

Impact of COVID-19 on Education – Transforming Education for All Post COVID-19

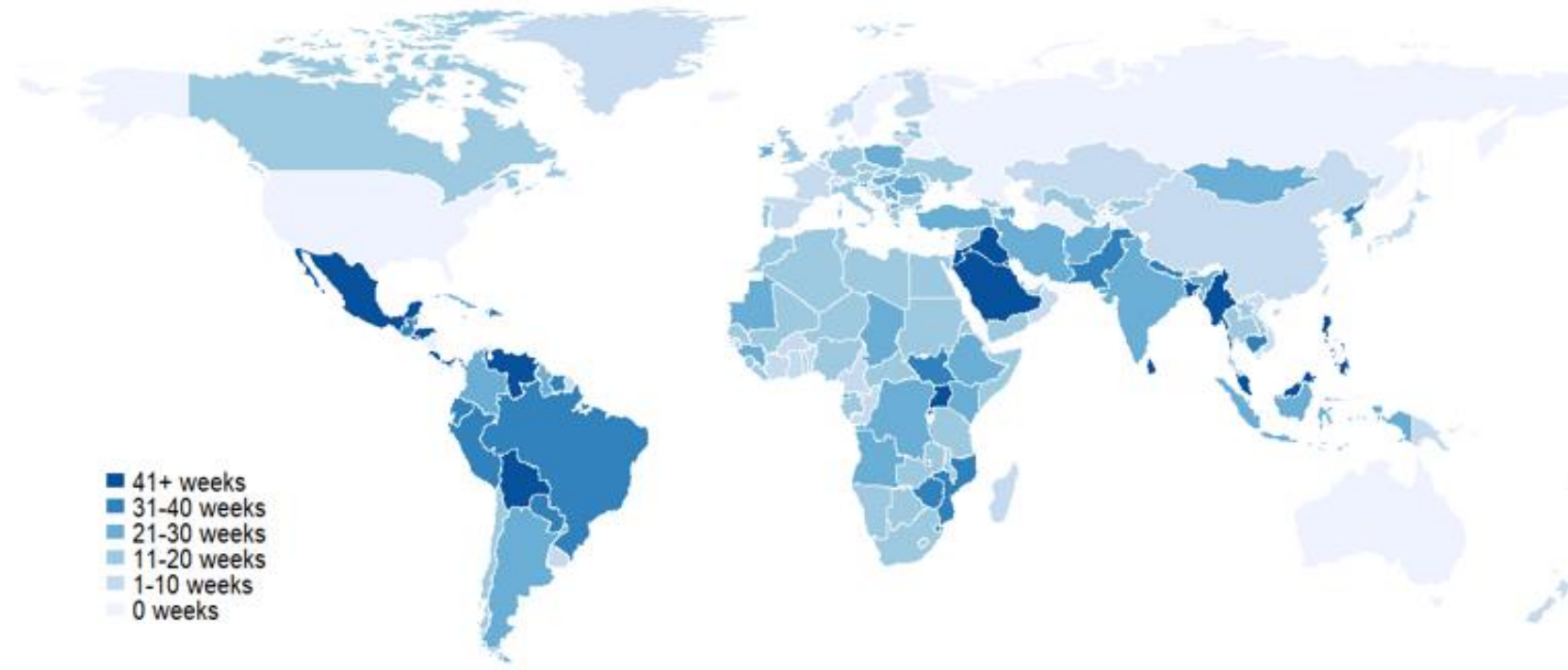
Takaho Fukami
Chief of Education, UNICEF Sri Lanka

Impact of School Closures

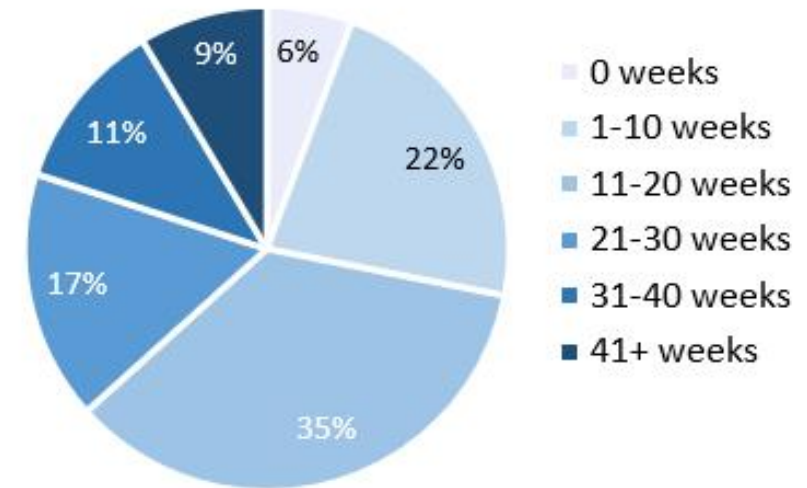


Global impact of school closures

On average, schools have been fully closed for **20 weeks** over the period between February 2020 to January 2022.



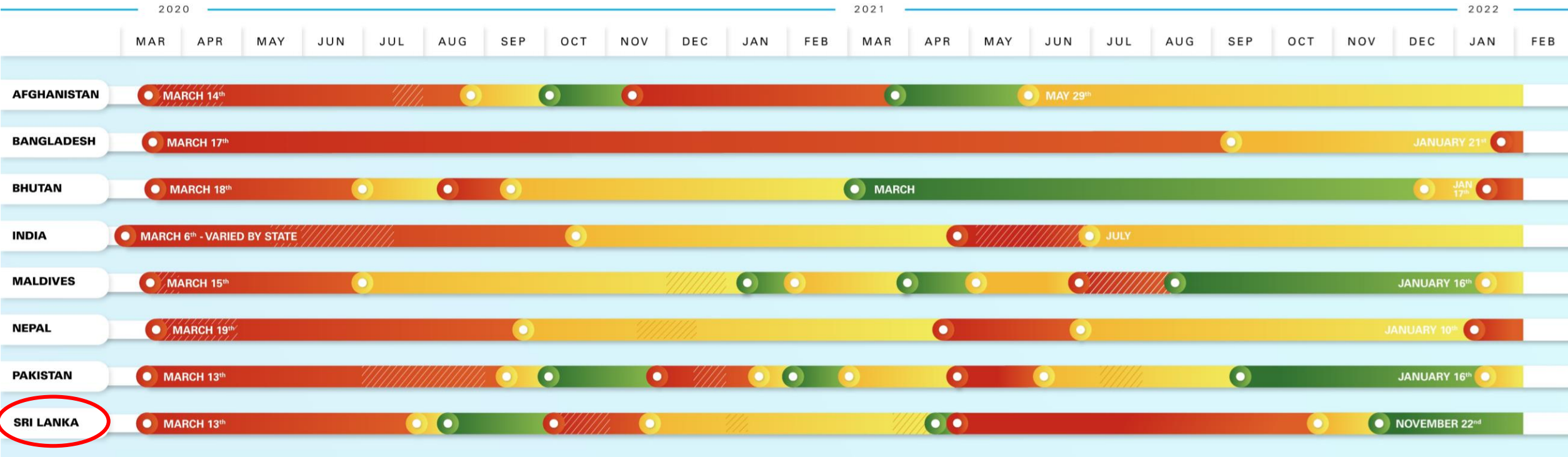
Percentage of countries by duration of full school closure, February 2020 to January 2022



Source: UNESCO [Global Monitoring of School Closures](#).

