



KASHISH DAS SHRESTHA FOR USAID

RETURNING TO LEARNING DURING CRISES: DECISION-MAKING AND PLANNING TOOLS FOR EDUCATION LEADERS

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SUMMARY

This toolkit is for USAID Mission staff and their partner national and local education officials, implementing partners, administrators of education institutions, and educators. It helps education planners plan and make key decisions on the return to learning during and after education disruptions caused by crises, such as COVID-19, in a way that is equitable, inclusive, and builds the resilience of education systems.

CROSS-CUTTING CONSIDERATIONS

- Promote equity and inclusion.
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of learners, educators, and school personnel.
- Actively communicate, consult, and collaborate with educators, communities, and other stakeholders.
- Plan to monitor, evaluate, and learn.
- Revisit policy and funding to benefit all learners.
- Plan for resilience.

[Tool 0.1: Equity and Inclusion Self-Assessment](#)

[Tool 0.2: Action Planning for Resilience](#)

PRIORITY 1: (RE)ENGAGE ALL LEARNERS, ESPECIALLY THE MOST MARGINALIZED

- ✓ Conduct rapid assessments (either through existing data or primary data collection) to identify marginalized groups.
- ✓ Collaborate with communities to (re)engage all learners.
- ✓ Ensure education information and monitoring systems are functioning and capable of tracking (re)enrollment of all learners, especially marginalized populations, in real time.
- ✓ Promote alternative pathways back to education.
- ✓ Address policy barriers that exclude some learners from returning to education.

[Tool 1.1: Identifying Barriers and Strategies to \(Re\)engage the Most Marginalized Learners](#)

[Tool 1.2: Monitoring \(Re\)Enrollment, Especially of the Most Marginalized Learners](#)

PRIORITY 2: DEVELOP EDUCATION REOPENING PLANS

- ✓ Involve learners, educators, parents, and communities in decision-making.
- ✓ Develop an education reopening plan, including safe operations guidance.
- ✓ Develop an outbreak response plan at the school level.
- ✓ Communicate clearly and consistently.
- ✓ Monitor the situation regularly.

PRIORITY 3: ADAPT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME, CURRICULA, AND LEARNING SUPPORTS

- ✓ Understand the range of options for helping learners catch up.
- ✓ Revise the academic calendar and schedule.
- ✓ Adapt (or condense) the curriculum and teaching and learning materials.
- ✓ Identify learners' social-emotional, protection, and academic needs.
- ✓ Consider where distance learning should continue.
- ✓ Mobilize financial and human resources for planning for catch-up programming.

Tool 3.1: Revising the Academic Calendar

Tool 3.2: Revising the Daily/Weekly Academic Schedule

Tool 3.3: Planning for Accelerating Learning and Catching Up

Tool 3.4: Identifying and Addressing Learners' Protection, Mental Health, and Psychosocial Needs

PRIORITY 4: MODIFY EXAMS AND LEARNER PROMOTION PRACTICES

- ✓ Identify how exams have been affected by the crisis.
- ✓ Identify which exams are a priority.
- ✓ Develop a learner promotion strategy.
- ✓ Communicate with learners, families, and educators.
- ✓ Ensure that monitoring systems to track access to exams and pass rates are in place.
- ✓ Mobilize resources needed to implement adapted exams.

Tool 4.1: Decision-Making for High-Stakes Examinations

Tool 4.2: Decision-Making for Learner Promotion

PRIORITY 5: RE-ENGAGE EDUCATORS AND PREPARE THE LEARNING SPACE

- ✓ Revisit workforce needs.
- ✓ Address educator capacity development needs.
- ✓ Develop or revise policy to meet education workforce needs.
- ✓ Assess the need for repairs and creation of new learning spaces, additional furniture and materials, disinfection of learning spaces, and signage and floor markings.
- ✓ Mobilize financial resources to fill gaps.

Tool 5.1: Identifying and Addressing Educator Needs

Tool 5.2: Adapting the Learning Space

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ACRONYMS

AEP	Accelerated Education Program
AEWG	Accelerated Education Working Group
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
PSS	Psychosocial Support
SEL	Social-Emotional Learning
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

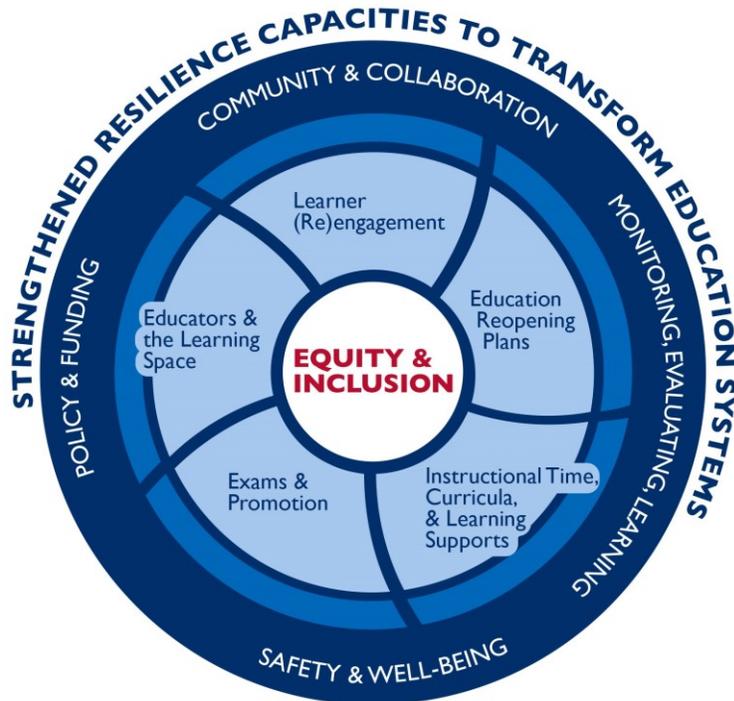
INTRODUCTION: A GLOBAL EDUCATION CHALLENGE

The COVID-19 pandemic presents an unprecedented global challenge. In early April 2020, approximately 1.6 billion learners, from pre-primary through higher education, were affected by school closures in at least 194 countries—91.3 percent of the world’s enrolled students.¹ Since then, countries have begun reopening education institutions.

Crisis situations such as conflict, natural disasters, or health epidemics, like COVID-19, regularly force education institutions to close, albeit usually on a more localized level than the current pandemic. Despite educators’ best efforts to sustain learning and routines through distance education during crises, many learners experience extreme hardships, creating new barriers to access and learning.

When learners return to learning—either in-person, at a distance, or both—many will have been out of education or training for several months. To respond to this disruption, it is critical to re-engage learners, including those who dropped out as a result of extended school closures and those who were out of school prior to the crisis. Education planners, partners, and leaders are also encouraged to leverage this opportunity to address historic educational disparities faced by the most marginalized. Education planners will need to navigate learner progression and adapt instruction so that learners receive essential instructional content. They may implement catch-up programs and continue distance learning as part of efforts to get back on track.² This will be done alongside new health and safety measures, while ensuring the psychosocial wellbeing of learners and educators.

Figure 1: Return to Learning Framework



A FRAMEWORK FOR THE RETURN TO LEARNING

The [USAID Brief for the Return to Learning during COVID-19](#) proposes a framework for planning the return to learning. Placing equity and inclusion at the center of all elements of the return to learning, this framework (Figure 1) outlines cross-cutting considerations and priority areas with specific action points for education planners. This toolkit builds on the framework by providing 12 tools that education planners can use to collaboratively plan for the return to learning during and after closures of education institutions.

