Unit 7: Assessment

Understanding the nature and extent of the learning crisis, and measuring progress in addressing it, requires reliable and valid assessment of learning outcomes. In recent years much progress has been made in terms of extending large-scale internationally comparable assessment exercises to many low- and middle-income countries. Significant improvements to national and local assessment exercises have also been achieved. However, controversy surrounds the question of how to measure progress towards SDG4 and, more broadly, how to measure progress with respect to alleviating the learning crisis. Some examples of the types of assessments and measurements of learning currently available are:

- Large scale international assessments (e.g., PISA and PISA for Development)
- Regional assessments (e.g., PASEC)
- National educational assessments (e.g., NAS India)
- Citizen-led assessments (e.g., ASER)
- Other ‘shorter quicker cheaper’ types of assessments (e.g., used in programme evaluations)
- Broader indicator approaches such as the World Bank’s Human Capital Index

After completing the unit, students should:

- Know and understand the key learning assessments which inform the learning crisis and SDG4;
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of various types of large-scale assessments;
- Understand and be able to evaluate various assessment exercises in terms of their purpose(s) including in relations to any tensions and incoherences which arise from multiple purposes; and
- Be able to discuss the potential role of large-scale assessments in informing education systems reforms.

Lectures

1. Why assess? A brief introduction to the key issues (Newman Burdett, Consultant)
2. The purposes of assessment (Newman Burdett, Consultant)
3. Measuring learning at large scale (Newman Burdett, Consultant)
4. Large scale assessments: How can we get useful data for policy? (Abhijeet Singh, Stockholm School of Economics)
5. Designing learning by assessments for impact evaluations (Abhijeet Singh, Stockholm School of Economics)
Required Readings

  o Blog: https://riseprogramme.org/blog/combatting-cheating-ideas-india-indonesia

Further Readings

- Ward, M. 2018. PISA for development: Results in focus. OECD. https://doi.org/10.1787/22260919
Supplementary Resources
