EVENT | The False Dichotomy between More & More Effective Public Spending on Education: Lessons from Country Experiences

Global school closures following the COVID-19 pandemic have led to massive learning losses, which have pushed the level of learning poverty to an estimated 70 percent. As a result, many countries in the world now face substantial additional costs associated with remediating learning losses and building back better and more resilient education systems that can deliver more learning for all children.

Despite this, many low-income countries and lower-middle income countries that meet common international benchmarks on education spending (such as 4-6% of GDP or 15-20% of public budgets) still spend very little per school-age child due to their small government budgets and large young populations. A third of lower-middle-income countries and half of upper-middle-income countries spent less per capita on education in 2019-2020 than in 2014-2015.

Countries need to develop longer term financing strategies on how to mobilize more domestic and external resources and rally national actors around a social contract that ensures equitable, effective, and sustainable education financing. However, additional education spending does not automatically improve learning outcomes. In most low and middle-income countries, increases in both the level and efficiency of education spending are needed to accelerate learning.

Overcoming the false dichotomy between more—and more effective—education spending is essential to ensure the efficiency and the equity of education spending.
NEW BROCHURE | Ending Learning Poverty and Building Skills: Investing in Education from Early Childhood to Lifelong Learning

The World Bank is the largest external financier of education in the developing world. We support education programs in more than 90 countries and are committed to helping countries increase access to quality education at all levels, reduce Learning Poverty, and develop skills, by putting in place education systems that ensure opportunities for all.
NEW FLYER | Delivering Education in the Midst of Fragility, Conflict, and Violence (FCV)

Today only 2.6% of humanitarian aid goes to education. Yet the children most in need of a good education are also at greatest risk of having their learning disrupted, whether by conflict, violence, pandemics, climate, or other crises. The World Bank, through technical assistance, loans, and grants, works in collaboration with humanitarian actors and other stakeholders to minimize these disruptions and advance education in fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) settings. Ensuring a safe environment for children to learn is more than a mission for the World Bank. It is an urgent imperative. In large part, the success of our FCV Strategy is predicated on education.
World Bank Education and COVID-19 Response

The World Bank’s education team is working to support countries as they manage and cope with the crisis today, and is advising on remote learning at-scale in the immediate to short-term, as well as supporting operations to facilitate learning after the pandemic is over. The Bank is also providing ongoing support to systemic education reform to ensure that with children back at school, schools can provide the necessary environments to ensure children learn.
World Bank Education and COVID-19 (coronavirus) Response

Upcoming Events

- **May 7-10** | [Education World Forum](#) (EWF)
- **May 9** | Report Launch: Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel's (GEEAP) "Cost Effective Approaches to Improve Global Learning" report launch – co-hosted by the World Bank, UNICEF, UK-FCDO, and USAID
- **May 10** | Event: [The World Bank Listens](#) (part of the Teacher Tech Summit)
- **May 22 – 23** | Event: "Learning to Read: A Path to Improving Arabic Literacy in MENA" – Regional conference on Advancing Arabic Literacy in MENA (Dubai, UAE)
- **May 28** | [Menstrual Hygiene (MH) Day](#)
- **June 20** | [World Refugee Day](#)
- **June 22 – 23** | Event: "Summit for a New Financial Pact" on climate and development to be convened by President Emmanuel Macron in Paris, France
Preparing girls for the future of Africa: Approaches to empowerment through digital skills

Akalisa is a 19-year-old student at a teacher training college in Rwanda. During the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns, Akalisa struggled to access the online lesson materials even when she borrowed her neighbor’s smartphone. Now that she is about to enter the job market, she needs to register online, get a job, and pay for her teacher certification fee using mobile money. Akalisa is anxious that she is losing out on opportunities and will be left behind, especially by her male friends who access and use digital media more easily than her.

MARIA BARRON, ALEX TWINOMUGISHA, HUMA KIDWAI, EKUA NUAMA BENTIL | APRIL 27, 2023

Empowering educators and learners: Insights and strategies from the EdTech Readiness Index

The EdTech Readiness Index (ETRI) was created to monitor and support education and technology (EdTech) policies and practices globally. The World Bank, with support from Imaginable Futures, created the ETRI to enable countries to identify good practices and areas where EdTech policies can be strengthened, and monitor progress made by governments in this field.

CRISTÓBAL COBO, MARIE-HELENE CLOUTIER, MARJORIE CHINEN, EMMA LAMBERT-PORTER | APRIL 26, 2023
Improving education in Edo state, Nigeria: Time to focus on learning and sustainability

Since 2018, the government of Nigeria has shown strong commitment to improve education outcomes and has been implementing a series of reforms under the label of “EdoBEST,” aiming to improve teaching and learning practices in Edo state. “The reforms in the education sector have been critical for our children. They are now learning how to read much faster. Stopping these reforms would mean killing education,” says Obebo, a community leader and parent of a primary school student in a rural school in Edo State.