¹ “UNESCO’s support: Educational response to COVID-19,” UNESCO, accessed May 12, 2020, <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/support>. Figures represent country-wide closures.

² For definitions, see Box 8 on page 16.

TRANSFORMING SYSTEMS IN THE RETURN TO LEARNING

Crisis situations present an opportunity to build individual, school, and community resilience and transform education systems. Education systems make changes, and education providers deploy creative and innovative strategies to quickly absorb and adapt to the crisis. For example, when COVID-19 hit, education institutions closed to protect learners and educators and mitigate the impacts of the pandemic. Soon after, many education systems deployed distance learning options to ensure continuity of learning.

It is also important to consider how short-term responses can contribute to building transformative resilience capacities both during and after a crisis. In other words, distance learning, alternative education opportunities, and other education innovations should continue to be developed, tested, adapted, and scaled in order for the education system to better respond during future crises. Box 1 provides USAID's definition of resilience in education settings.



DEFINITION

BOX 1: USAID DEFINITIONS OF RESILIENCE IN EDUCATION

Resilience capacities are the "assets, skills, knowledge, resources, and networks that are used to anticipate and deal with the consequences of shocks or stressors in a way that reduces their overall impacts." There are three forms of resilience capacities:

- **Absorptive:** The ability of individuals, households, communities, or institutions to minimize exposure and sensitivity to shocks and stressors through preventative measures and appropriate coping strategies to avoid permanent, negative impacts
- **Adaptive:** The ability of individuals, households, communities, or institutions to make informed choices and changes in livelihood and other strategies in response to longer-term social, economic, and environmental change
- **Transformative:** The ability of communities and institutions to establish an enabling environment for systemic change through their governance mechanisms, policies and regulations, cultural and gender norms, community networks, and formal and informal social protection mechanisms

Source: Dr. Ritesh Shah, *Transforming Systems in Times of Adversity: Education and Resilience* (USAID, 2019), <https://www.eccnetwork.net/resources/transforming-systems-times-adversity-education-and-resilience-white-paper>.

Building transformative resilience capacities will help to increase access to, availability of, and quality of a range of education options for all learners, including the most marginalized and those who were out of school prior to the crisis. It also helps to ensure education authorities, communities, and educators are better able to respond to future shocks and stressors. As a result, more resilient education systems are able to sustain and expand learning outcomes for all learners in the face of adversity. Tools in this toolkit should be used to simultaneously support immediate planning for the return to learning as well as transform education systems and strengthen resilience in the long term.

PARTNERING FOR THE RETURN TO LEARNING

Responding to COVID-19 and other crises means adapting education provision to promote recovery and build resilience. USAID staff should continue to work with local education and public health leaders, technical and financial partners, educators, and community members to support the development and implementation of back-to-school plans. Plans will include decisions about: 1) when/how to reopen education institutions; 2) health and safety measures and outbreak response planning; and 3) how to resume learning in person, at a distance, or through a hybrid model.



Planning for the return to learning is an essential component of reopening schools. It also is an opportune time to reflect on education policies and practices in context, enhance collaboration with partners, engage individuals whose voices are typically marginalized in education spaces, and build trust with local communities.

Tips for building resilience capacities are marked by the above icon throughout this toolkit.

This toolkit focuses on the third component—the return to learning—and helps users to collaboratively make decisions and identify action steps around the five priorities for returning to learning identified in the Return to Learning Brief.

In using this toolkit, education planners should:

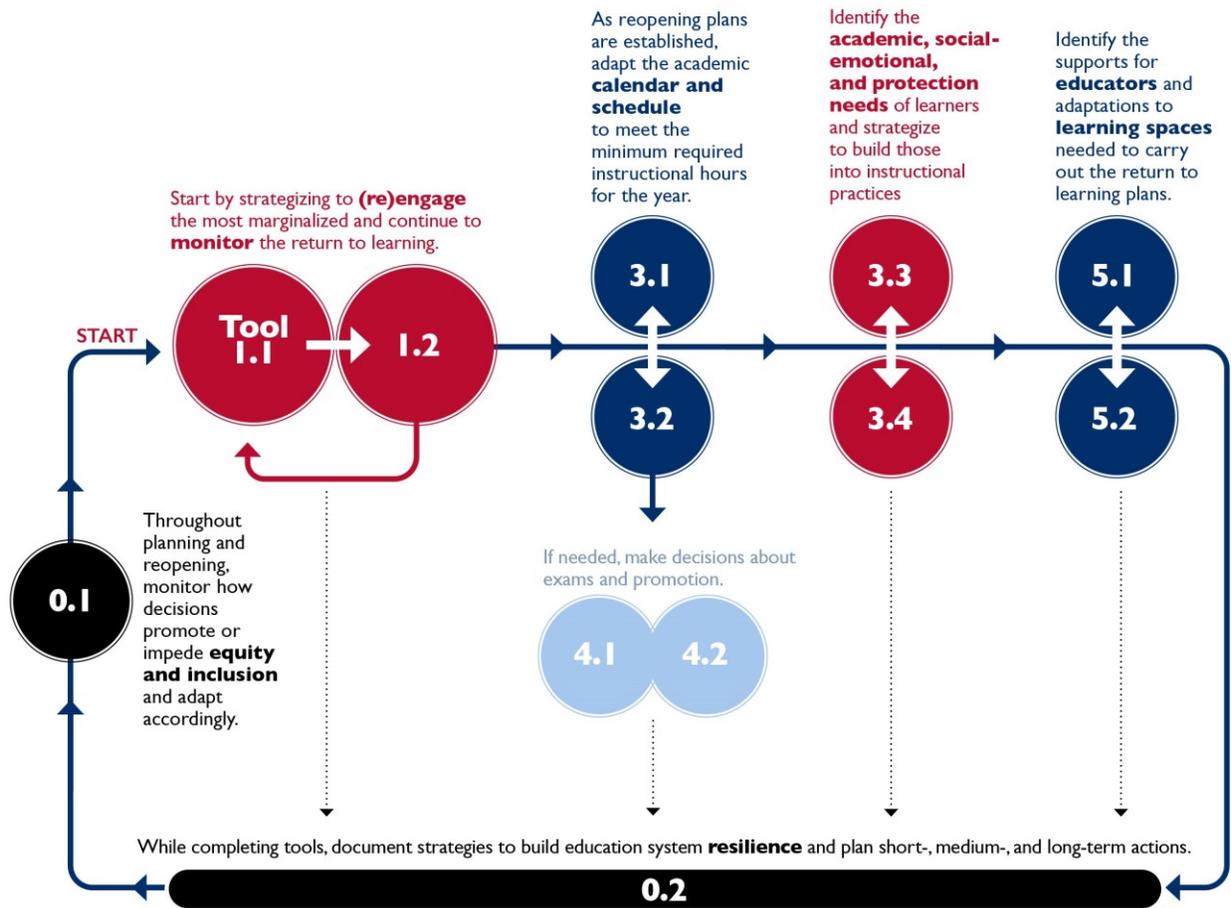
- **Start planning early** so that the return to learning during and after a crisis ensures equitable access to high-quality education for all learners.
- **Regularly update back-to-school plans** as new information about the crisis emerges and local and global policies, guidance, and practices are developed.
- **Build on existing resources, policies, and practices** where possible.
- Ensure all interventions are **safe, equitable, and inclusive**.
- **Link short- and medium-term interventions to long-term goals and priorities** to strengthen the resilience of the education systems.