Two trillion hours of in-person learning have been lost due to school closures, with **long-term** implications for learners.

School closures & reopening in South Asia

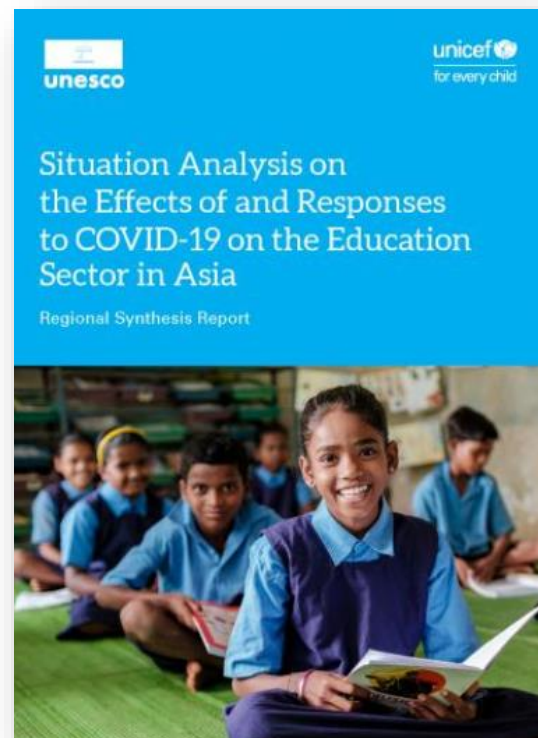


In Sri Lanka, schools were fully closed for **50 weeks** and partially closed for **23 weeks**



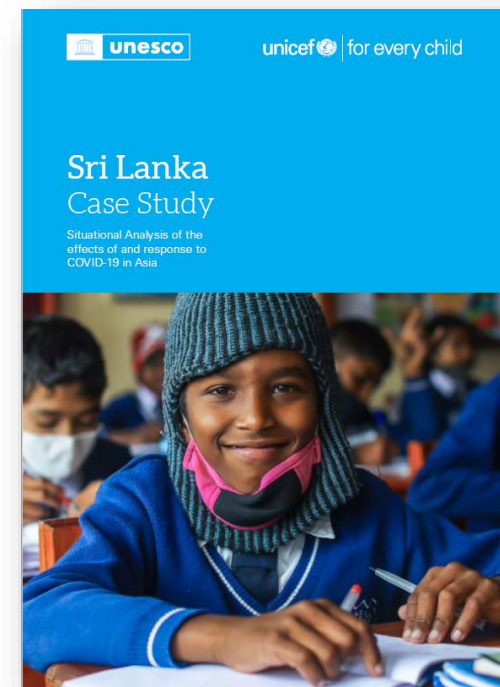
Impacts and responses to COVID-19 on education

- Direct impact and indirect impacts on education
- Early responses included school closures and roll out of **remote learning opportunities**
 - TV, radio, online, printed materials
- Perceived risk and **lack of safety measures** prolonged school reopening



South Asia Regional Report

Sri Lanka Report



Projected impact on learning poverty and long-term economic cost

Learning crisis and inequities already existent before COVID-19 further worsened

The learning poverty rate before COVID-19

- 53% low-middle income countries
- 9% high income countries
- **Sri Lanka** (estimated) - **15%** of school going children at end of primary, who are not proficient in reading

A year into the pandemic:

COVID-19 related school closures are likely to **increase global learning poverty** to as much as 63%

Students of today risks **losing US\$ 17 trillion in lifetime earnings** as a result of school closures

(Source: World Bank)

