



# Experience with AMPL: Lesotho

Global Alliance to Monitor Learning

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## Outline

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### Introduction

#### **Articulation of AMPL within the national policy of student assessment including:**

- What is the existing national policy or provisions and goals of student assessments for improving learning?
- How is national policy of student assessments connected between different tools, curriculum and teaching?
- How does AMPL fit with the student assessment policy, provisions and goals?

#### **Experience of administrating/piloting AMPL**

- Operational: Managing AMPL from sample design, items adoption, test administration and data management
- Data analysis and use: Reporting to SDG indicator 4.1.1 indicators and use for national purpose
- Capacity-building: Strengthening institutional and individual capacity building

#### **Challenges, opportunities, and sustainability of national and international assessments**

## Introduction

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- First involvement with AMPL in 2023
- Administered AMPLab at Grade 7, to a sample of 219 schools and around 4818 learners.
- AMPL assesses minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics.
- Administered another round of the Lesotho National Assessment (LNA) at Grade 4 and 6 in the same year.
- LNA assesses learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy
- AMPL displayed low proficiency level among learners in both mathematics and reading (19.7% in math and 10.8% in reading).
- AMPLa (Grade 3) to be implemented later in 2025, alongside LNA (Grades 3&7).

# Articulation of AMPL within the national policy of student assessment

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## Existing national policy, provisions and goals of student assessments for improving learning

The Lesotho national aspirations on learner assessments are mainly outlined in the 2016-2026 Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) and the 2021 Lesotho Basic Education Curriculum Policy (LBCEP). The primary goal of these assessments is to improve learning outcomes and ensure quality education for all learners.

The assessment objectives are as follows:

- 1. Enhancing learning outcomes:** Focus on improving literacy and numeracy, especially at the basic education level, to achieve universal access to quality education.
- 2. Identifying learning gaps:** identify specific areas where learners struggle, enabling targeted interventions for those falling behind.
- 3. Promoting accountability:** ensure that schools and educators meet educational standards, promoting a culture of continuous improvement for better learner performance.

## Articulation of AMPL within the national policy of student assessment Cont.

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- 4. Integration of assessment tools:** encourage the use of diverse assessment methods, including formative assessment, standardized tests, national examinations and national assessment surveys, for a comprehensive view of learner progress.
- 5. Data-driven decision making:** utilize assessment results to inform policy, resource allocation and curriculum development, ensuring strategies that effectively address learner needs.
- 6. Capacity building:** train teachers and school administrators in effective assessment practices, enhancing their ability to use assessment data to improve teaching and learning outcomes.

# Articulation of AMPL within the national policy of student assessment Cont.

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## Connection between national policy on learner assessments and different tools, curriculum and teaching

- 1. Integration of assessment tools:** the national policy encourages the use of various assessment tools to provide a comprehensive view of learning progress.
- 2. Curriculum alignment:** the policy encourages ensuring that assessments are aligned with the national curriculum to ensure that what is taught in the classroom is consistent with educational objectives. (LBECP, 2021)

## Articulation of AMPL within the national policy of student assessment

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### How AMPL fits with the student assessment policy, provisions and goals

- 1. Alignment with national goals:** AMPL measures minimum proficiency levels in literacy and numeracy, which is in line with national educational quality goals.
- 2. Complementing existing assessments:** AMPL has been administered alongside other national assessments (AMPLab in 2023 and AMPLa in 2025), providing additional data to better understand learner performance across demographics and also providing a chance for comparison with sister countries.
- 3. Capacity building:** implementing AMPL helps boost the capacity of educational systems in conducting large-scale assessments, thus supporting ongoing monitoring and improvement in education.

## Experience of administering/piloting AMPL

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**Operational: Managing AMPL from sample design, items adoption, test administration and data management**

**Current stage:** preparations for the 2025 round of AMPL administration

- Sample design: ongoing, with sampling forms submitted to ACER. Active discussions between the National Centre team and ACER experts in the facilitation of the design process.
- Adaptations of contextual instruments and manuals successfully completed.
- Test administration: timelines established for the upcoming administration, scheduled for May.
- Adaptation of cognitive instruments scheduled for the week of 17/02/25.
- Data management: plans under way for acquiring grade 3 enrolment data once school sampling has been finalized.



## Experience of administrating/piloting AMPL Cont.

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### **Data analysis and use: Reporting to SDG indicator 4.1.1 indicators and use for national purpose**

- Following the 2023 administration of AMPLab at Grade 7, the findings of the assessment were disseminated to a wide range of stakeholders, including the ministry senior management, district education managers and their staff, school principals and teachers, etc.
- This was done with the aim of sharing knowledge to encourage a united front in addressing the identified challenges of low proficiency levels in both reading and mathematics.
- Request for the NC team to be capacitated on data analysis to be able to analyse effectively in future national assessments.

## Experience of administrating/piloting AMPL Cont.

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### Capacity-building: Strengthening institutional and individual capacity building

#### 1. Strengthening institutional capacity

- The UIS has facilitated procurement of 13 computers for the national centre
- These resources will enhance data management for AMPL and improve overall organizational capacity for future national assessments.

#### 2. Enhancing individual capacity

- UIS, through ACER has supported the development of Grades 3 and 7 national assessment instruments for 2025 and beyond.
- ACER experts have provided constructive feedback for improvement of the draft instruments to ensure alignment with international standards.
- The feedback process has strengthened test item development skills among national centre staff and collaborating teachers.
- The teachers involved in the process are empowered to transfer the newly acquired skills to colleagues, promoting a continuous improvement in assessment processes.

# Challenges, opportunities, and sustainability of national and international assessments

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## Opportunities

- **Data-Driven policy and decision making:** Both national and international assessments can inform policy decisions and improved classroom practices.
- **Global Collaboration:** International assessments provide opportunities for sharing of best practices and benchmarks through engagements with colleagues from other countries and experts in the field of assessment.
- **Technology Integration:** though the use of innovative assessment tools, engagement and accessibility is enhanced, e.g. ACER data management tools which enable faster and more efficient management of assessment processes, e.g. sampling. National assessment has also benefited from this, whereas in the past sampling was done manually.

# Challenges, opportunities, and sustainability of national and international assessments

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## Sustainability

- **Long-term commitment:** there is a need for sustained investment in assessment systems to ensure consistent provision of data on children's learning.
- **Adaptability:** Assessments must evolve to reflect changing educational landscapes and learner needs
- **Stakeholder engagement:** it is crucial to involve a wide range of stakeholders, e.g. teachers, policymakers and communities to ensure that assessments remain relevant and effective in informing improvement in learning.

# Challenges, opportunities, and sustainability of national and international assessments

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## Challenges

- **Lack of funding sustainability:** The Lesotho national assessment program struggles with fluctuating funding, which has resulted in inconsistent data provision.
- **Effective utilization of assessment data:** the extent to which assessment data (both national and international) are used to effectively inform and improve educational policies in Lesotho has not be established, despite efforts to disseminate findings as broadly as possible.
- **Improvement in curriculum standards:** ensuring that assessments accurately support curriculum standards is also not determined.

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