These tools will not define what to do, but rather assist in prioritizing and planning for the return to learning in a specific context. In order to complete these tools, USAID education programs should support national and/or district education authorities to consult and actively engage relevant stakeholders, including local education and public health officials, educators, learners, families, and communities. A highly consultative process will ensure reopening plans are relevant and responsive to diverse needs and build trust in education authorities, which is critical for successful implementation.

A ROAD MAP FOR COMPLETING THE TOOLS

Figure 2 provides a suggested “road map” for completing the tools. Some of the tools may need to be completed before others, while some may need to be completed simultaneously. Education planners should use and adapt the tools in a way that makes sense for the local context and needs.

Figure 2: Road Map for Completing the Return to Learning Tools



Education response planning during a crisis requires iteration and adaptation. These tools should be used and revisited at several points before, during, and after reopening to ensure responsiveness to the changing context, alignment of policy and practice to local needs, and coherence across the entire response. Moreover, USAID encourages education planners to apply scenario-based planning by completing the tools for different possible reopening scenarios, ranging from best case to worst case. This will allow education planners to account for the unpredictability typical of a crisis situation and to strengthen the preparedness and resilience of systems. Each of the tools is designed for virtual collaboration across education stakeholders; however, you may choose to print the toolkit and work on paper. Finally, all tools can be used across the education continuum, from pre-primary to higher education, in both formal and non-formal education spaces.

CROSS-CUTTING CONSIDERATIONS

- **Promote equity and inclusion** across all investments in the return to learning in order to reach marginalized and vulnerable populations throughout all levels of education as required by [USAID’s Education Policy](#). By leveraging the current crisis to redress and reform inequitable and exclusionary policies or practices, education systems will be more inclusive and resilient to future shocks and stressors, sustaining learning outcomes for all. This may also require tailored, targeted, and innovative approaches to ensure resources and education services are reaching the most marginalized both in the immediate return to learning and in the future.

Use [Tool 0.1: Equity and Inclusion Self-Assessment](#) to reflect on and adapt reopening plans during and after reopening to ensure they are equitable and inclusive of all learners.

- **Ensure the safety and wellbeing of learners, educators, and school personnel** by working closely with public health officials and social workers to develop a scenario-based, phased plan for reopening education institutions and utilizing existing [frameworks for reopening schools](#). This will involve implementing health and safety measures in schools, promoting psychosocial wellbeing of learners and educators, and identifying and addressing protection concerns.

- **Actively communicate, consult, and collaborate with educators, communities, and other stakeholders** (e.g., teachers unions and non-state education providers). This is essential so that education actors understand local needs, have buy-in for decisions made, and build trust with communities. Box 2 shows some ways countries have used technology to communicate with communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Education leaders will need to consider how to engage community members, what information to share, and when and how to communicate. To reach all groups, communicate early, often, and through multiple channels (e.g., SMS, radio, TV, social media, and in-person). Actions and resources will need to be coordinated across education stakeholders to ensure an effective and efficient response.



BOX 2: USING TECHNOLOGY TO COMMUNICATE WITH COMMUNITIES DURING COVID-19

In **Jordan**, information on home-based learning solutions during COVID-19 school closures was included in UNHCR’s web-based Support Center for refugees. In **Mexico**, UNHCR shared information on their social media platforms on how to access education services during COVID-19 closures.

Source: UNHCR, “Supporting Continued Access to Education during COVID-19: Emerging Promising Practices,” (April 2020), <https://www.unhcr.org/5ea7eb134.pdf>.

- **Plan to monitor, evaluate, and learn (MEL)** continuously to adapt education interventions according to the latest information and ensure an effective, evidence-based response.³ This includes planning for needs assessment and situation analysis to understand the effects of the crisis on infrastructure and learning environments, educators, learner access and learning

³ Anjali Shivshanker, Elena Walls, Saima Malik, Rebecca Pagel, and Chris Ying, “Guidance for USAID Education Sector Implementing Partners: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic,” (USAID: June 2020), <https://www.edu-links.org/resources/guidance-usaid-education-sector-implementing-partners-monitoring-evaluation-and-learning>.

outcomes, and the outputs and outcomes of the response, allowing education leaders to target those with greatest need. Existing MEL plans may need to be adapted so that monitoring, evaluation, and learning is safe and feasible, given the context.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) [Global Education Cluster](#) has identified [key indicators and questions](#) to assess the impact of COVID-19 on education systems. When monitoring or evaluating response efforts, indicators should be disaggregated by—at a minimum—gender, disability, and displacement status. Additional questions can be added to measure inclusivity, such as “Number of schools with physically accessible classrooms, latrines, and WASH facilities.” Moreover, most of the indicators can be adapted to include higher education.



RESILIENCE TIP

In MEL practices, be sure to strategically plan for moments to pause, analyze data, reflect, and revise reopening plans. Making collaboration, learning, and adaptation an integral part of programming contributes to more responsive, adaptive education systems.

MEL should be conducted in ways that are rapid, feasible, and action-oriented. Existing data (e.g., from education management information systems [EMIS] and household surveys) should be used and supplemented with additional data collection as needed. Education leaders will need to monitor re-enrollment and attendance to ensure an inclusive, equitable return to learning.

- **Revisit policy and funding to benefit all learners.** Policy and funding barriers that intentionally or unintentionally exclude marginalized learners should be revised so that adjustments to the academic calendar, curriculum, teaching, infrastructure, and exams are inclusive and equitable. These barriers can be identified by working with local civil society organizations led by marginalized populations, such as organizations led by individuals with disabilities, women, indigenous populations, LGBT individuals, and youth.
- **Plan for resilience.** Planning the return to learning during and after a crisis should contribute to comprehensive crisis preparedness and response plans to mitigate the impact of future crises. Crises offer an opportunity for identifying strengths and weaknesses in education systems and learning how to overcome barriers to build resilience capacities at the individual, community, institution, or systems level. This requires taking the time to think, actively plan for, and implement short- and medium-term response interventions. These interventions should be layered or sequenced in a way that contributes to long-term, sustainable education outcomes for learners, educators, and the education system at large.

[Tool 0.2: Action Planning for Resilience](#) helps education planners identify and prepare to take concrete next steps to plan the return to learning while transforming education systems in the face of adversity.

PRIORITY I: (RE)ENGAGE ALL LEARNERS, ESPECIALLY THE MOST MARGINALIZED

The impacts of crises are far-reaching, but not all learners are affected in the same way. Education planners need to understand how learners, especially the most marginalized, have been affected, and strategize to re-engage them in education.

For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, children and youth are exposed to different and multiple direct and indirect threats to their safety and wellbeing. They may fall ill or experience the loss of a family member; poverty and child labor; abuse and neglect; gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, or trafficking; displacement or family separation; stress, trauma, and stigma; fear or grief; and, in conflict-affected areas, increased conflict or recruitment into armed forces.⁴ No matter the risks faced, many learners will experience learning loss, many will miss important exams, and some will be forced to drop out of school. Box 3 provides estimates of how much learning loss learners may experience due to COVID-19 and other crises.