Learning Loss and Remediation

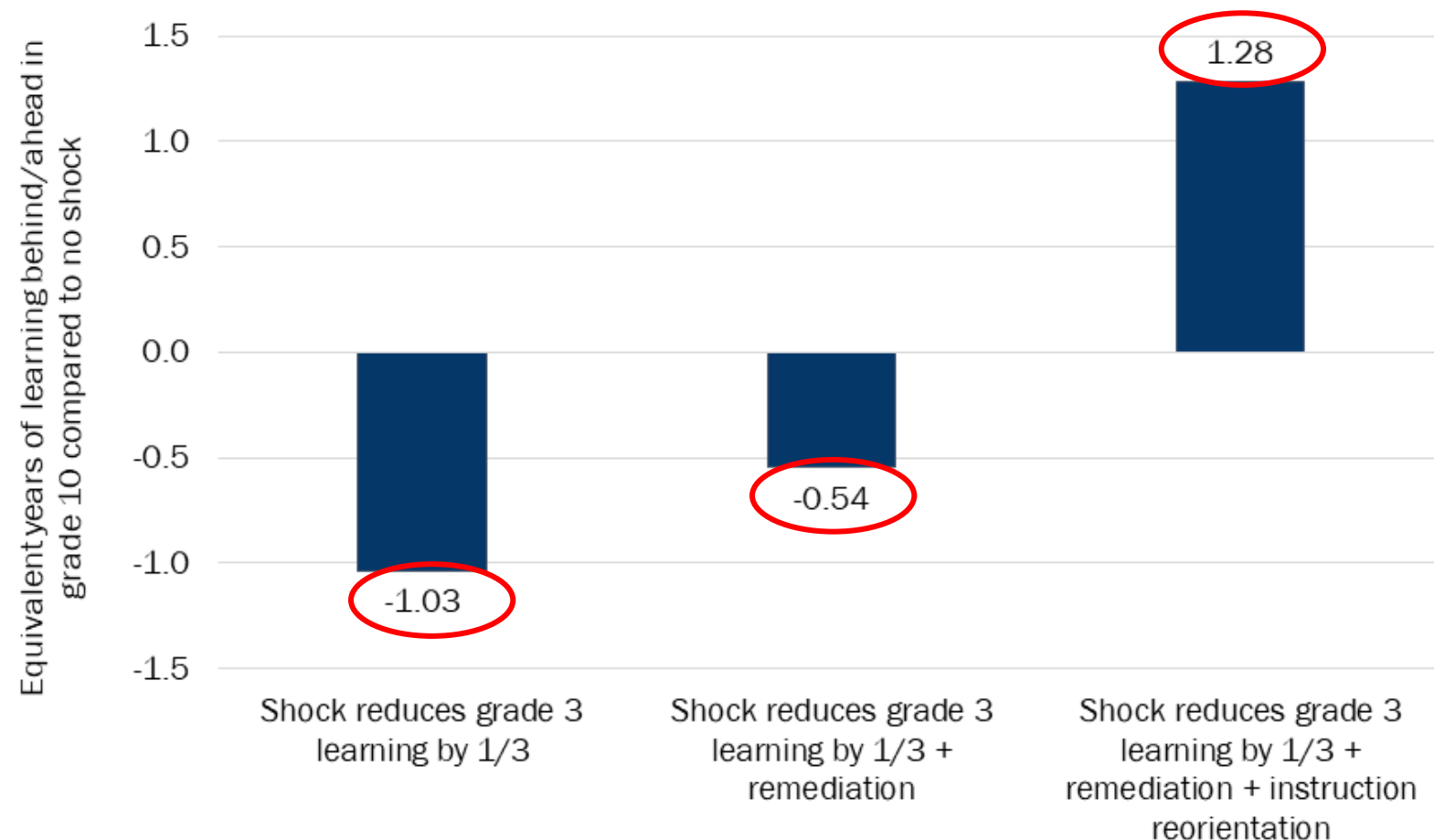
© UNICEF/UN0123456/Photographer



How can learning loss be mitigated?

School closure and learning loss in Pakistan earthquake 2005

Figure 1. Long-term learning loss from COVID-19 school closures and mitigation strategies for the grade 3 cohort



Source: "Modeling the long-run learning impact of the COVID-10 learning shock: Action to (more than) mitigate loss." RISE.



What is required to support recovery (catch up) efforts?

- Curriculum modification
- Avoid automatic promotion
- Diagnostic and **formative assessments** of learning
- **Teacher support and capacity building**
- **Parents, caregivers** and classroom assistants
- **Quality learning materials**
- **Integrated/blended learning approaches**
- **Communication** strategies
- Monitoring, including school attendance & remote learning

Financing is a key enabler to learning recovery

Education should be prioritized as a gateway to rights and human capital development



**Reimagine
Education -**

**Transforming
Education
for All**

Reimagining Education

Digital learning should be part of a basic basket of essential services for every child and young person

1. **The most vulnerable** children and young people to be prioritised
2. Digital learning to be **relevant** to each individual child and young person
3. **Education funding** to be protected
4. Decision-makers to maximise **innovation** and investment, collaborations involving governments, businesses, community groups, industry pioneers and more.



Challenges in reaching all children with remote learning

1. Access and use of digital devices
2. Inability to shift to digital learning, including **parent and teacher capacity and engagement**
3. **Quality** of learning resources
4. TV and radio should be complemented by other modalities
5. Mobiles phones proved a critical learning modality
6. Cost of devices and lack of connectivity



Reach and Effectiveness of Distance Learning

← Potential to reach children & youth with effective learning opportunities →

% with **access** to technology & materials for learning

Majority of households have access to some form of tech

% who **use** technology for learning

Typically, less than half of tech is used for learning

% **well-supported** by teachers

Majority had infrequent or no contact with teachers

% learning effectively

Large majority perceive themselves as learning less or significantly less

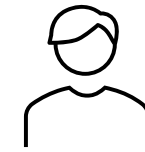
Sri Lanka

**National Survey on
Learning
Continuity in
Primary Grades
(2020-2021)**

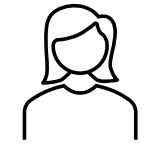


Methodology

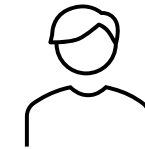
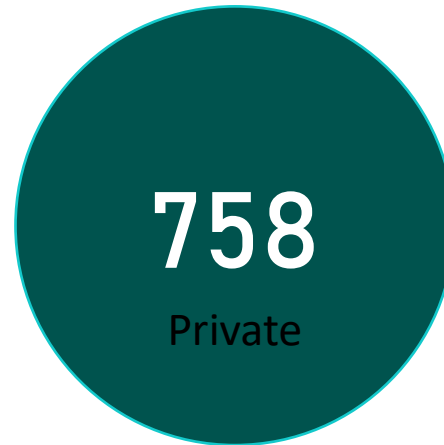
- Conducted from Nov 2020 to Feb 2021
- Mixed methods
 - Face-to-face survey (quant.)
 - Target: Parents of primary school students (**grades 1-4**)
 - 15 FGDs with 90 teachers (qual.)
- Nationally representative samples
 - Public schools – all 9 provinces
 - Private schools – 5/9 provinces



