The deepening learning crisis

Even before the pandemic, children were not learning enough

Skills of Grade 3 students
- only 30% can read and understand simple texts
- just 18% show mastery over simple numeracy tasks

In almost all the countries analyzed, girls outperform boys in foundational reading.

There is little difference by sex when it comes to foundational numeracy.

The pace of learning is too slow
- For 70% of schoolchildren to gain the skills they should have grasped in 2 years of primary school, it would take: 7 YEARS reading skills, 11 YEARS numeracy skills.

Certain groups of children are less likely to have foundational learning skills

- Children from the poorest families (by wealth quintile): 22-percentage point gap in reading skills between the poorest and the wealthiest students
- Children with disabilities: 20% less likely to grasp the basics of reading as children without disabilities
- Children engaged in child labour who don’t attend school: have about half the rate of foundational reading as children who go to school and are not engaged in child labour

A year of school closures due to the pandemic has worsened the learning crisis

According to estimates, the share of children with foundational reading skills will drop by 68% after just one year of being out of school.

Younger children could lose out the most:
- If nothing is done, only half of today’s Grade 1 students will have foundational reading skills by the time they get to Grade 9.

LOOKING AHEAD

With the right strategies, learning loss from the pandemic can be recouped

With teaching at the right level over the long term, the negative impacts due to COVID-19 on education can be fully recovered.