The degree to which a crisis affects individuals either directly or indirectly, also known as sensitivity to a shock, varies based on individual, household, and community characteristics, vulnerabilities, and pre-existing resilience capacities (e.g., coping strategies and social interventions). These impacts are also associated with the duration of national or local shutdowns. For example, longer shut downs may exacerbate family poverty and make young people more likely to participate in child labor and less likely to return to school, or it may increase family stress and reduce exposure to protective supports, so violence against children, sexual exploitation, and trauma might be increased.⁵



BOX 3: ESTIMATIONS OF LEARNING LOSS WHEN SCHOOLS CLOSE

The Collaborative for Student Growth has used data on summer learning loss to estimate the impact of COVID-19 school closures on students in the United States. While the effects of being out of school vary by student, trends show that achievements slow or decline over summer months in both reading and math, with a steeper decline in math skills. Due to extended school closures during COVID-19, they estimate that students returning in September will enter school with the equivalent of returning nearly a year behind.

The World Bank Group found that learning loss continues to accumulate for years following a crisis. Following the 2005 earthquake and three-month school closures in Pakistan, students who lived closest to the fault line (and were most affected) continued to fall further behind. Four years after the earthquake, these students were estimated to have lost 1.5 to 2 years of schooling.

Sources: Dr. Megan Kuhfeld and Dr. Beth Tarasawa, "The COVID-19 slide: What summer learning loss can tell us about the potential impact of school closures on student academic achievement," (Collaborative for Student Growth, 2020), https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/05/Collaborative-Brief_Covid19-Slide-APR20.pdf
World Bank Group, "The COVID-19 Pandemic: Shocks to Education and Policy Responses" (May 2020), <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/33696>.

⁴ The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, "Advocacy Messages for Child Protection Actors: Prioritizing Child Protection in COVID-19 Response Plans," (April 2020), https://alliancecpha.org/en/system/tdf/library/attachments/advocacy_messages_v1.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=37862.

⁵ CDC, "Considerations for School Closure," (2020), https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/considerations-for-school-closure.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0uFNcjxtHrcrH_Lgb1vURig_TILLtWxOrTIT2ab2yDZ4zVIRoWf9uWLoM.

The effects of crises also differ between localities. Contexts with challenges to infrastructure, capacity, financing, and coordination, as well as countries with low public trust in the government, will face greater difficulties responding to and recovering from the crisis. Conflict-affected contexts may face increased conflict, further displacing young people and exacerbating other impacts of the crisis.

Finally, the effects of crises differ between groups. Girls and boys with and without disabilities, learners in conflict-affected contexts, young people in extreme poverty, and those in rural and urban areas will experience crises differently. For example, in the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Girls/young women may have a greater risk of exposure to COVID-19 because they tend to be more involved in care work, including health care.⁶
- Displaced learners in densely populated camps/settings may be at greater risk of contracting the virus.⁷
- Older and over-age learners may be more likely to drop out of education and seek employment; others who were working may have lost employment.
- Pregnant girls or young mothers may be unable to return to education due to lack of childcare, education or training that does not fit their schedules, or social norms or official policies that exclude pregnant girls from formal schools (see Box 4 for evidence from the Ebola epidemic).
- Learners with disabilities, learners in rural areas, and the urban poor may experience greater learning loss due to inaccessible design of learning content and lack of access to technologies used to provide distance learning opportunities.⁸



BOX 4: CRISIS, PREGNANCY, AND DROP OUT

Between 2013 and 2016, the West Africa Ebola epidemic led to increased dropout rates for girls in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. As families struggled financially, girls' participation in income-generating activities and domestic responsibilities increased. It is also estimated that teenage pregnancy rates doubled during this time. In Sierra Leone, enrollment rates for secondary school-age girls dropped from 50 to 34 percent. Using Sierra Leone as a model, Malala Fund predicts that as many as 10 million secondary school-age girls may not return to school after COVID-19 in low- and lower-middle-income countries.

Sources:

Malala Fund, "Girls' Education and COVID-19: What Past Shocks Can Teach Us About Mitigating the Impact of Pandemics," (United Nations, 2020), https://downloads.ctfassets.net/0oan5gk9rgbh/6TMYLYAcUpjhOpXLDgmdla/3e1c12d8d827985ef2b4e815a3a6da1f/COVID-19_GirlsEducation_corrected_071420.pdf
United Nations, "Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Children," (April 2020), <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/policy-brief-impact-covid-19-children>.

⁶ UN Women and CARE, "Latin America and the Caribbean Rapid Gender Analysis for COVID-19," (May 2020), https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/enlac_rga_report_english_final_junio2_1comprimido.pdf; Fatouma Zara Laouan, "West Africa Rapid Gender Analysis for COVID-19," (CARE, 2020), <https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/media/k2/attachments/CARE-West-Africa-Rapid-Gender-Analysis-COVID-19-May-2020.pdf>.

⁷ International Rescue Committee, "COVID-19 in Humanitarian Crises: A Double Emergency," (April 2020), <https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/4693/covid-19-doubleemergency-april2020.pdf>.

⁸ UNESCO, "COVID-19 Education Response: Preparing the Reopening of Schools," (May 2020), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373401>.

As a result of the differentiated impacts young people face during a crisis, there is a high risk of widening educational gaps and dropout from education prior to and after reopening of education institutions. Box 5 shows estimates of dropout due to COVID-19 globally.

However, learners, families, and their communities also bring assets, strengths, and innovation to education and the reopening process. For example, during COVID-19 many parents become more involved in their children's education. Partners across sectors (e.g., health, child protection, and education) have enhanced collaboration and coordination efforts. And there is often a renewed focus on engaging learners who were out of school prior to the crisis, as well as those who drop out or are at risk of dropping out. It is essential that return-to-learning processes are centered around equity and inclusion, leveraging existing and new resilience capacities to improve reopening plans.



BOX 5: ESTIMATES OF DROPOUT DUE TO COVID-19

UNESCO estimates that as many as 24 million learners (pre-primary to tertiary) could drop out of school during COVID-19, nearly half of whom are in South and West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. While university and pre-primary learners will be most affected, an estimated 10.9 million primary and secondary school learners are at risk of dropping out. Socio-economic factors, increased household responsibilities, early and forced marriage, teen pregnancy, fear of the virus, and lack of access to distance learning during school closures are expected to be the main causes of drop out.

Source: UNESCO, "How many students are at risk of not returning to school?" (July 2020), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373992>.

ACTIONS WITH MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION (MOEs), MINISTRIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION (MOHEs), AND EDUCATION PLANNERS

- ✓ **Conduct rapid assessments (either through existing data or primary data collection) to identify marginalized groups.**

To understand how a crisis has affected learners, especially the most marginalized, ministries, sub-national education officials, administrators, and educators will need to identify at-risk groups and strategize to explicitly re-engage them in education. Education leaders should use existing data or gather new information to better understand the differentiated physical, social, emotional, educational, and economic impacts of the crisis.