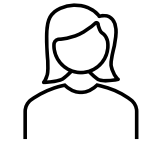
52%
MALE



48%
FEMALE



59%
MALE



41%
FEMALE

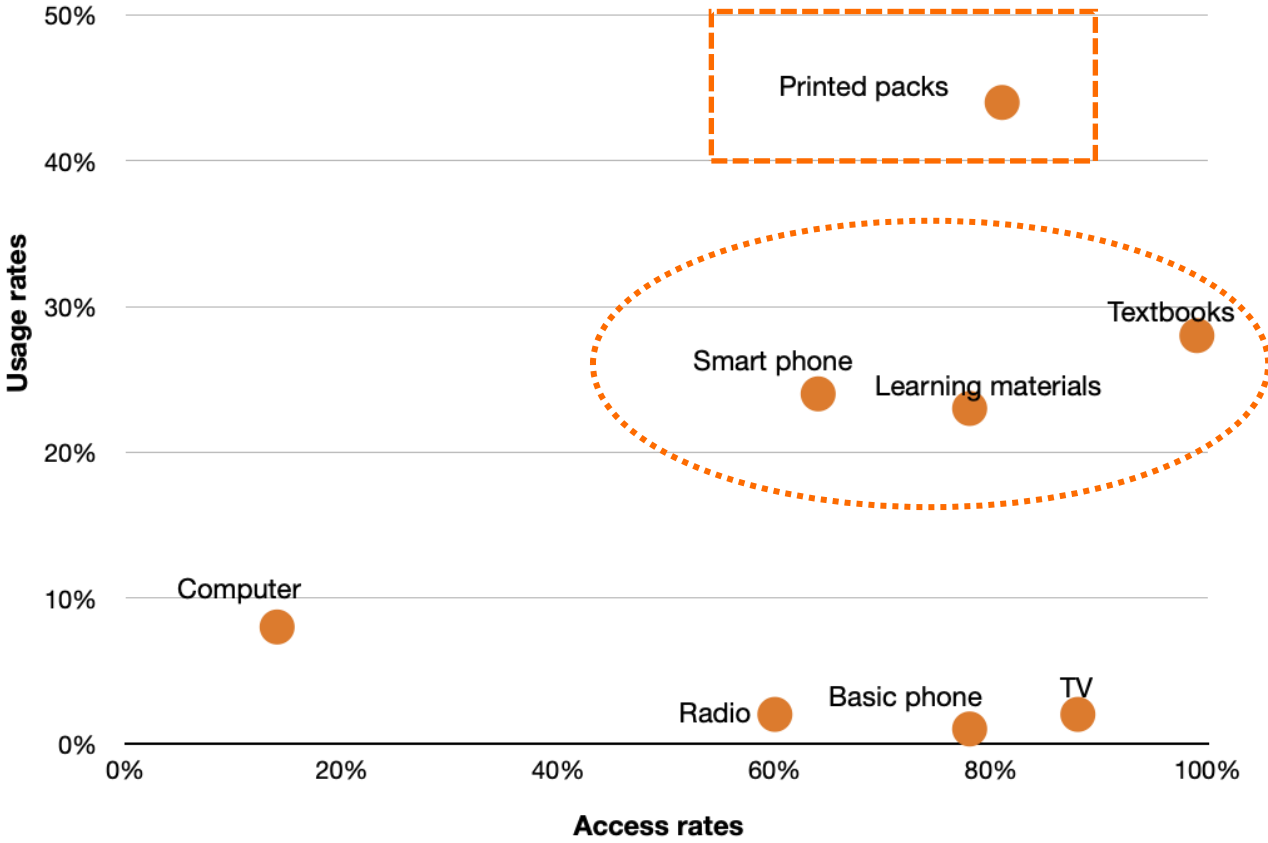
Household Internet connectivity

	Reliable internet	Unreliable/slow internet	No internet
Sampled children in public schools	41%	16%	42%
Sampled children in private schools	87%	12%	1%

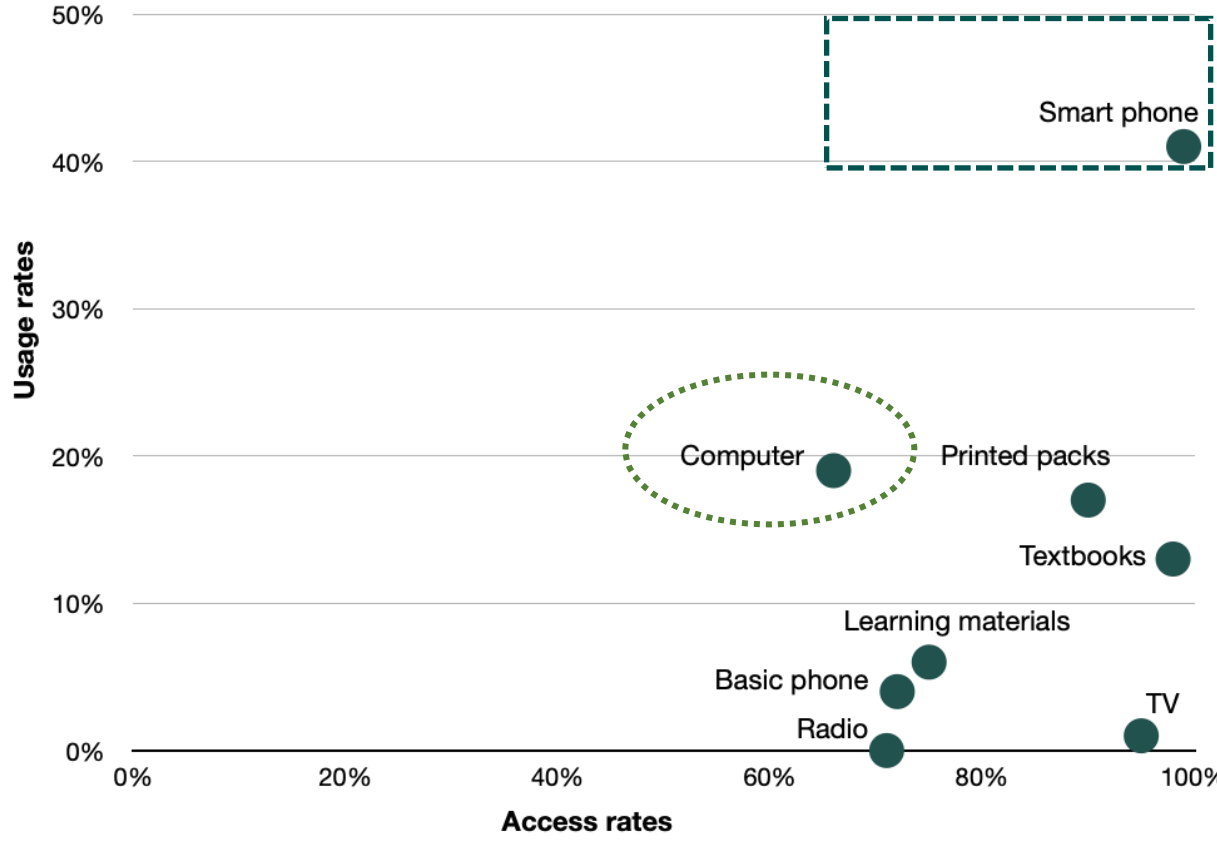
Access & usage: Public & private school students

