



# School-age learning assessment tools: Frequently Asked Questions on the Foundational Learning Skills module

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# Frequently Asked Questions: Foundational Learning Skills (FLS) module

1. What for?
2. Where is it administered? To whom?
3. What does it assess? How?
4. Does it work? Is it valid, reliable, fair?
5. Can it help with equity and policy issues?

# What for? To feed into SDG 4.1.1.a

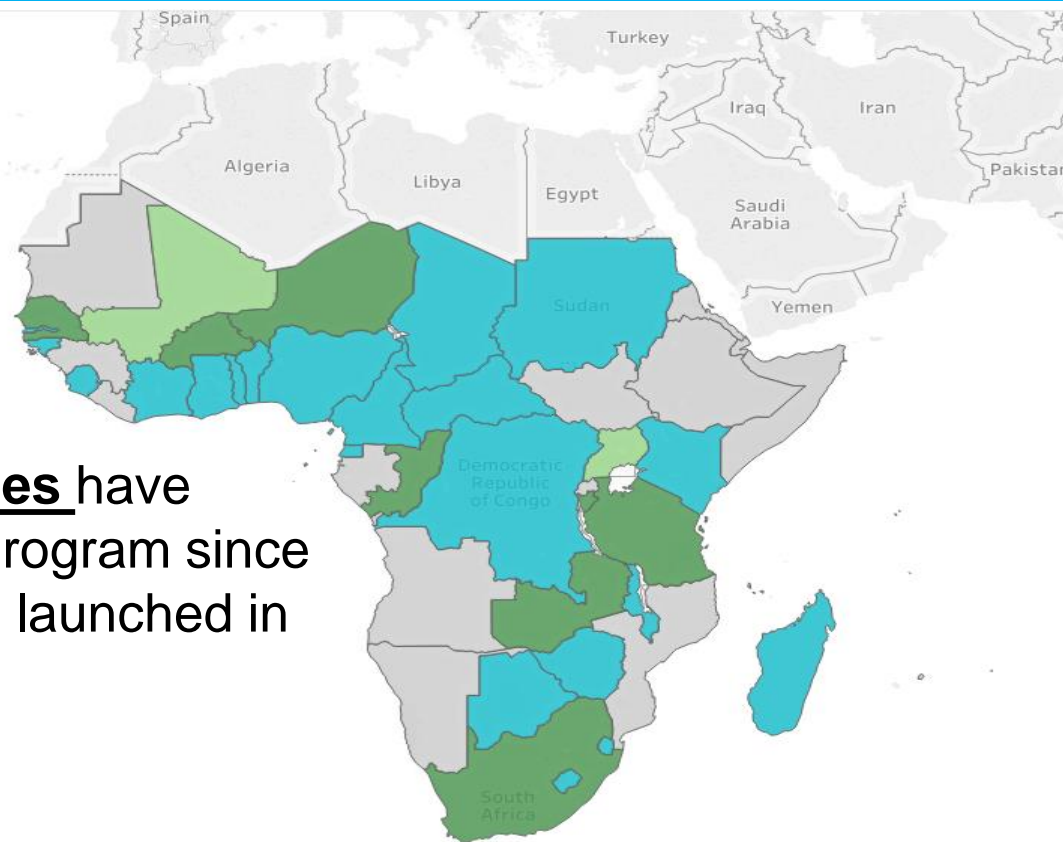
➤ 4.1.1 – Minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics

a) **Early grades: Foundational Learning Skills (MICS, etc.)**

b) End of primary: Regional assessments (SEA PLM)

c) End of lower secondary

# Where? In households all over the world: sub-Saharan Africa... and elsewhere



- So far, **16 countries** have joined the MICS program since the 6th round was launched in 2017

## MICS Countries SSA

### Benin

Central African Republic

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Eswatini

Gambia

Ghana

Guinea-Bissau

Lesotho

Madagascar

Malawi

### Nigeria

Sao Tome and Principe

Sierra Leone

Zimbabwe

Chad

Togo

<https://mics.unicef.org/>

# To whom? One 7-14 year old per household

## How long? 15 minutes

- 1) Parental Participation (in child's learning) – Caregiver
- 2) Foundational Learning skills: 7-14 year old
  - Rapport-building exercise (partially scripted)
  - Learning environment – reading habits, languages at home and in school
  - Foundational reading skills
  - Foundational number skills

