Recovering Learning Losses from the COVID-19 Pandemic

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1. **Projected** losses in absence of remedial measures
Projected learning and earnings losses in absence of remedial measures

• Students in developing Asia are projected to lose over half a year of learning-adjusted schooling.
• Less learning -> lower ability to earn income.
• Estimated $3.2 trillion in lost lifetime earnings – 13% of developing Asia’s GDP in 2020.
• This is a conservative estimate (see Asian Development Outlook 2022 Special Topic for more details).
Projected gender and wealth gaps

Girls incur 28% more earning loss than boys.

The poorest quintile incur 47% more earnings loss than the richest quintile.
From projections to assessments

• Review of 35 studies from mostly advanced economies shows an average of a half year of learning lost (Patrinos et al. 2022)

• Losses much greater for children from poor families (Evans and Moscoviz 2022).

• But reasons for hope:
  • Impact evaluations of innovative remote solutions show promise in limiting learning losses (Angrist et al. 2022).
  • Remedial education campaign in rural Tamil Nadu, India coincided with two-thirds of learning gap closing in four months (Singh et al. 2022)
2. Three broad approaches to learning loss recovery
Enabling factors for recovery approaches

• Periodic student assessment
  • Nationally representative learning survey using a standardized test focused on literacy and numeracy (for policymakers)
  • Periodic formative assessment of individual students’ learning levels (for teachers and administrators)

• Continuous teacher training
Losses can be recovered using proven approaches for improving learning

- **Consolidate curriculum**
  - Regroup classrooms by level

- **Targeted instruction**
  - Teaching assistants for small groups
  - Personal tutoring
  - Tech-assisted learning

- **Extend instruction time**
  - More hours per day, weekend classes, shorter breaks

- **Continuous teacher training**
  - Periodic measurement of learning levels
Supporting policies for re-enrollment

• Community monitoring and mobilization efforts

• Financial incentives, social safety nets.

• Public information campaigns sensitive to reasons for dropout
Discussion

• Optimal mix of approaches for a coherent recovery strategy depends on pre-pandemic situation and nature of school closure.
• Also depends on resource availability (financial, human).
• Next: Panel discussion hosted by ADB Chief Economist Albert Park