Access vs usage of different learning modalities

Public schools

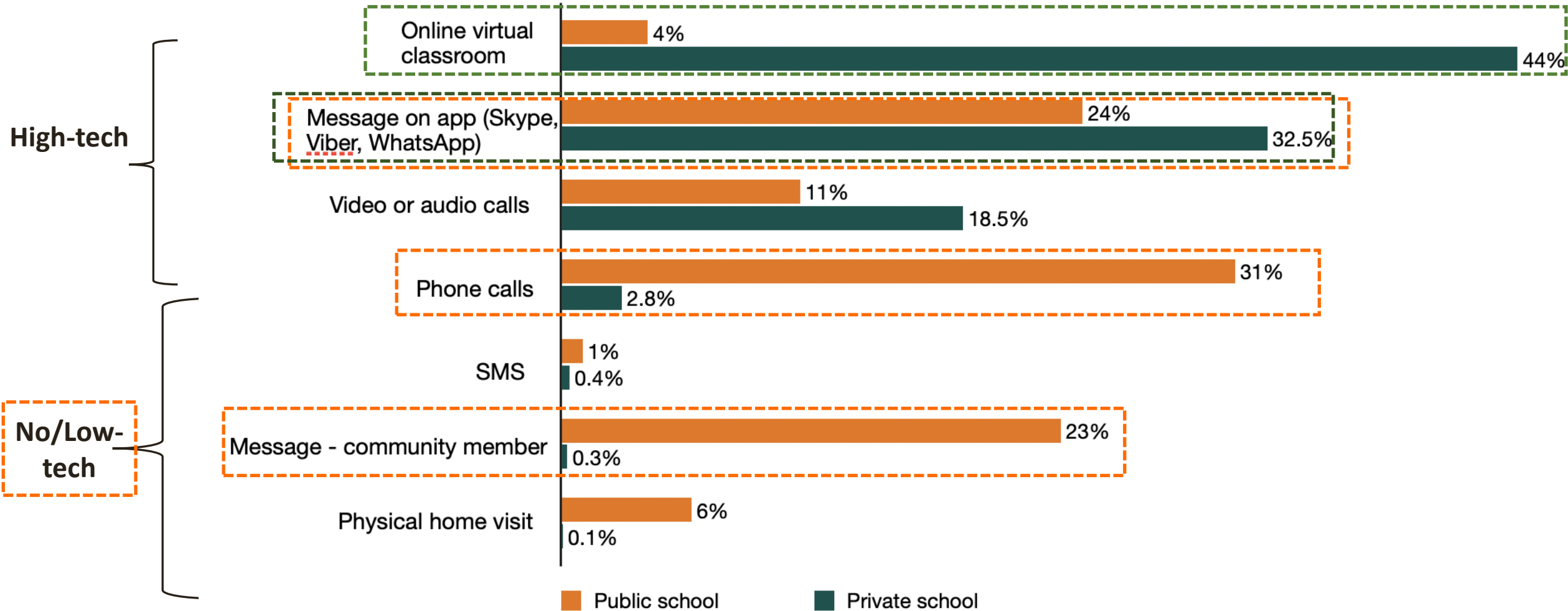


Private schools



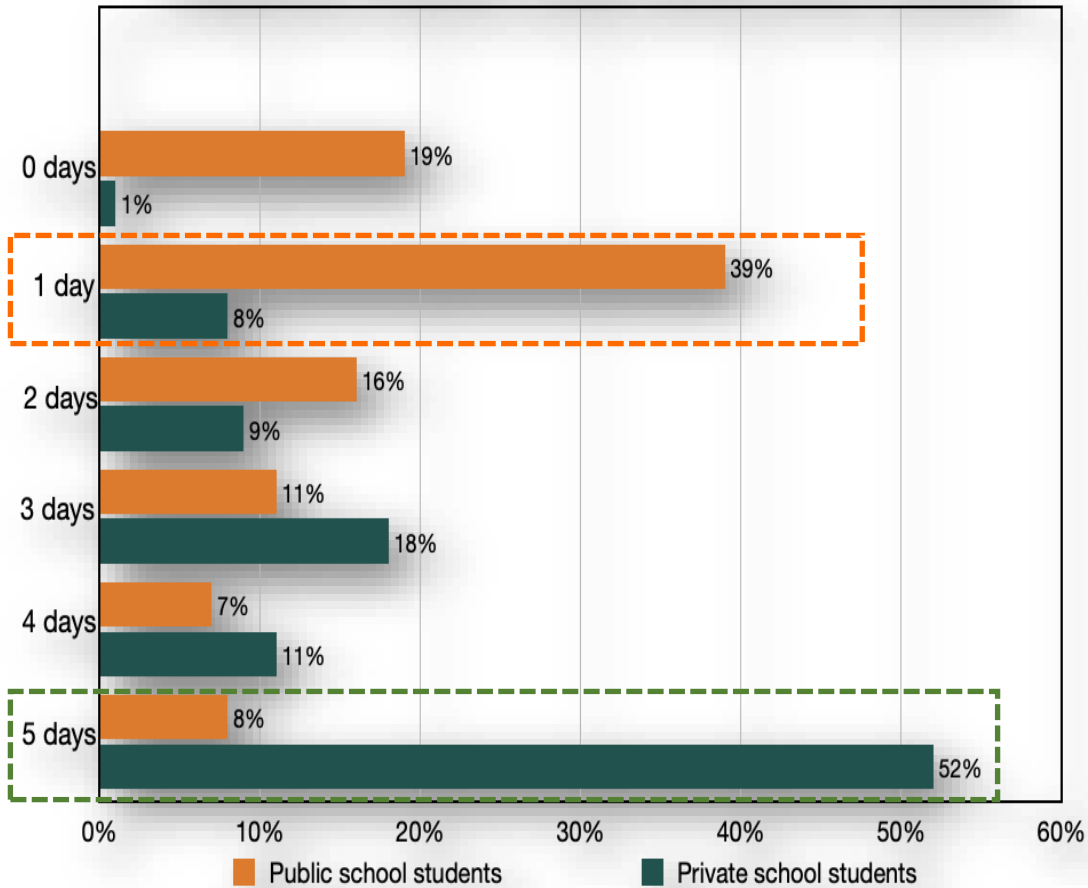
Teacher contact: methods

Most common method used by teachers to initiate contact

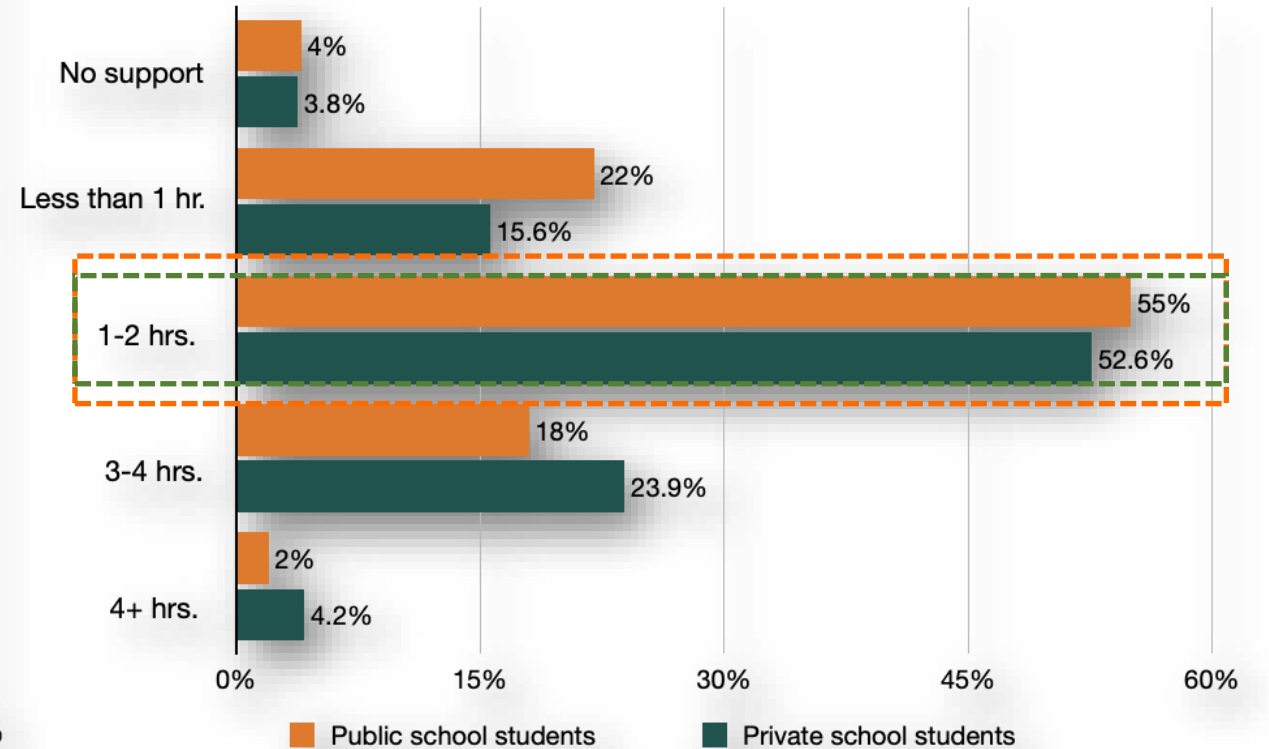


Support for children's remote learning

Frequency of teacher contact during school closures



Families' reports of time spent supporting young children with remote learning



Education support by parents' education levels (public schools)

HIGHER EDUCATION



Education level of parent	No support	Less than an hour	One to two hours	Three to four hours	More than four hours
No formal education	0%	67%	33%	0%	0%
Grade 5 and below	33%	33%	11%	15%	9%
Grade 6-9	27%	24%	10%	16%	23%
Up to GCE (O/L)	22%	25%	11%	16%	25%