# What does it assess?

## Mathematics: Numbers

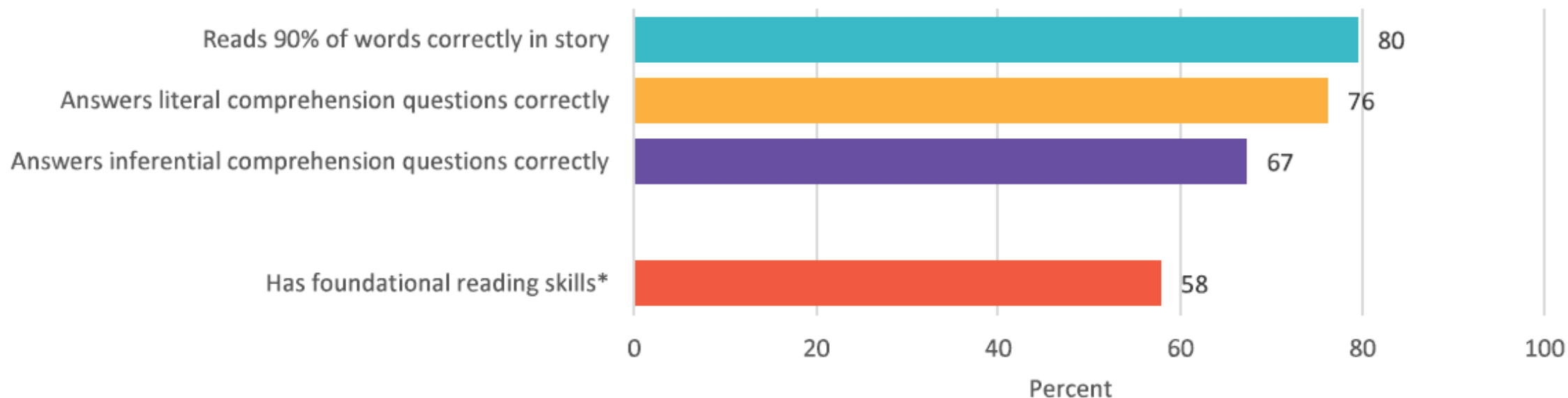
| Task   | Number of items | Last item                    |
|--|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Number reading   | 6               | 731                          |
| Number discrimination                                  | 5               | 146                      154 |
| Addition   | 5               | 12 + 24 =                    |
| Pattern recognition and completion<br>(missing number) | 5               | 5    8    11    ___          |

Out of five classical domains, it currently focuses on Numbers. Geometry and Measurement items should be explored, as well as Data and Algebra, to improve alignment to the Global Proficiency Framework.

# What does it assess?

## Reading: Accuracy and comprehension (Kyrgyzstan)

Foundational Reading Skills: SDG 4.1.1.(a) (i: reading)



\*Percentage of children age 7-14 who can 1) read 90% of words in a story correctly, 2) Answer three literal comprehension questions, 3) Answer two inferential comprehension questions

