



the  
Education  
Commission

SAVE OUR  
FUTURE

# Averting an education catastrophe for the world's children

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# Outline

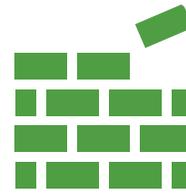
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The  
Crisis



The  
Potential



The  
Actions



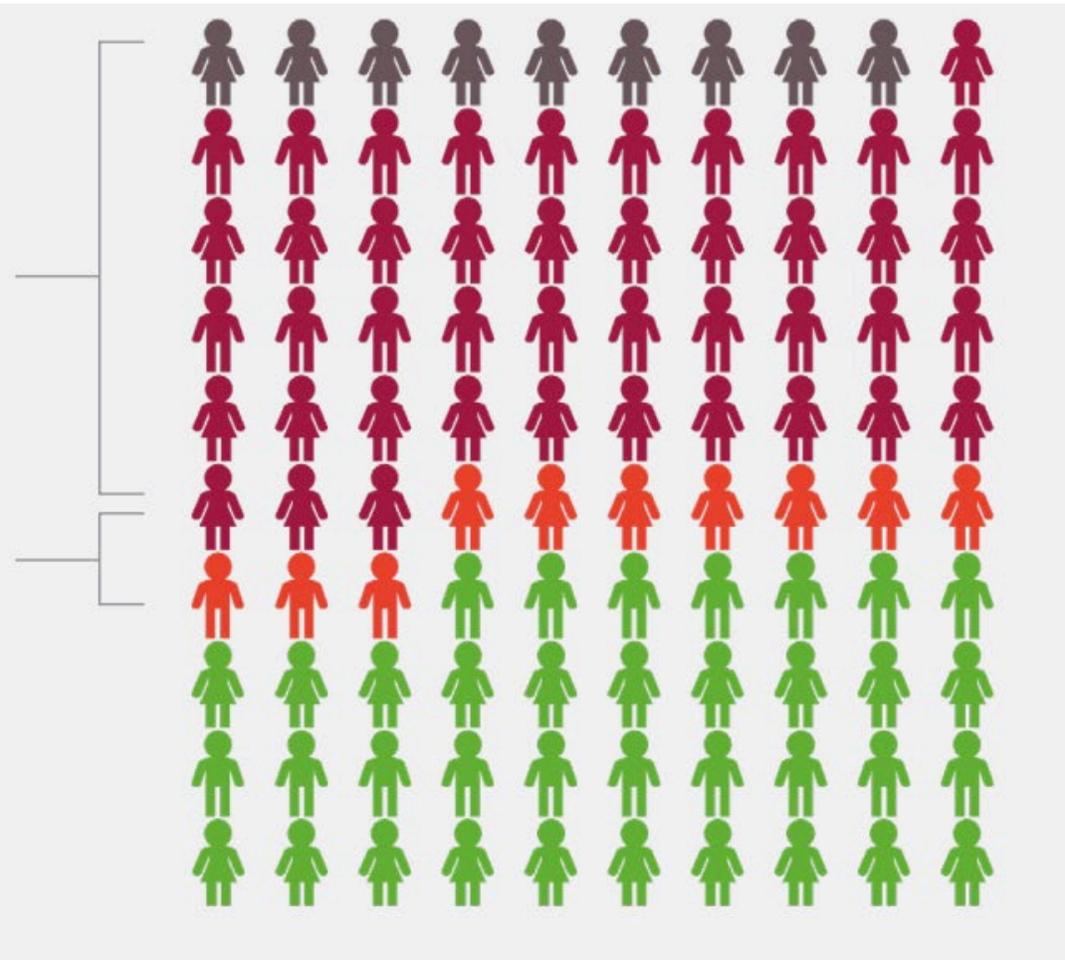
The Next  
Steps

# The crisis... of learning worsening

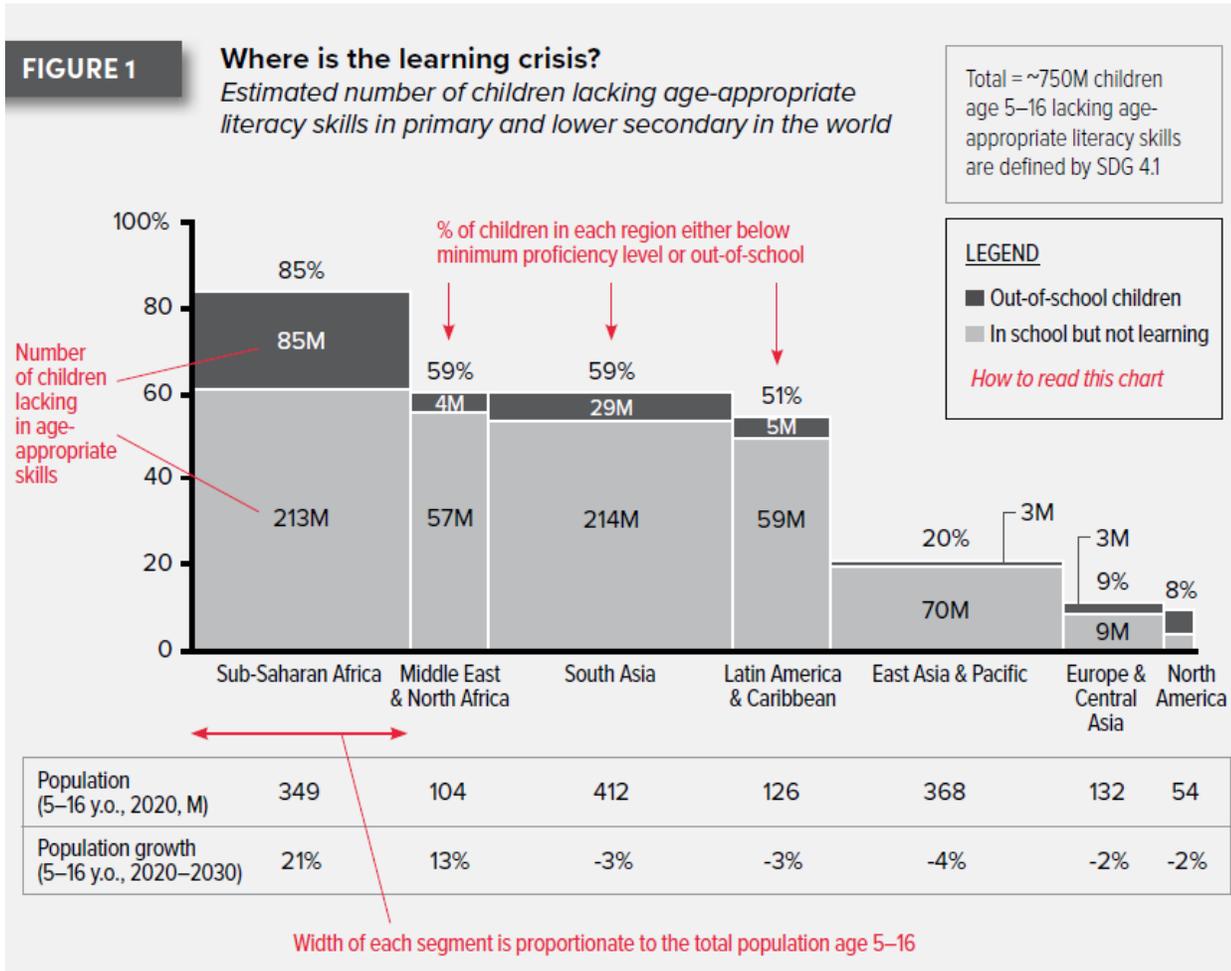
For every 100 primary school-age children in low- and middle-income countries:

**53 were already in learning poverty before the pandemic** (of which 9 were out of school and the rest were in school but not learning)

**10 more will enter learning poverty as a result of COVID** (of which almost all will be in school but not learning)



# The crisis... in Asia and the Pacific



There are more ‘non-learning’ children in Asia and the Pacific than any other region in the world

Some countries have HUGE learning crises – South Asian countries have the biggest burden but learning levels are also low in other regions