Up to GCE (A/L)	17%	26%	8%	16%	34%
Diploma or equivalent	8%	0%	4%	38%	50%
Degree or equivalent and above	7%	23%	10%	23%	38%

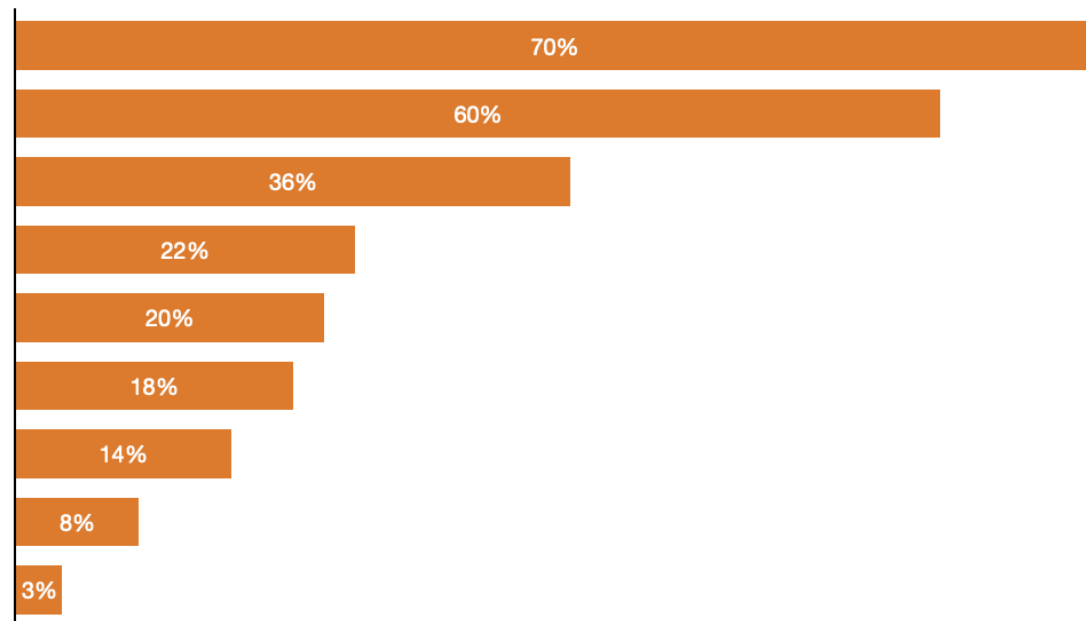
HIGHER SUPPORT



Factors contributing to 'extremely effective/ineffective' learning (public schools)

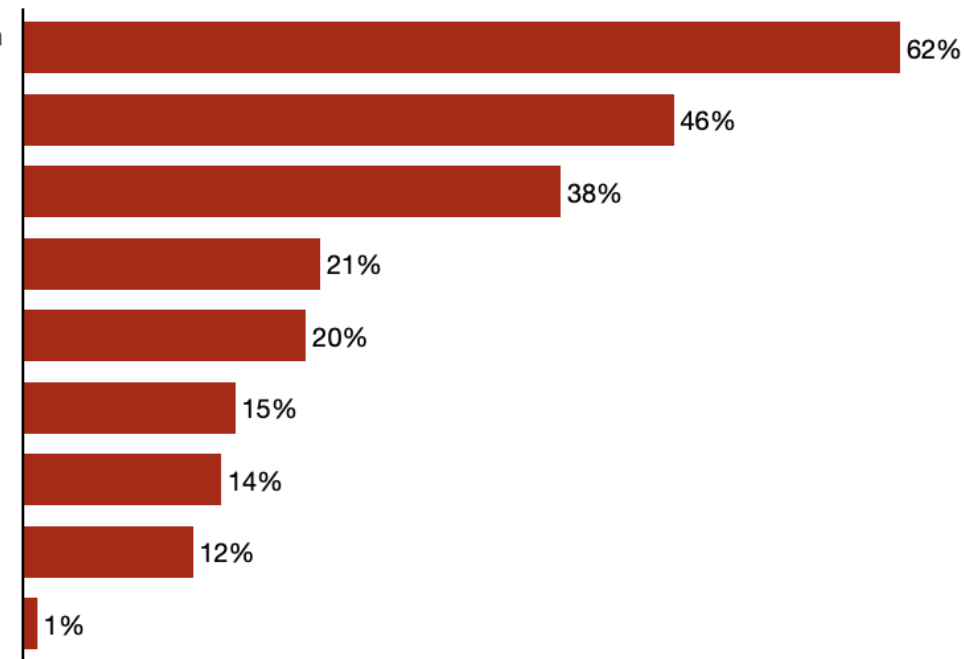
Effective

- Children received regular and effective support from their parents or other family members
- Children received regular and effective support from their teachers
- High quality printed materials provided by the school
- A quiet place to study
- High quality learning materials online
- High quality learning program developed by the school
- High quality teaching programs broadcasted on radio
- High quality teaching programs broadcasted on TV
- Had sufficient infrastructure such as laptops/computers

