A shared conception of literacy:
A continuum that includes both learning to read and reading to learn

- Literacy involves a continuum of learning measured at different proficient levels.
Literacy skills are vastly different within and across countries. Consequently, it is important:

- To offer a \textit{variety of tools} that can target and capture varied skills across population
- To let countries choose the instruments that best fit their needs.
Currently available instruments:

- **PIAAC (OECD):** captures well middle-to-high skills
- **STEP (World Bank):** only covers Literacy skills so might not have sufficient information to report on indicator 4.6.1
- **LAMP (UNESCO):** captures better middle skills so might be suited for low- and middle-income countries
Gaps in literacy data

CURRENTLY, 64 COUNTRIES OUT OF 195 HAVE IMPLEMENTED A DIRECT ASSESSMENT OF ADULT LITERACY SKILLS (33% OF COUNTRIES)

1. **Asia & Pacific**
   - 22 COUNTRIES OUT OF 63 (35%)

2. **Africa**
   - 4 COUNTRIES OUT OF 54 (7%)

3. **Latin America**
   - 7 COUNTRIES OUT OF 32 (22%)

4. **North America & Europe**
   - 31 COUNTRIES OUT OF 46 (67%)

Source: UIL
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Where do the data come from?

INTERNATIONAL ONLY

Three international assessments were carried out: LAMP from UNESCO, STEP from the World Bank and, most often, PIAAC from OECD. STEP does not assess numeracy skills.

NATIONAL ONLY

Bangladesh, Botswana, Lao PDR and Papua New Guinea. The four of them collected data on both literacy and numeracy skills.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

With the exception of Kenya (STEP), all the countries have also participated in PIAAC.
UNESCO Literacy tool

INNOVATIVE SOLUTION:

• assesses skills in reading (prose and documents) and numeracy among nationwide samples of adults (15 or older) in their households.

• provides countries with input for policymaking, and a methodology for sustainable monitoring

Adaptable

• Multilingual tool
• Questions may be added/removed

Flexible

• Devices
• Low connectivity

Sound methodology

• Platform for pre- and post-data collection storage
• Stand alone survey or module
Background questionnaire

What is the language that you first learned in childhood and still understand?

- English
- French
- Arabic
- Other: [Enter text]

What is the highest formal qualification you have?

- Early childhood education
- Primary education
- Lower secondary education
- Upper secondary education
- Post-secondary non-tertiary education
- Short-cycle tertiary education
- Bachelor’s or equivalent
- Master’s or equivalent
- Doctoral or equivalent

During the past month, how often have you ...

- ... written a memo or an official letter to organisation?
  - Daily
  - At least once a week
  - Seldom
  - Never

Challenges and opportunities to measure literacy
High level goals

Only with direct skills assessments and high-quality data will we be able to fully leverage the potential of literacy and numeracy as key drivers for economic prosperity, social inclusion, and sustainable development.

Compare across populations and over time
Requires advance methods to confirm key assumptions

Inform policy and program planning:
Who needs help?
How much help do they need?
What kind of help does each group need?
Thank you

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