Citizen-led Assessments of Basic Learning to Track SDG 4.1.1

SDG 4.1.1: Proportion of children and young people in grades 2/3, at the end of primary, and at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics, by sex.

In many developing countries, large proportions of children in grades 2 and 3 cannot yet read. Pen-paper assessments therefore cannot be used meaningfully to track progress towards SDG 4.1.1. CLAs are administered orally, one on one with each child.

The People’s Action for Learning (PAL) Network brings together fourteen countries working across three continents to assess basic reading and numeracy competencies of all children, in their homes, through citizen-led assessments (CLA). Together, we regularly assess more than one million children. Data from these assessments highlights the learning crisis across many developing countries.

Emerging from the global south, this family of citizen-led assessments has grown over the past ten years, but our guiding question remains the same: Are our children learning?
### Learning levels in grade 3 and grade 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Can read this grade 2 text (%)</th>
<th>Can do this grade 2 arithmetic problem (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Grade 3: 25.1</td>
<td>Grade 5: 47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Grade 3: 16.7</td>
<td>Grade 5: 52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Grade 3: 46.1</td>
<td>Grade 5: 80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Grade 3: 12.9</td>
<td>Grade 5: 45.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Citizen-led assessments test children’s foundational reading and arithmetic abilities. Each country designs assessment tools and sampling strategies based on the national curriculum and context. Data is therefore not comparable across countries.*
About the PAL Network

The PAL Network envisages a world where all children acquire the foundational skills that allow them to thrive. Its mission is to bring learning and measurement to the centre of educational policy and practice through citizen-led assessments.

Household-based assessments of basic reading and numeracy competencies are the only way to find out whether ALL children are acquiring basic skills, which are the building blocks for all future progress in school.

Guiding principles

- We design basic assessments of foundational skills including reading and simple arithmetic, based on national curriculum expectations
- We assess children one on one
- We conduct assessments in the household
- We assess at scale
- We assess at regular intervals
- We respond to local demand to address the crisis in learning
- We ensure that our data meets the highest standards
- We involve as many citizens as possible by using simple tools, communications, and assessments
- We communicate assessment results regularly to inform citizens and influence policy

Sample Description

Data is available for 9 of the 14 PAL Network countries. Bangladesh, Ghana, Mozambique, Cameroon and Nepal are in early stages of implementation.

For more information visit palnetwork.org

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