# Does it work? Is it valid, reliable, fair?

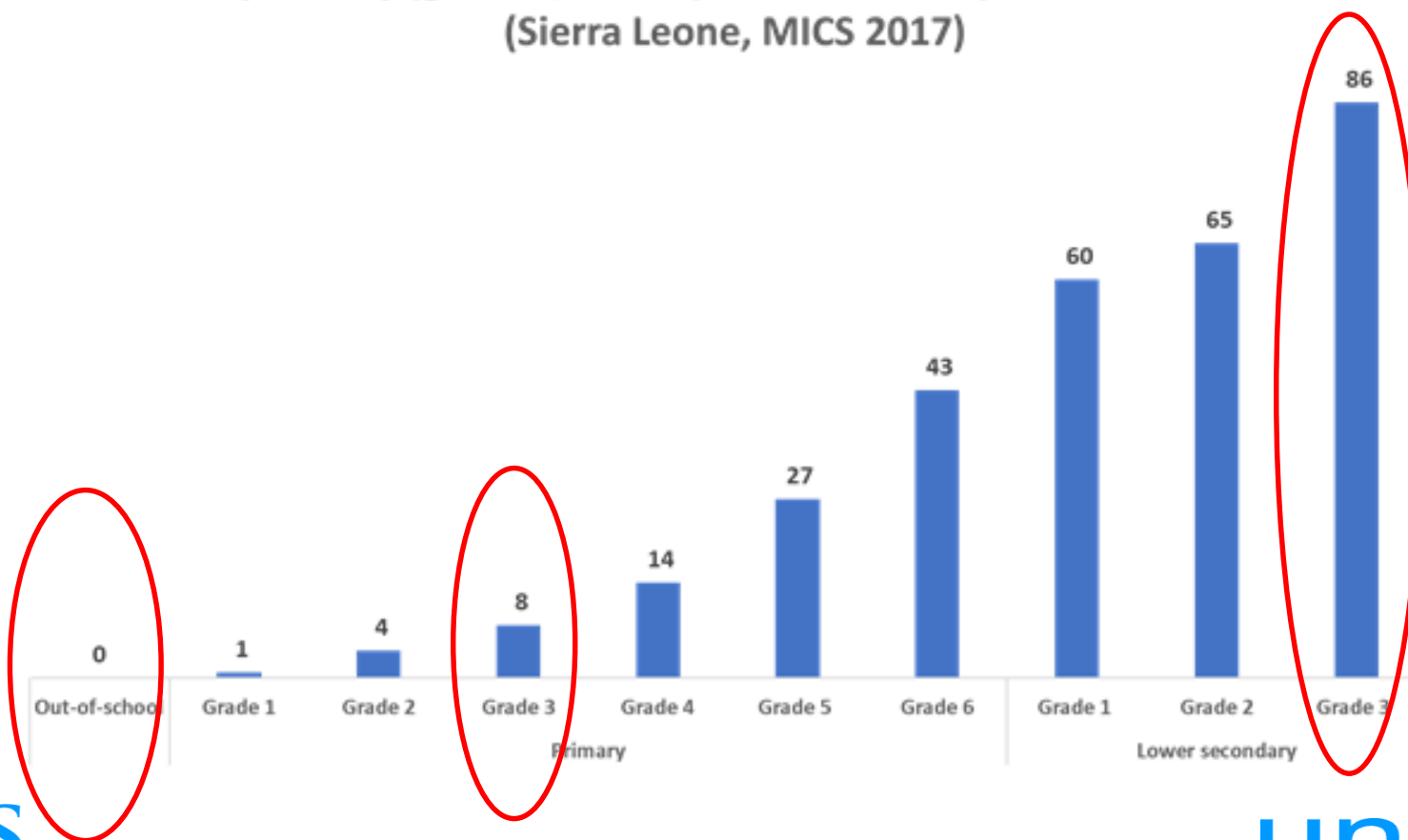
## Reliability (I): Internal Consistence Kenya, 2016

| MICS Foundational Learning Skills Subtests | Number of items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|--|-----------------|------------------|
| Oral Reading Accuracy                      | 43              | .9115            |
| Reading Comprehension                      | 5               | .8269            |
| Foundational mathematical skills           | 21              | .7762            |



# Teach every learner at their level: UNICEF's Foundational Literacy and Numeracy initiative

Percentage of children ages 7-14 who could read a short, simple story (grade 2/3 level) and answer 5 questions about it  
(Sierra Leone, MICS 2017)



# Answers

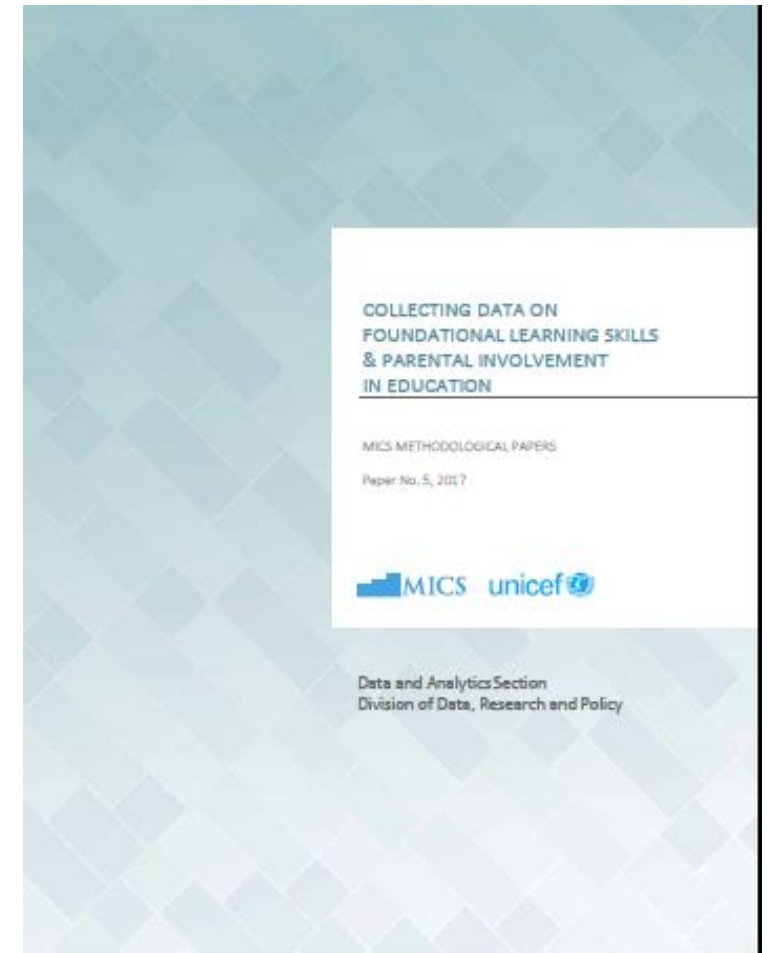
1. What for? SDG 4.1.1.a
2. Where? Households everywhere. To whom? 7-14 year olds
3. What? Reading (accuracy; comprehension); numeracy (numbers)