JAIME SAAVEDRA, MARTÍN E. DE SIMONE | APRIL 25, 2023
READ BLOG

School closures and longer-term implications of COVID-19 for inter-generational mobility

In our new paper, we attempt to quantify potential long-run welfare effects of worldwide school closures by simulating their impact on inter-generational mobility. By mapping the estimates of losses in learning-adjusted years of schooling (LAYS) from the latest World Bank learning losses simulations onto estimates of inter-generational mobility in education, we find that, in the absence of remedial measures, learning losses are likely to significantly reduce intergenerational mobility in a wide range of countries.

JOÃO PEDRO AZEVEDO, ALEXANDRU COJOCARU, VERONICA MONTALVA, AMBAR NARAYAN | APRIL 20, 2023
READ BLOG
Why hasn’t the pandemic sparked more concern for learning losses in Latin America? The perils of an invisible crisis

There is now overwhelming evidence that children’s learning plummeted during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in Latin America. Surprisingly, we found that there has been little public outcry in the region for school systems to act on learning recovery compared to the rest of the world.

JOÃO PEDRO AZEVEDO, GABRIEL DEMOMBYNES, YI NING WONG | APRIL 20, 2023

Accelerating learning recovery for all in Romania

Growing disparities between urban and rural areas are creating a “tale of two Romanias”: one Romania is urban, dynamic, and increasingly globally connected; the other is rural, poor, and isolated. These inequalities are most evident in education: students in rural areas, where 70% of Romanians in poverty live, are more than five times more likely to leave school early than their city-dwelling peers, according to Eurostat.

ALINA SAVA, GALLINA ANDRONOVA VINELETTE, RITA ALMEIDA | APRIL 20, 2023
In Pakistan, Quality Education Requires A Different Approach—and More Investment

Our recent Human Capital Review highlights that quality education for all children in Pakistan will require a different approach and substantial financial efforts, estimated to be 5.4 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Low public spending on education limits Pakistan's citizens from more actively participating in economic & social activities. There are actions Pakistan can take to change the trajectory.

JUAN BARON, MAY BEND | APRIL 19, 2023

Educating girls is key if we want a future of equality

As a Congolese woman and civil engineer, I’ve had to shatter the gender stereotypes surrounding my line of work. Thanks to my education I was able to pursue my passion for construction even though I’d been told time and again there was no work for women in the technical fields. So, how do we tackle this problem?

OLIVIER MAX ZOUMENOU, EXAUCÉE WONGA | APRIL 06, 2023

See Education for Global Development for all blogs posted by the Education Global Practice.

Podcasts

Building and Sustaining National ICT Education Agencies: Lessons from Korea (KERIS)
Apple | Spotify | Apr. 21 - Word Bank EduTech Podcast
Measuring EdTech Readiness: A conversation about the EdTech Readiness Index
Apple | Spotify | Mar. 24 - Word Bank EduTech Podcast

Discussing the Most Common and Challenging EdTech Questions for 2023
Apple | Spotify | Feb. 17 - Word Bank EduTech Podcast

TOP TWEETS (April 2023)

@WorldBank EVENT | “Effective Public Spending on #Education: Lesson from Country Experiences”

@JaimeSaavedra22 explaining major financing challenges & actions to mobilize/use more resources for education more effectively & equitably.

#ReshapingDevelopment #EndLearningPoverty

Mamta Murthi and 9 others
What Do We Know About the Adequacy of Education Financing Before COVID-19?
DID YOU KNOW?

The Adequacy of education financing refers to whether a country is spending enough to meet its education goals. The two most common indicators used to proxy for the adequacy of a country's (or government's) funding for education are: (i) education spending as a share of GDP; and (ii) education spending as a share of total government expenditure. Commonly cited international benchmarks of education financing adequacy based on those indicators include those agreed in 2015 as part of the Education 2030 Incheon Declaration, which urges countries to allocate at least 4-6 percent of GDP and/or at least 15-20 percent of public expenditure to education, while recognizing the diversity of country contexts.

As shown above in Figure 1, low-income countries (LICs) and lower-middle income countries (LMICs) spend, on average, a higher share of their public budgets on education than do the upper-middle income (UMICs) and high-income countries (HICs). But HICs and UMICs allocate more resources to education as a share of their (larger) economies than do lower-income economies, because in the former group of countries the government sector is larger. Over the two decades before the COVID-19 pandemic, LICs and LMICs increased their allocations to education.

Click [HERE](mailto:pubrights@worldbank.org) to learn more.