Even the top performing students in many developing Asian and Pacific countries are far behind the average students in developed countries



# The crisis... in SE Asia

Country	Reading end of primary SDG 4.1.1b Band 6 and above	
	%	Standard Error
Cambodia	11	1.01
Lao PDR	2	0.41
Malaysia	58	2.06
Myanmar	11	0.78
Phillippines	10	1.21
Viet Nam	82	1.42

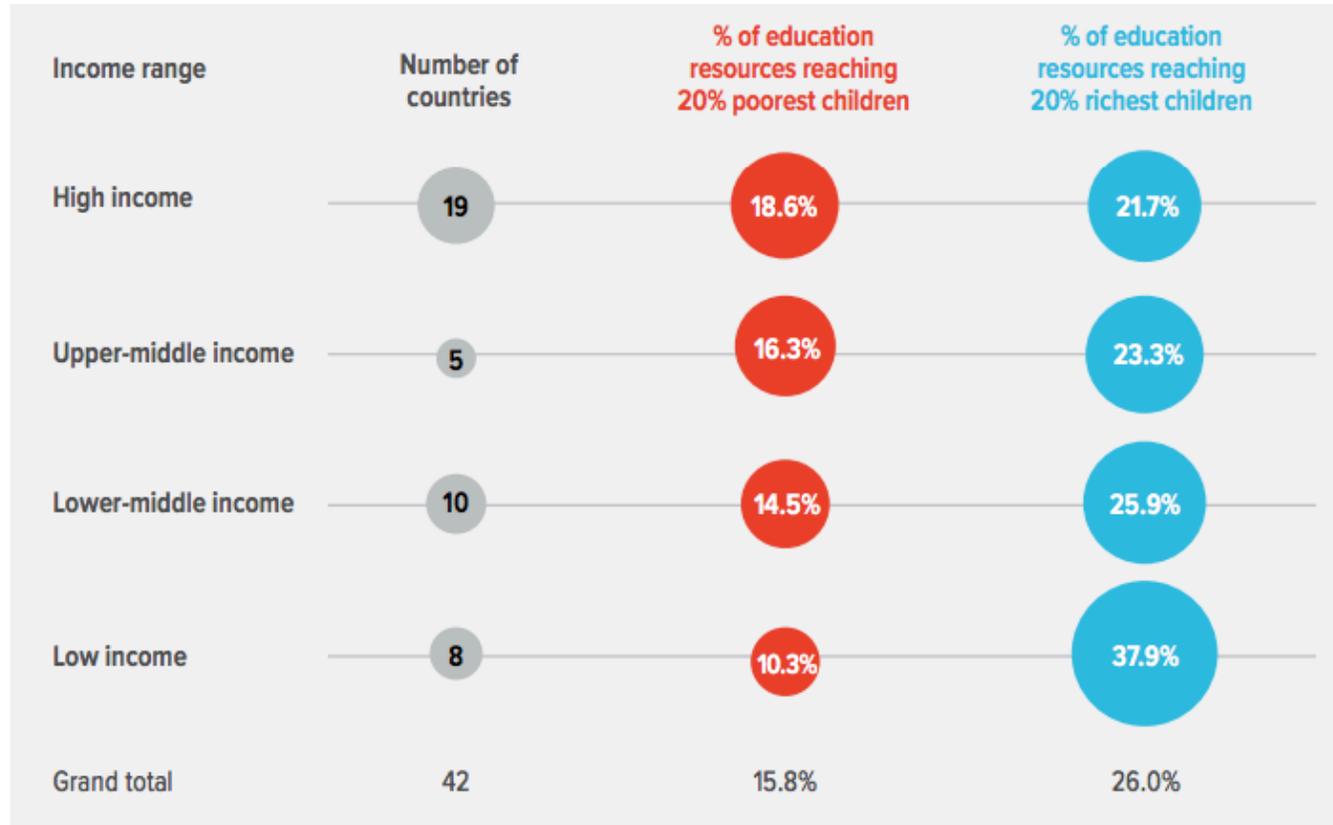
New evidence from the SE Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) shows that the learning crisis in South East Asia is worse than we may have thought

Table shows proportion of grade 5 children meeting the SDG4.1.1b indicator in reading

<https://www.seaplmm.org>



# The crisis... of finance worsening



Low- and lower-middle-income countries could face an **annual financing gap of between USD \$178 and \$193 billion over the next 10 years**

All of official aid for education combined is **\$16 billion**

Falling budgets will further **exacerbate existing inequities in spending and resource allocation**

UNICEF (2020). Addressing the Learning Crisis. An Urgent Need to Better Finance Education for the Poorest Children.