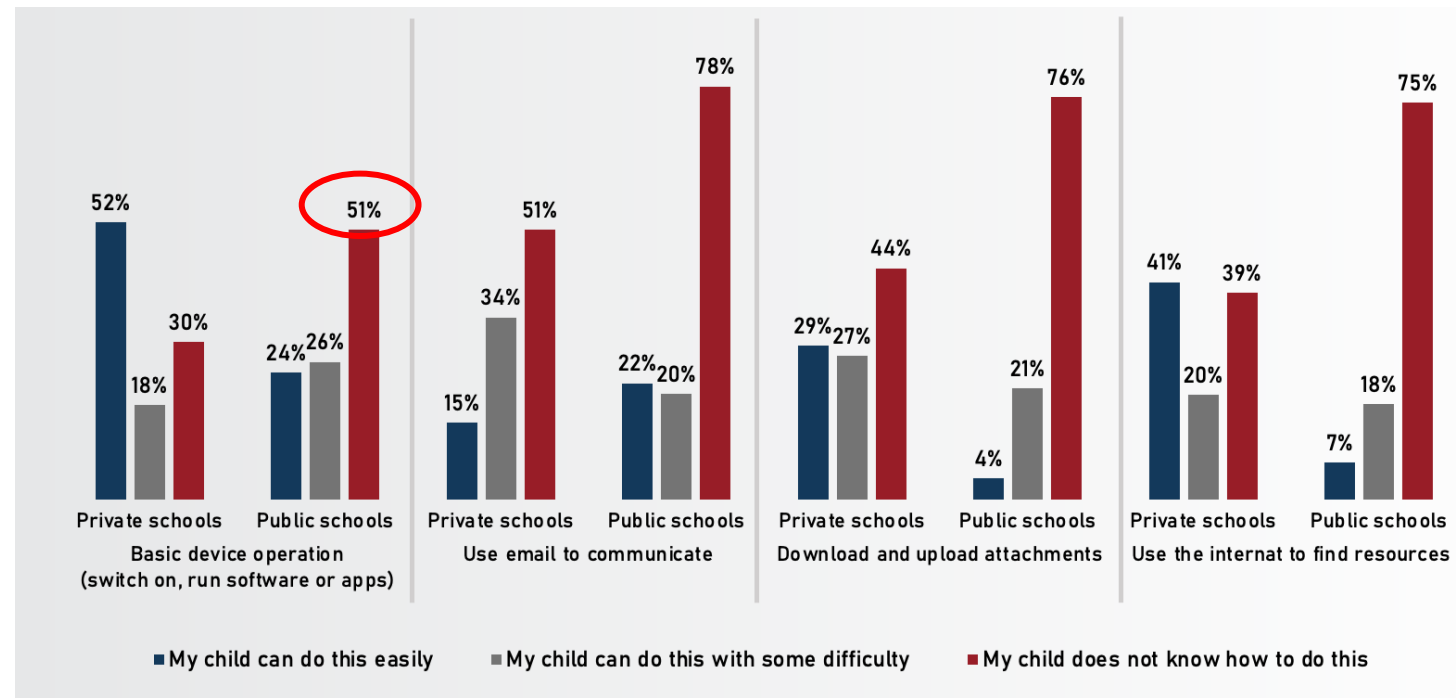
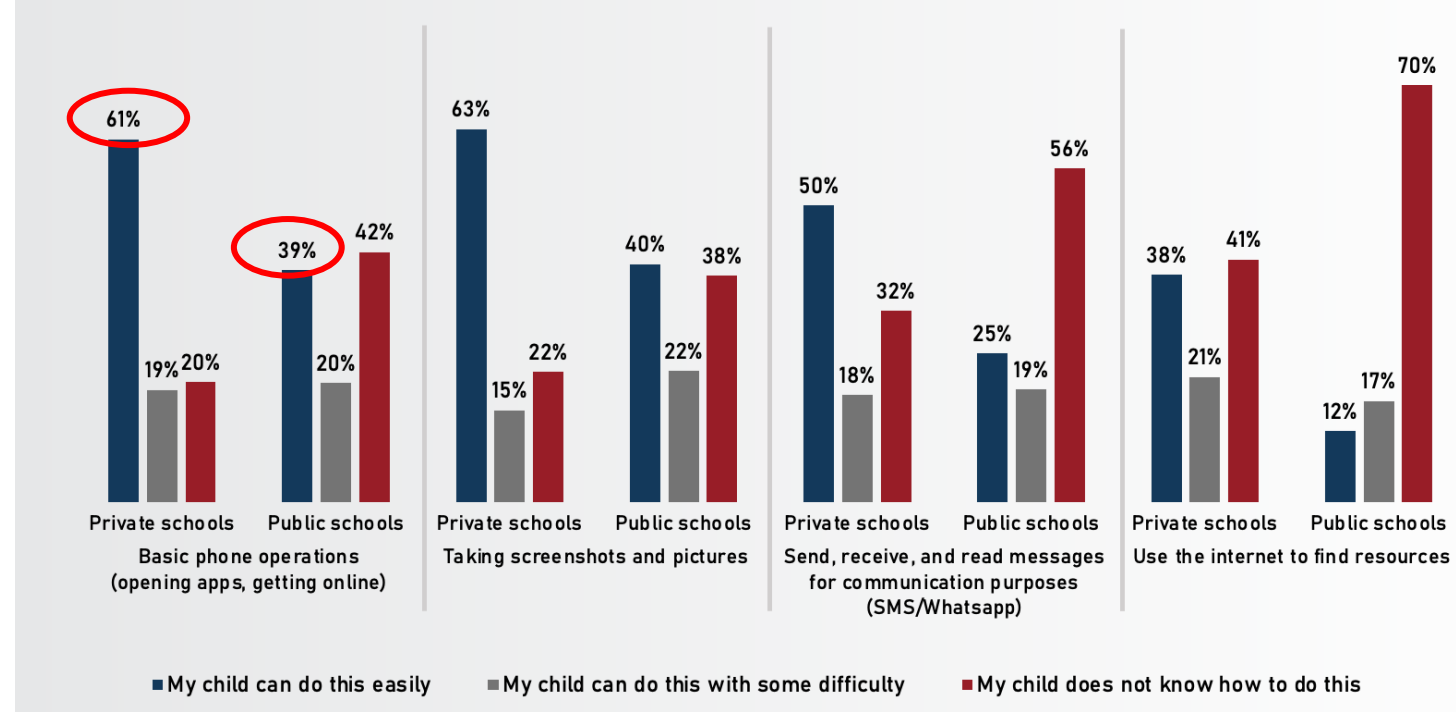