Not all "data" need to come from a new or formalized assessment, such as a survey. Often administrators and educators, working with community leaders and self-advocacy groups, have a great deal of knowledge regarding their communities, so "assessment" may simply be strategic consultations with key stakeholders. In order to target and tailor learner re-engagement strategies to specific marginalized groups, information and data must be disaggregated by gender, disability, and displacement status, at a minimum. Self-advocacy groups (e.g., organizations of persons with disabilities and women-led community groups) can contribute to assessment design and implementation. Assessment should also take advantage of the opportunity to explore the needs of learners who were out of school prior to the crisis and how



RESILIENCE TIP

Vulnerability to COVID-19 and other emergencies is a combination of an individual's, school's, community's, or system's exposure and sensitivity. Social, political, economic, and cultural factors shape vulnerability to emergencies. Use the [USAID Resilience Framework for the Education Sector](#) to understand how individuals, schools, communities, and education systems are affected to identify barriers and strategies in the return to learning, and to prepare for future shocks.

reopening processes can meet their needs as well. Higher education institutions or research networks in-country may also serve as a key partners in designing, collecting, or analyzing rapid assessments.

- ✓ **Collaborate with communities to (re)engage all learners.**

Communities play an essential role in re-engaging learners who were previously in education and engaging those who were out of school prior to a crisis. Communities include parents and caregivers; peer groups; traditional, elected, and religious leaders; youth or women’s organizations; organizations of persons with disabilities; private sector and civil society actors; and others.

Strategies to ensure community support for learner (re)engagement efforts include clear, frequent, consistent messaging about reopening dates and plans; deploying reopening communication campaigns; collaborating with educators to identify and respond to learners at risk of dropping out; developing school-community partnerships to re-enroll learners; waiving, pro-rating, or applying a sliding scale for school fees; and providing scholarships, materials, cash transfers, school feeding, or other assistance to meet basic needs. Local officials must build community trust in decision-making in order for families to feel confident that it is safe to send children and youth to school. Participatory and responsive decision-making help build that trust and confidence.



RESILIENCE TIP

Re-enrollment campaigns to help learners return to learning during COVID-19 or another crisis can serve as an absorptive capacity. They also provide the opportunity for engaging with communities, enhancing community-school collaboration and trust, and garnering support for the education of all learners, including those who are often excluded from schooling, such as girls and learners with disabilities.

Tool 1.1: Identifying Barriers and Strategies to (Re)engage the Most Marginalized Learners

can help education planners understand how a crisis has affected learners and identify strategies to re-engage them.

- ✓ **Ensure education information and monitoring systems are functioning and capable of tracking (re)enrollment of all learners, especially marginalized populations, in real time.**

EMIS can provide essential information about the reach of education services at district and national levels; however, they may be inaccurate or slow. Education officials should enhance current monitoring systems to ensure efficient data collection, aggregation, and analysis that provides timely information on re-enrollment disaggregated by sex, disability, and geographic location. Officials should consider including non-formal education in EMIS to capture learners outside of formal education.

Tool 1.2: Monitoring (Re)Enrollment, Especially of the Most Marginalized Learners can help education planners track learners’ return to learning and identify which groups are struggling to come back.



RESILIENCE TIP

A resilient education system includes alternative education opportunities to meet the needs of all children and youth in the face of further shocks and stressors. Therefore, developing or formalizing alternative education pathways is not only a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is also a strategy to strengthen education system resilience. Recognized and certified alternative education creates a safety net for the education system, as children and youth will always be vulnerable to dropout or delayed enrollment due to shocks or stressors.

✓ **Promote alternative pathways back to education.**

Alternative education opportunities provide a pathway back to education for young people who were out of school prior to the crisis or learners who drop out due to a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Education planners, with support from donors and implementing partners, should incorporate relevant, non-formal (including accelerated) education opportunities to meet the needs of out-of-school children and youth. To increase instructional time or to meet the needs of learners who cannot attend face-to-face instruction, distance or blended learning can also be used in non-formal education.⁹

✓ **Address policy barriers that exclude some learners from returning to education.**

Some education policies and practices exclude marginalized learners from education, such as those that prevent pregnant girls and learners with disabilities from enrolling in formal school, or those that exclude learners in non-formal education or refugees from sitting exams or obtaining certification. Policymakers should revise policy to ensure all young people access appropriate education and ensure financing is available to implement strategies to enroll marginalized learners. Policymakers and leaders in education institutions should also ensure that education policies and practices (e.g., enrollment and attendance policies) do not punish learners or educators who are uncomfortable returning right away so that they are not excluded from re-engaging in education.

⁹ Joe Hallgarten, “Evidence on efforts to mitigate the negative educational impact of past disease outbreaks,” (Department for International Development, 2020), https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/793_mitigating_education_effects_of_disease_outbreaks.pdf.

PRIORITY 2: DEVELOP EDUCATION REOPENING PLANS

During the COVID-19 pandemic, while some countries have begun to reopen schools, others plan to reopen in the next academic year or may not have decided when to reopen. **To plan for the return to learning during and after a crisis, education planners at the national, sub-national, and school levels need to develop education reopening plans and strategies.** These include plans for when and how education institutions will reopen in person (reopening plans); how education institutions will ensure the safety and health of learners, educators, and families (safe operations); and how education institutions will monitor symptoms or signs of infection, make decisions about future closures, and transition between remote and in-person learning depending on local risk factors (response plans).

Decisions regarding safe operations of education institutions during a health crisis require reliable and accurate health data, information on other impacts of the crisis (e.g., data on abuse and neglect, child marriage, and teen pregnancy), and the ability to analyze and interpret these data in real-time. Moreover, decision-makers must have a great deal of flexibility, allowing for unpredictable changes in the situation, and communicate with stakeholders that plans may change. Making and carrying out these decisions requires time, financial investments, and personnel.

Even in highly centralized education systems, national authorities should consider allowing local education officials to set reopening dates and plans. While this may create challenges for national oversight, during the COVID-19 pandemic, it allows localities that have decreasing rates of infection; sufficient capacity for testing, contact tracing, and treatment; and school outbreak response plans in place to reopen more quickly.

ACTIONS WITH MOEs, MOHEs, AND EDUCATION PLANNERS

✓ Involve learners, educators, parents, and communities in decision-making.

In order to address the specific needs of all learners, education authorities should involve learners, teachers, parents, community members, and self-advocacy groups in reopening planning. This may include setting up a steering committee, conducting rapid surveys, or holding listening sessions to identify their needs and priorities. This can inform country-level decisions about when to reopen, or validate decisions that are already being made. It can also serve as a useful mechanism to establish trust and open communications with communities, as well as learn what information needs to be communicated, and how best to communicate that information.

✓ Develop an education reopening plan, including safe operations guidance.

Education authorities must work closely with public health officials to develop scenario-based education reopening plans, including projected dates, guidance on safe operations to mitigate infectious disease transmission, and planned instructional adaptations. Dialogue between education and health officials seeks to ensure local health and safety measures take into consideration the social and education impacts of those measures, and vice versa. Opening too early could put learners and educators at risk, while remaining closed too long increases learning loss and dropout, especially for those without access to quality distance learning opportunities, and exacerbates inequality and protection risks. To analyze the various risks associated with school reopening, use the Alliance for Child Protection and Inter-

Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) [Weighing up the Risks: School Closure and Opening under COVID-19](#) Policy Paper. Box 6 shows reopening plans for countries worldwide.



BOX 6: COUNTRY REOPENING STRATEGIES

According to a survey conducted by UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank (as of May 2020), countries are developing their plans to reopen schools as indicated in the table below (n=122).