# The crisis... of inequality worsening

## Marginalization due to characteristics



Children with disabilities – most likely to be out of school and learning the least



Girls have better learning outcomes at foundational level but increased risk of drop out

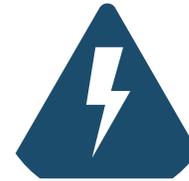


48% of refugee children are out of school

## Marginalization due to location



Best-performing students in low-income countries have learning outcomes far below lowest-performing students in high-income countries.



Children living in crisis and conflict settings face trauma and risks to safety



Digital divide - at least 31% of schoolchildren, cannot be reached by digital or broadcast remote learning programs



# The potential... to drive sustainable development



Health behavior



Climate action

Peace, tolerance  
and community  
cohesion



Global citizenship



Gender equality



Employability

# The action... to Save Our Future

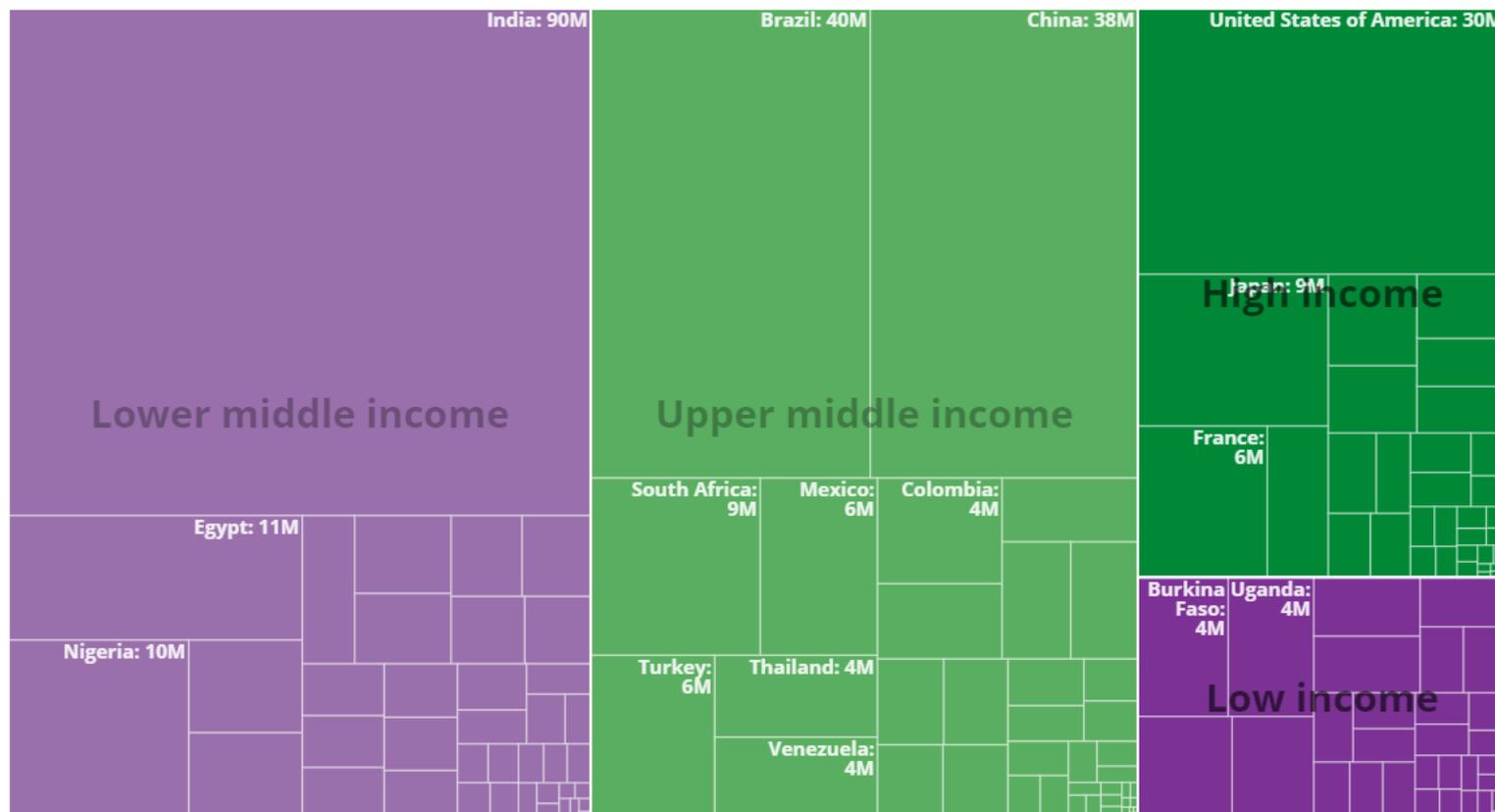
Led by a coalition of international organizations in partnership with over 600 organizations and youth.