Ineffective

- Children did not receive regular and effective support from their teachers
- Children did not have sufficient infrastructure such as laptops/computers
- Children did not receive regular and effective support from their parents or other family members
- A lack of a quiet place to study
- Low quality learning materials online
- Low quality printed material provided by the school
- Low quality teaching programs broadcasted on radio
- Low quality learning programs developed by the school
- Low quality teaching programs broadcasted on TV



Children's ability to use smartphones & laptops



Recommendations



1. Use a combination of learning modalities (**Blended learning**), both in emergencies and regular classes
2. Encourage **school leaders** to take an active role
3. **Build capacity and motivate teachers**, parents/caregivers and children; ensure their continued engagement
4. Develop and implement strategies to **reach the most vulnerable children**
5. Explore ways to provide **free Internet access** to education resources, engaging private sector
6. **Monitor reach and effectiveness** of distance learning modalities and learning progress
7. Prioritise flexible responses NOW – **well designed, contextualized** digital learning solutions and its **integration into teaching-learning processes** are key to success for better learning outcomes

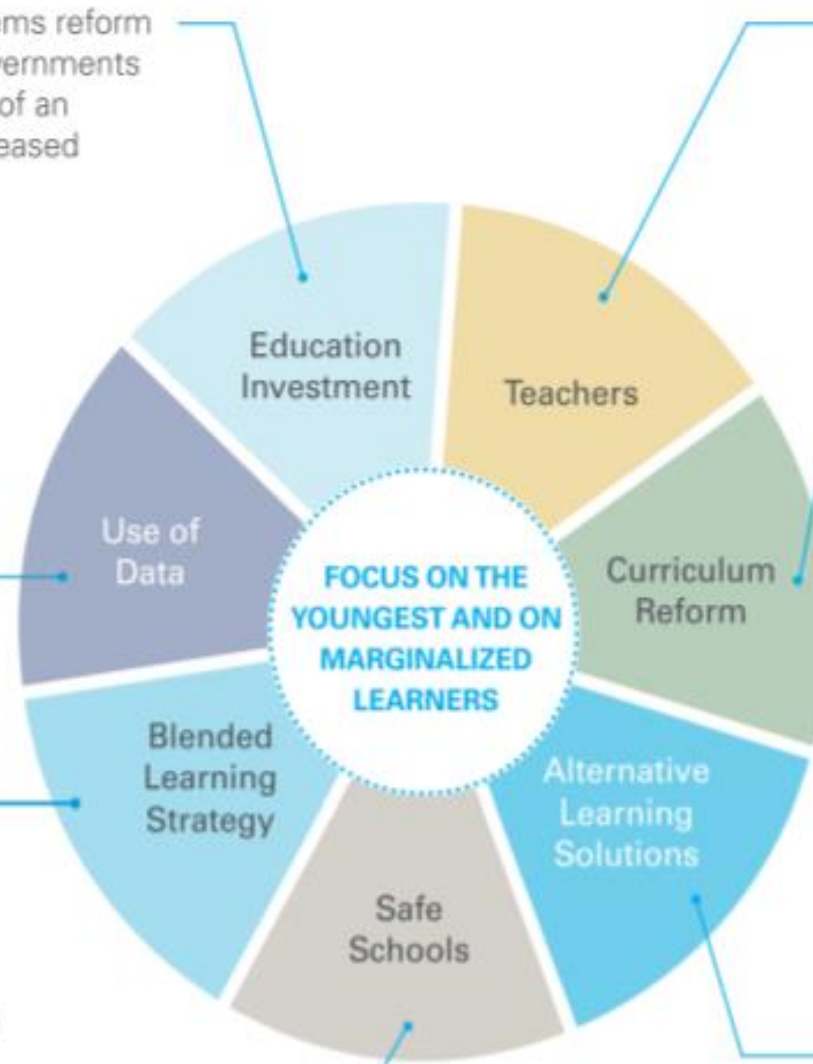
Increasing Resilience and Building Back Better

This new vision requires substantial systems reform and increased financial investment by governments and development partners or run the risk of an increasing digital divide and potential increased levels of poverty and unrest.

Monitoring, evaluation, assessment and data collection and use, were found to be particularly in need of strengthening so that there is more information about learning gains and where initiatives have not had significant impact in order to vary plans and approaches.

Introduce blended learning approaches for flexible learning but recognize that technology is not the whole solution.

Develop learning strategies which recognize how to make schools safe places where well-being is prioritized and safeguarded. Provide for those who may not for various reasons return to the classroom.



Investment in building skills and capacity for teachers and learning supporters.

Revised curricula would feature deeper knowledge of fewer things, encouraging independent learning, a concentration on foundational skills, awareness of climate change issues, gender sensitive materials etc., using both what is taught in the classroom and what is augmented through other media and contexts.

Local knowledge and experience are critical to reach all children in the most appropriate way; the best solutions have taken place at the local level. Blended learning offers opportunities for flexible learning locations.

unicef 

for every child

Thank you



Annex

Ensuring Continuity of Learning During School Closures

TRAINING PACKAGE

Teachers/Parents/ Learners

ICT Skills
Online safety


Teachers

Teaching with low &
high tech
MHPSS
Assessment
Teaching at the right level

LEARNING PACKAGE



→ Self-learning + Teacher guided ←


 Learning Kits,
Reading/Textbooks

 Calls, SMS

Free phone
credit

Feedback loop: Assign -> Submit
-> Correct -> Reflect


 Broadcast
Programmes

 Messaging Apps &
Digital Platforms

Free access
to online
educational
resources

MONITORING

Monitor
(schools, teachers, students)
and adjust

EMIS & SMIS
(Education & School
Management Info System)

Communications

Adapted
Curriculum