	NATIONWIDE REOPENING	PARTIAL OR GRADUAL REOPENING PLAN BY REGION	PHASED STUDENT RETURN BY AGE OR GRADE	DO NOT KNOW
Pre-primary	41 percent	23 percent	17 percent	21 percent
Primary	48 percent	24 percent	21 percent	14 percent
Lower Secondary	48 percent	26 percent	21 percent	12 percent
Upper Secondary	47 percent	29 percent	21 percent	12 percent

Note: Questionnaire allowed for multiple responses to this question.

Source: "Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures," World Bank Group, UNESCO, and UNICEF, accessed, September 11, 2020, <http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/survey-education-covid-school-closures/>.^{10,11}

Countries may reopen education full-time, part-time, by locality, or exclusively through distance education. Some are implementing progressive reopenings, sending learners back in phases. Some countries may use double shifting to send learners back for half-days or use alternating days or weeks to meet physical distancing requirements. Many countries will continue to leverage distance learning to supplement face-to-face time. Reopening decisions must consider the state of the pandemic and health response; conditions of the education environment; preparedness of educators; readiness of learners and families; and the social, emotional, physical, and economic costs of keeping schools closed. It is also essential to consider issues of equity and inclusion when making reopening decisions. Box 7 (next page) demonstrates the inequitable access to distance learning during school closures, which will likely continue during reopenings, and which will contribute to exacerbated education inequities.

¹⁰ Questions in this survey (represented in this and subsequent boxes) allowed for multiple responses, e.g., participants could select both "Nationwide reopening" and "Phased student return." Therefore, totals do not equal 100 percent.

¹¹ The number of entries in the raw survey data (n) is 122, although some entries are missing data on individual questions. Percentages reported from this survey in this and subsequent boxes are based on the total number of entries (122), rather than the number of entries *complete* per individual question. That is because a) we are reporting only the percentage of countries who indicated in the affirmative that they *are* implementing a certain strategy, and b) for most questions, it is not possible to distinguish between non-response answers due to data collection error or because participants do not yet know the selected intervention. For all questions analyzed, the non-response rate is approximately 10 percent of entries or less, thus relatively low.

Current evidence on transmission of COVID-19 emphasizes that safe operations of schools requires four components: 1) physical distancing; 2) hand hygiene (e.g., hand washing); 3) respiratory hygiene (e.g., wearing masks or face coverings and effective ventilation of spaces); and 4) cleaning and disinfection. Plans for safe operations when education institutions reopen should be multi-layered, including addressing individual behaviors that learners and educators must adhere to in order to protect themselves and others, institutional policies and practices to keep people safe and healthy, and physical structures that must be adapted.

It is important to understand that school reopening decisions will also have a political dimension as education service provision is one way governments demonstrate responsiveness and legitimacy to citizens. As a result, in some contexts, education planners will be given projected reopening dates to which they must develop or adapt their reopening plans. Education planners should proactively engage in scenario planning, considering best- and worst-case scenarios.

✓ **Develop an outbreak response plan at the school level.**

To keep learners, educators, and families safe when education institutions reopen for in-person instruction, schools need to develop and follow outbreak response plans. An outbreak response plan describes what to do if staff or learners are sick or possibly sick. It should encompass clear instructions for how to isolate and transport learners or staff who show symptoms of infectious illness in the education environment, as well as how to advise staff, families, and learners who may identify symptoms while at home or in the community. The outbreak response plan should be sensitive to the potential for stigmatization of learners or educators. Outbreak response plans also provide clear instructions on how to clean and disinfect the learning environment and how to notify local health officials, in alignment with local public health policy while respecting the confidentiality and privacy of individuals. It is important that response plans include considerations for learners and staff with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. Plans should be reviewed and updated regularly in light of emerging data and local and global policies and practices. Response plans may be developed by reviewing and enhancing existing school emergency response plans used in previous health crises (e.g., Ebola Virus Disease, Avian Influenza) or developing a new outbreak response plan specific to the current pandemic.

✓ **Communicate clearly and consistently.**

Learners, educators, parents, and communities need to know when and how education institutions will reopen, how decisions will be made, and how processes will be communicated. Caregivers will need to feel that their children and youth are safe when they return, and educators and other personnel will need to feel that it is safe for them to return to work. Lack of clear, consistent communication can affect learners' ability to return to school. When communicating about reopening education institutions,



BOX 7: UNEQUAL ACCESS TO DISTANCE LEARNING DURING COVID-19

COVID-19 has exacerbated issues of access to quality education due to socio-economic status. Less than 25 percent of low-income countries have been able to provide online distance learning during school closures, relying primarily on television and radio broadcasts. This compares to about 65 percent of lower-middle income countries and nearly 90 percent of high income countries, which primarily use Internet-based education.

Source: Emiliana Vegas, "School closures, government responses, and learning inequality around the world during COVID-19;" Brookings, last modified April 14, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/school-closures-government-responses-and-learning-inequality-around-the-world-during-covid-19/>.

education leaders and local education officials will need to design communication strategies using a variety of media (e.g., radio, print, and visual campaigns in the local language) and reinforce planning principles of flexibility and adaptability by reminding stakeholders that the academic calendar may change as conditions improve or decline. MOEs and MOHEs will also need to communicate decisions clearly and consistently to district and local education leaders, so that they in turn can communicate effectively to learners, educators, parents, and communities. Early engagement with learners, educators, parents, and communities will help to develop and roll out communications strategies.

✓ **Monitor the situation regularly.**

Education planners should work with their monitoring units to identify proxy indicators to be collected at the school or community level that will indicate whether the school reopening plan is achieving both access and learning outcomes, as well as maintaining the health and safety of learners and educators. This will allow education institutions, districts, and national leaders to adapt reopening plans to respond to contextual changes.

Recall that [**Tool 1.2: Monitoring \(Re\)Enrollment, especially of the Most Marginalized Learners**](#) can help education planners monitor the return to learning.

PRIORITY 3: ADAPT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME, CURRICULA, AND LEARNING SUPPORTS

Once reopening dates are identified and health and safety measures are ensured, **education planners will need to adapt instructional time (calendar and schedule), curricula, and learning supports to meet the objectives of these interventions.**

Many countries will implement national catch-up programs to help learners recover lost instructional time, cover essential content, and get back on track.¹² Likewise, catch-up programs may be implemented in non-formal education for those learners who are outside of the formal education system. Over-age learners who drop out may prefer an accelerated education program to help them complete their education, or they may shift to technical and vocational training to develop skills for livelihoods. All of these interventions may be supplemented by remedial support for struggling learners. Box 8 provides clarifying definitions.



DEFINITION

BOX 8: PROGRAM OPTIONS FOR THE RETURN TO LEARNING

Catch-up programs are short-term transitional education programs for children and youth who had been actively attending school prior to an educational disruption. They provide students with the opportunity to learn content missed because of the disruption, and they support their re-entry to the formal system.

Remedial programs provide additional targeted support, concurrent with regular classes, for students who require short-term content or skill support to succeed in regular formal programming.

Accelerated education programs (AEP) are flexible, age-appropriate programs, run in an accelerated timeframe, which aims to provide access to education for disadvantaged, over-age, out-of-school children and youth. This may include those who missed out on, or had their education interrupted, due to poverty, marginalization, conflict, and crisis. The goal of Accelerated Education Programs is to provide learners with equivalent, certified competencies for basic education using effective teaching and learning approaches that match their level of cognitive maturity.