Pushing to **unify the sector** and **ensure that stronger, more resilient and equitable systems** are part of the “build back better” COVID 19 recovery strategy.



# Action 1: Prioritize reopening schools, deliver vital services to children, and treat the workforce as frontline workers

370 million children left without school meals

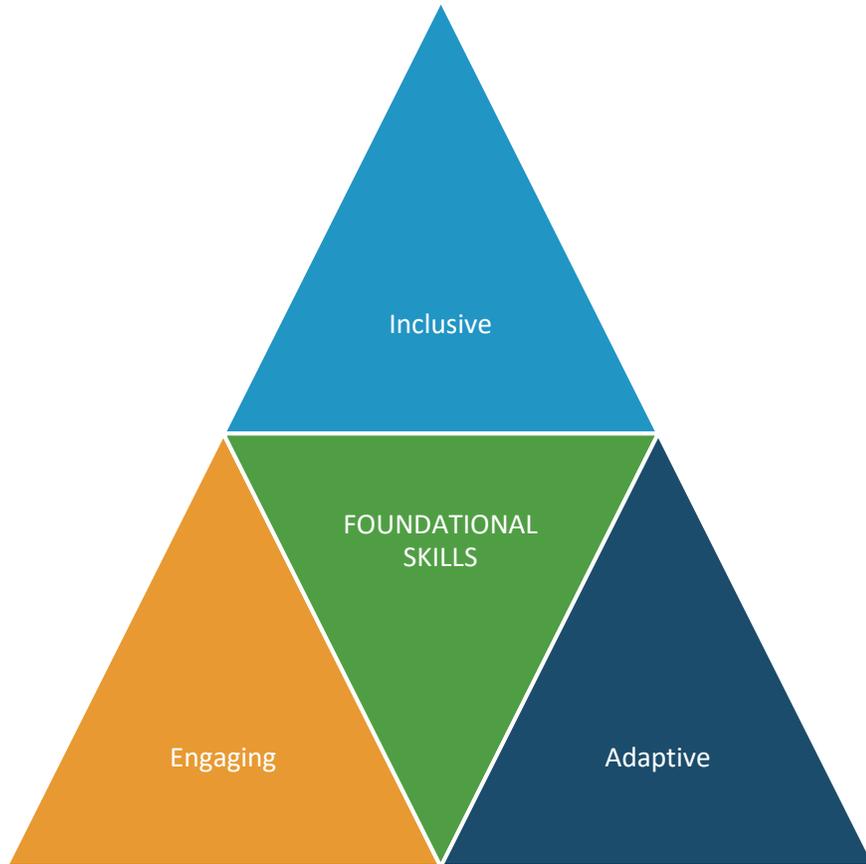


~820 million without handwashing facilities!

