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Institute for Statistics

Challenges and opportunities to measure literacy

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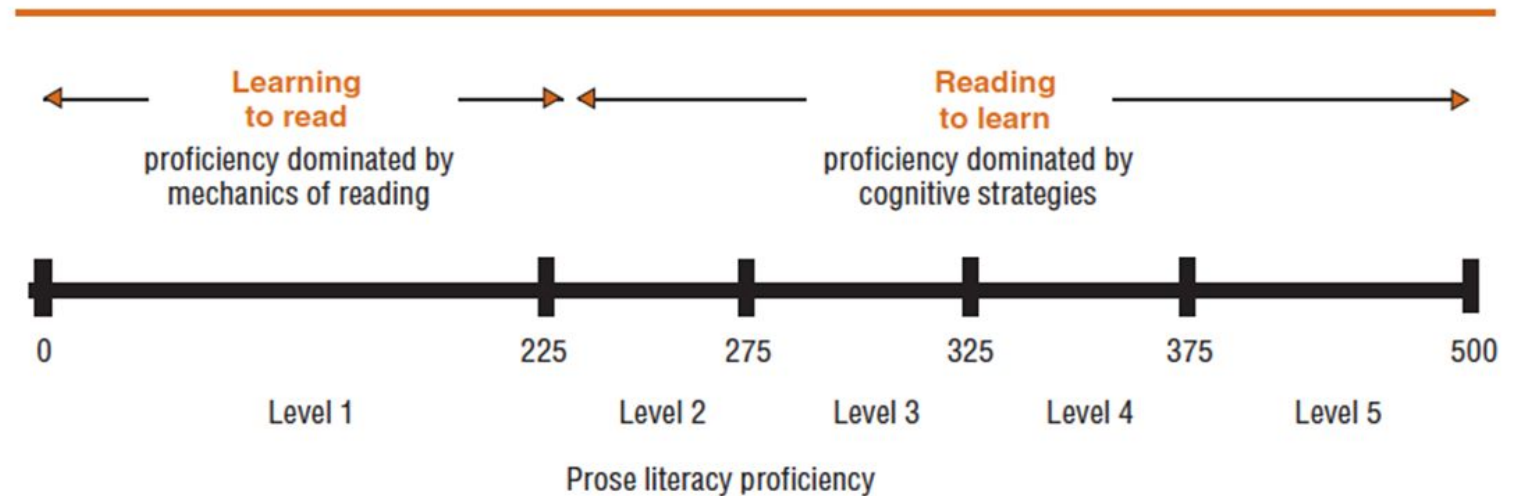
17 June 2022, CONFINTEA VII



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.

The transition from learning to read to reading to learn





Literacy skills are vastly different within and across countries.

Consequently, it is important:

- **To offer a 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:



LITERACY ASSESSMENT AND
MONITORING PROGRAMME (LAMP)

- **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

LITERACY DATA COVERAGE

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 32 (22%)
- 4 North America & Europe**
31 COUNTRIES OUT OF 46 (67%)

4



Source: UIL
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Where do the data come from?

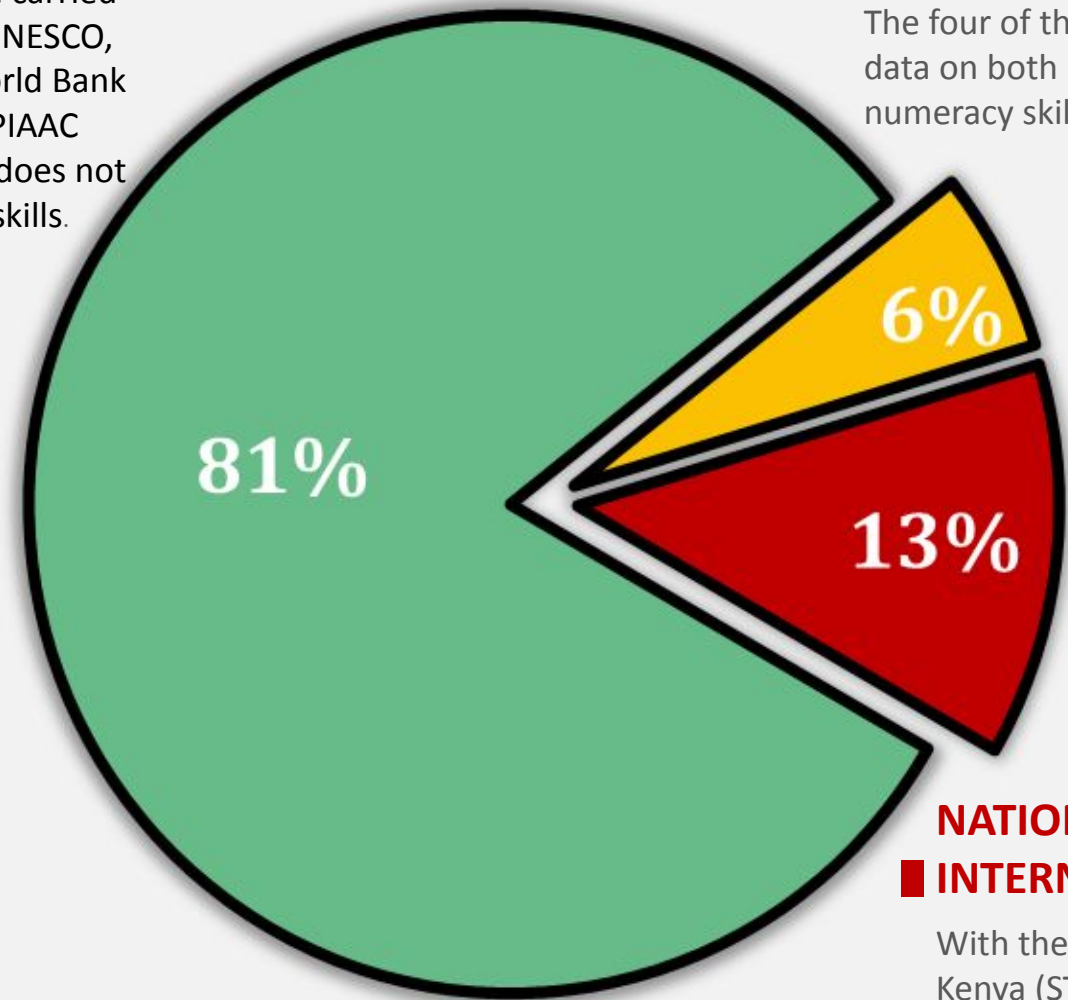
INTERNATIONAL

■ 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 :

Valider

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

Valider

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

Valider

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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