Source: Accelerated Education Working Group, "COVID-19: Pathways for the Return to Learning," (2020), <https://inee.org/resources/covid-19-pathways-return-learning>

Some learners may not be able to attend regularly, for example, due to increased domestic or income-generating responsibilities. Others may be afraid or unable to return to education immediately. Some parents/guardians may not be ready to send their children and youth back, and some teachers and staff may be unwilling or afraid to return to teaching. Therefore, no matter what education modalities are chosen, flexibility is needed at the school and classroom level.

¹² Getting “back on track” and “catching up” refer to helping learners to return to the place in the curriculum they would have been at if the crisis had not closed education institutions. This can be accomplished in many ways, including extending instructional time, condensing a curriculum by prioritizing learning outcomes, and leveraging distance learning. In many contexts, learners had below-grade-level knowledge and skills prior to the pandemic. Ideally, catching up and getting back on track includes differentiation and remediation to ensure struggling learners acquire on-grade-level competencies.

ACTIONS WITH MOEs, MOHEs, AND EDUCATION PLANNERS

- ✓ Understand the range of options for helping learners catch up.

Interventions to help learners catch up take into consideration the duration of closures and learners' academic and psychosocial needs. When schools are closed for a couple of weeks, "catching up" may mean adding instructional time by beginning the next semester early or extending the school day or week. When education institutions are closed longer, "catching up" may require accelerating the curriculum by prioritizing learning outcomes.

The Accelerated Education Working Group's (AEWG) [COVID-19: Pathways for the Return to Learning Brief and Decision Tree](#) may help education planners identify the appropriate response(s) for learners in their context. Box 9 shows how many countries have adapted the academic year.

- ✓ Revise the academic calendar and schedule.

To help children and youth return to learning while respecting physical distancing policies, it may be necessary to adjust or reduce the time children and youth spend in a physical classroom. This may require adjusting the academic calendar and daily schedule, especially if a significant amount of learning was missed.

Adapted calendars should address four learning aims: recovering learning loss, catching up on missed instruction, condensing curricula to get back on track, and getting to the "new normal." These four aims are not linear—they should be integrated across the revised academic year and throughout the curriculum. It may be useful to prepare multiple calendar options as a part of situation planning.

Adaptations may include changing academic year start/end dates, compressing the academic year, and extending the school day. When deciding about calendar adaptations, especially when thinking about condensing the curriculum, consider decisions made about phased or part-time re-opening. For example, it would be challenging to expect learners to cover one grade level in a reduced time period if they are only attending in-person classes every other week.

Tool 3.1: Revising the Academic Calendar can help education planners explore ways to adapt the calendar following various scenarios. Adjustments to the school calendar during COVID-19 may span several academic years.



BOX 9: ADAPTATIONS TO THE ACADEMIC YEAR IN COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD

According to the first round of a survey conducted by UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank (as of May 2020), countries around the world are making/plan to make the following adjustments (n=122):

- 71 percent of countries indicated that the current school calendar has been/will be adjusted.
- 24 percent of countries indicated that class time will be increased.
- 63 percent of countries indicated a plan to introduce remedial programs.
- 30 percent of countries indicated a plan to introduce accelerated education programs.
- 38 percent of countries predict that the next school year will be affected as well.

Source: "Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures," World Bank Group, UNESCO, and UNICEF, accessed, September 11, 2020, <http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/survey-education-covid-school-closures/>.

Concurrently, academic planners may need to adapt the daily and weekly schedule. This is especially true when physical distancing protocols require that class sizes be reduced and classes be split up. For example, in some contexts, half the class may attend in-person classes every other week and learn at a distance during their “off” week. In other contexts, double shifting may be used. On a weekly basis, additional instructional time may be added.

Tool 3.2: Revising the Daily/Weekly Academic Schedule can help education planners explore options for tailoring the daily/weekly schedule based on modifications made to the academic calendar dates, timelines, curricular decisions, and required instructional time.

✓ **Adapt (or condense) the curriculum and teaching and learning materials.**

Most learners will experience learning loss or will not learn new content as a result of school closures, even if they have received quality distance learning. Returning to learning will require rapid, usable, and learner-friendly assessments, and potentially a condensed curriculum and teaching materials, so educators can teach to the right level and help learners catch up. Box 10 shows countries’ plans for adapting their curriculum.

The AEWG’s [Guidance for Condensing a Curriculum during COVID-19](#) can help educators and education leaders prioritize competencies to help learners catch up and get back on track. Curriculum units should prioritize adapting and/or making available existing local catch-up program assessments, curricula, educator guides, learning materials, exams, and training resources for immediate use. Priority should be given to resources that are the most inclusive, accessible, and conflict-sensitive. Where resources exist, but are not inclusive and conflict-sensitive, curriculum units should be encouraged to revise them or develop new materials to avoid exacerbating underlying conflict drivers.



BOX 10: ADAPTATIONS TO THE CURRICULUM

The survey conducted by UNESCO, UNICEF, and World Bank indicated that in 60 percent of countries (n=122), content being covered will be adjusted in the next school year. Of these 73 countries, content adjustments vary.

- 27 percent of countries indicated a plan to reduce content covered within subjects.
- 5 percent of countries indicated a plan to reduce the number of subjects taught.
- 14 percent of countries indicated there will be a reduction in both the content covered within subjects and the number of subjects taught.
- 26 percent indicated a plan to leave the adjustments to the discretion of the schools.

Other adjustments countries are making include tailoring content to the students, offering alternative skills-based courses, intensifying content taught, or prioritizing core subjects.

Source: “Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures,” World Bank Group, UNESCO, and UNICEF, accessed September 11, 2020, <http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/survey-education-covid-school-closures/>.

Where a condensed curriculum is not available, educators may need to develop one. Condensing a curriculum usually involves prioritizing essential learning outcomes (e.g., for the primary level, this will include reading, writing, math, and life skills); integrating related content and ensuring content is mutually reinforcing; and reducing repetition.¹³ For example, language arts and social studies units or math and

¹³ Accelerated Education Working Group, “COVID-19: Pathways for the Return to Learning: Guidance on Condensing a Curriculum,” (2020), <https://inee.org/resources/covid-19-pathways-return-learning-guidance-condensing-curriculum>.

science lessons may be integrated; content or skills that are not covered on national exams might be removed; and review and repetition might be reduced. Condensing a curriculum will include revising learning outcomes, revising sequencing, adapting content, and updating lesson plans. Since condensed curricula are based on the full curriculum, learning materials and assessments may still be used if adapted. Box 11 shows subjects covered in reduced timeframes in accelerated education programs as an example.¹⁴

In a condensed curriculum, the rate of acceleration depends on the amount and difficulty of content, and learners' cognitive maturity and background knowledge. Education planners must also consider the instructional time available. In many contexts, oversized classes may need to split shifts. This will reduce the amount of in-person instructional time for learners, and if instructional time is reduced, the acceleration rate will be slower.

In the initial months of the return to learning, teachers and education administrators at the school level may have to condense the curriculum on their own. Over time, a national condensed curriculum may be

developed. Curriculum units should work with educators and curriculum specialists to develop a condensed curriculum that ensures essential, examinable competencies are taught and accredited. Trainers will need to build educators' skills to carry out adaptations. Training will also need to include strategies for educators to identify learners who are struggling to keep up with the catch-up curriculum in order to provide additional support.