~700 million without basic sanitation



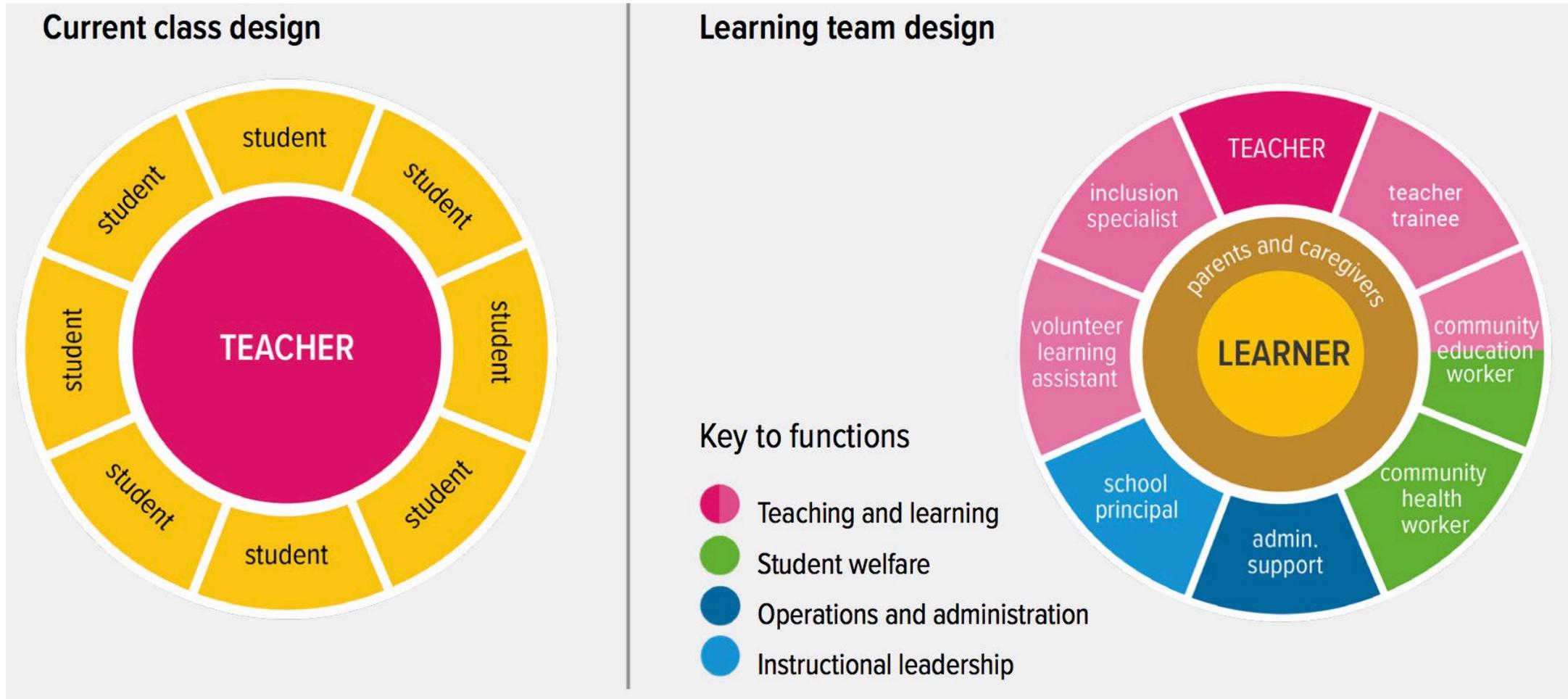
## Action 2: Make education inclusive, engaging, and adaptive



- Consensus amongst researchers that we need to focus on building foundational skills
- Doesn't mean that that other skills are not important – simply that NO skills are possible unless and until foundational skills are built