**Now working with partners to improve alignment to GPF**

4. It works: Valid (concurrently with EGRA/EGMA), reliable, fair (no DIF)
5. It shows the need for more equitable, inclusive policy approaches

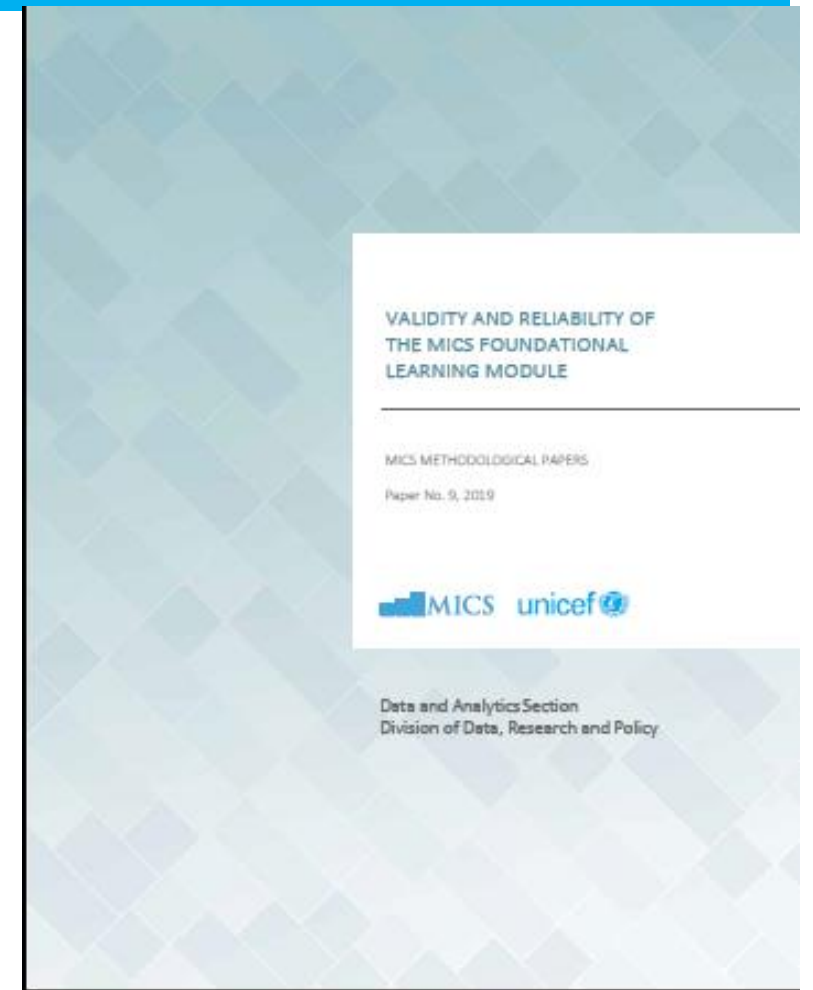
## How was it developed and validated? MICS Methodological Paper No. 5, Collecting data on foundational learning skills & parental involvement in education

- This paper details the process of development and validation of the instruments
- Collaboration funded by the Hewlett Foundation, with inputs from ASER/Uwezo, RTI, Save the Children, GEMR, GPE, UIS, WB
- The paper describes field tests in Belize, Costa Rica, Ghana and Kenya



# MICS Methodological Paper No. 9, 2019, Validity and reliability of the MICS foundational learning module

- Based on a special study on concurrent validity and inter-rater reliability in Kenya in 2016
- Internal consistency is high for reading comprehension, and acceptable for numeracy
- Agreement between scorers is very high, more stringent Inter-Rater Reliability measures are still high
- Concurrent validity with EGRA and EGMA is acceptable





**THANK YOU!**  
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