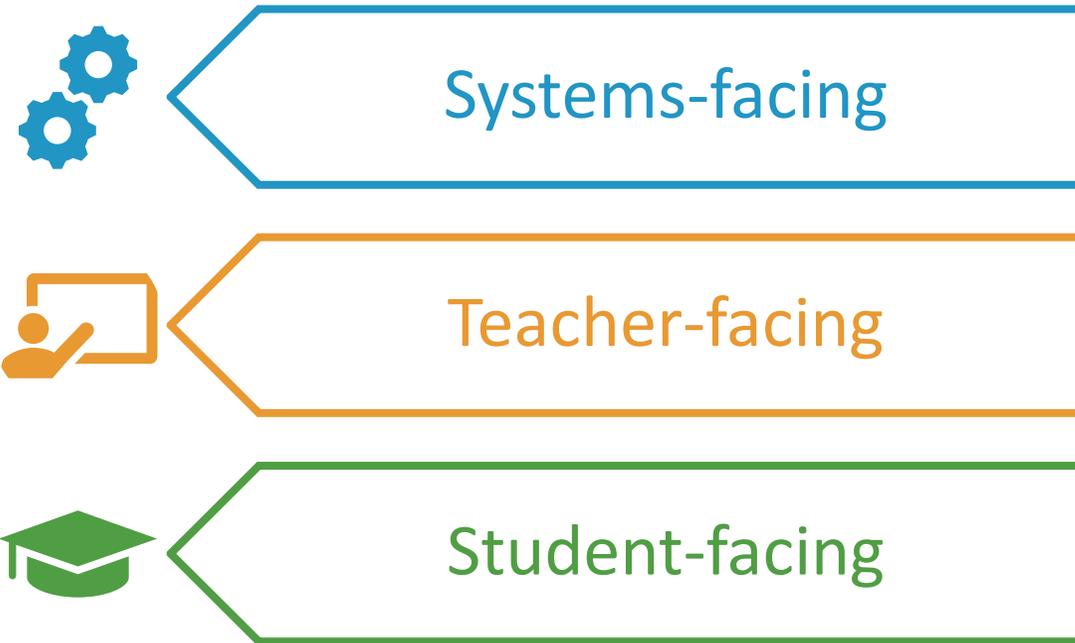
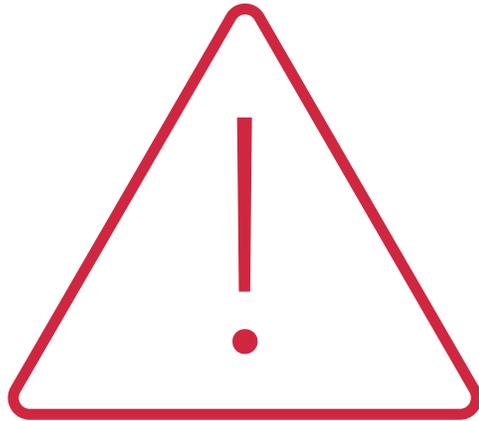
# Action 3: Strengthen the education workforce



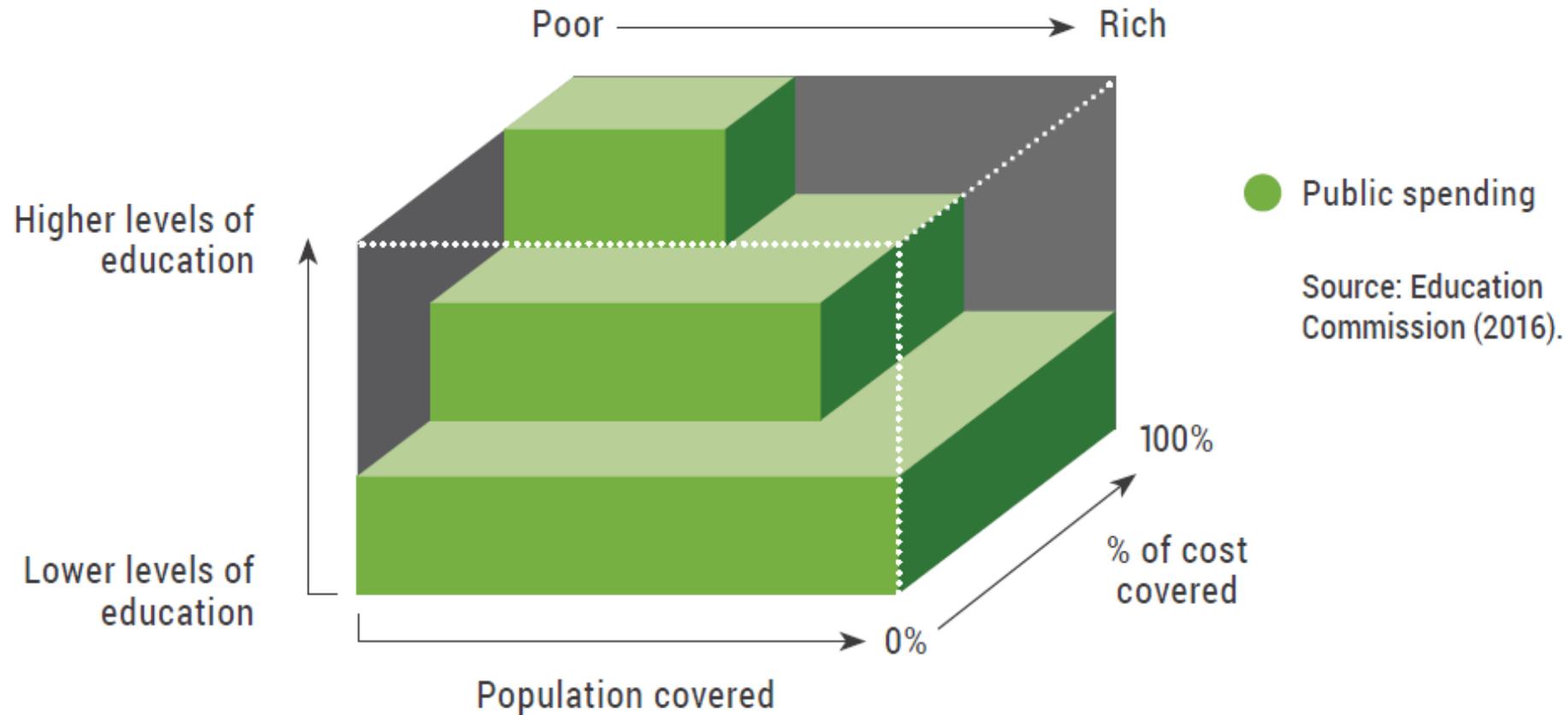
# Action 4: Focus education technology where it is proven to be effective and most equitable

First, do no harm...

...and draw on technology throughout the system as a means not an end



# Action 5: Protect education budgets and target public spending at those left furthest behind.



The Education Commission (2016). The Learning Generation. Investing in Education for a Changing World.



# Action 6: Mobilize international resources to fully finance education

## 1. Maximize aid for education

- Bilateral donors protect and grow aid budgets (target 0.7 percent of GNI)
- MDBs and IMF to mobilize additional resources (e.g. IDA supplement)
- Debt relief (with links to education if possible)
- IMF issue Special Drawing Rights

## 2. Allocate a greater share of education ODA through multilateral channels (e.g. through multilateral funds like GPE and ECW)

## 3. Bring in additional finance through innovation e.g. [International Finance Facility for Education](#)

- IFFEd works through MDBs including ADB
- IFFEd provides MDBS with additional capacity to lend to Lower-Middle-Income countries



# Action 7: Use resources better by improving evidence generation, coordination, alignment, and effectiveness

Too much money is still being spent on interventions that we know don't work.



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How can we cultivate a greater R&D culture and mobilize actors around evidence-based policy; making every dollar go further?

UNESCO is driving much needed reform of the global architecture



CC licensed, Antonio Mantero

How do we make sure coordination of development actors doesn't get lost?

# The next steps... how can ADB help make change happen



## Prioritization

ADB as a trusted development partner can facilitate vital conversations about prioritizing foundational learning – as the KEY to lifelong learning.



## Edtech

Consider teacher-facing EdTech. Most development actors are still not thinking about this. ADB has expertise and could lead the way



## International funding

ADB and its partner countries can play an important role in making the case for funding for education including via the International Finance Facility for Education



## Private finance for skills

Build for Skills is a revolutionary approach. ADB could lead the way by building skills programming into infrastructure programs more widely.





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**Thank you!**

For more information, please contact  
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Photo by Dominic Chavez/World Bank