[Tool 3.3 Planning for Accelerating Learning and Catching Up](#) can help education planners identify what is needed in order to implement a catch-up program.



COUNTRY EXAMPLE

BOX 11: INSTRUCTIONAL TIME AND CURRICULAR CONTENT IN AEPs

A review of AEP curricula conducted by the AEWG revealed the following adaptations to curricula and instructional time.

COUNTRY	INSTRUCTIONAL TIME	ACADEMIC SUBJECTS
Liberia	3.5 hours/day x 5 days/week = 378 hours/year	Literacy/language arts, numeracy/math, social science, science, life skills
Uganda	4 hours/day x 5 days/week	Literacy, math, social science, science, religion
Afghanistan	20 hours/week x 22 weeks	Literacy, math, religion
Sierra Leone	10.5 hours/week	Literacy, math, social science, science
Mali	4 hours/day x 172 days/year	Literacy, numeracy, social-emotional learning, and life skills

Source: Accelerated Education Working Group, "AEP Curricula Review Matrix," (unpublished, 2020).

¹⁴ It is important to note that AEPs are designed for *over-age* children and youth, so rates of accelerating may be different for learners who are in the age-appropriate grade but who need to catch up.

✓ Identify learners' social-emotional, protection, and academic needs.

When learners return, educators will need to assess learners' academic and social-emotional competencies in order to provide effective support. When returning to learning, many learners will need psychosocial support (PSS) services, including social-emotional learning (SEL) opportunities. Some PSS services should be overseen or implemented by trained mental health providers, as they address clinical mental health conditions. Other services, such as SEL, can be provided at the classroom level by teachers. SEL activities, such as practicing mindfulness to build self-awareness and self-regulation, benefit all learners both with and without mental health conditions and can be integrated into academic and non-academic content, or provided in short, discrete SEL opportunities. Prior to returning to work, educators may need to be trained to incorporate SEL into daily instruction and classroom routines as a way to transition back to more structured, academic learning for all ages and levels of education.



Building self-awareness, self-esteem, healthy coping skills, positive social relations, and other skills through social-emotional learning can help learners absorb the effects of shocks and stressors in the short-term. In the long-term, however, they can contribute to the development of leadership, effective communication, and prosocial behaviors, which ultimately have the potential to transform societies. Upon the return to learning, educators can take the opportunity to teach lessons where learners are able to reflect on and describe the new coping skills they developed during this time of adversity.

Educators and education leaders will also need to ensure learners' protection needs are met. This may include (re)establishing and scaling up nutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), and health services (e.g., school feeding, vaccinations, menstrual hygiene management); services for learners with disabilities (e.g., personal care assistants, sign language mentors and interpreters, occupational therapists); and referral and reporting mechanisms for abuse, gender-based violence, and mental health conditions.

Box 12 shows some of the likely effects of COVID-19 on learners' well-being. Education planners should engage communities to identify learners' social-emotional, protection, and academic needs, and to plan how to (re)establish, scale up, or implement supports to address learners' needs holistically.



BOX 12: COVID-19 AND CHILD PROTECTION

UNFPA estimates that the COVID-19 pandemic will result in an additional 13 million child marriages and 2 million cases of female genital mutilation over the following decade that could have been averted without the crisis. They further estimate that for every three months that lockdowns continue, there will be 15 million additional cases of gender-based violence.

Moreover, an additional 42 to 66 million children could fall into extreme poverty as a result of the pandemic, and there is an expected rise in malnutrition, as 368.5 million children who depend on school lunches must find alternative sources of nutrition.

Sources: UNFPA, "Press release: New UNFPA projections predict calamitous impact on women's health as COVID-19 pandemic continues," last modified, April, 28, 2020, <https://www.unfpa.org/press/new-unfpa-projections-predict-calamitous-impact-womens-health-covid-19-pandemic-continues>, United Nations, "Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Children," (April 2020), <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/policy-brief-impact-covid-19-children>.

Education planners can use [Tool 3.4: Identifying and Addressing Learners' Protection, Mental Health, and Psychosocial Needs](#) to identify strategies at the classroom, institution, and community levels to support learners holistic needs.

✓ **Consider where distance learning should continue.**

During school closures, many countries implemented or scaled up distance learning (e.g., interactive audio instruction, television programs, online modules, no-tech work packets). To complement the return to learning and remediation efforts, education authorities may need to plan for, fund, and build capacity to sustain distance learning. Some countries may implement blended (in-person and distance) learning, especially where part-time or alternating schedules are implemented in alignment with physical distancing measures. For additional resources and guidance on distance learning during a crisis, visit USAID's [EducationLinks](#) Distance Learning resources page.



RESILIENCE TIP

Leverage investments made during school closures and when education institutions reopen to strengthen education systems. Distance learning and alternative pathways developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic should not be considered a temporary solution but rather an opportunity to build the effectiveness and efficiency of education systems. If well integrated, they will increase access to high-quality education for all learners and, in turn, build resilience of individuals, families, and communities.

✓ **Mobilize financial and human resources for planning for catch-up programming.**

Education planners must keep in mind the implications for educators and infrastructure when adapting the academic calendar, schedule, curriculum, and teaching and learning materials. Revising curricula, teaching and learning materials, and teacher professional development manuals, as well as conducting teacher training, are resource intensive. If more educators are hired, or educators' salaries are increased to account for additional teaching hours, budgets must reflect these changes. Education authorities must allocate appropriate material, time, human, and financial resources to effectively implement catch-up programs. This may be done by adapting or reallocating existing budgets and resources, or by finding additional financing for essential interventions.

PRIORITY 4: MODIFY EXAMS AND LEARNER PROMOTION PRACTICES

When schools closed due to COVID-19, learners in countries with September to May academic calendars were just weeks away from taking exams, and those in countries with February to November calendars will miss large portions of their school year, also affecting exams. During crises, many learners struggle with uncertainty and anxiety about exams, and educators, administrators, and education authorities are challenged to make difficult decisions on how to grade, promote, or permit enrollment of learners. **To prepare for the return to learning after a crisis, education leaders must decide how to safely hold end-of-year, end-of-level, certification, and entrance examinations, as well as how to promote learners.**

The experience of a crisis can be distressing and even traumatic for many learners, and it can dramatically change the composition of learners' families and their roles within them (e.g., if adolescents have had to begin working). Thus, many learners may face difficulty studying, paying attention, and succeeding on exams. Exam policies and practices (e.g., enrollment requirements) should be revisited so they can accommodate learners who have been severely affected by a crisis.

ACTIONS WITH MOEs, MOHEs, AND EDUCATION PLANNERS

- ✓ Identify how exams have been affected by the crisis.

Box 13 shows how high-stakes examinations have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Some countries have cancelled end-of-year exams, and others have announced that exams will be used for formative purposes only (i.e., understanding learners' progress). In some cases, prior term classroom-based assessments may be used to determine learner promotion. Some countries have announced that all learners will be automatically promoted to the next grade or level.

Even in countries with February to November calendars, exams are likely to be affected since many learners will only return months before expected exam dates. In response to a crisis like



BOX 13: COVID-19 AND EXAMS

Of 71 countries that hold **primary graduation exams**, the following plans were reported:

- 27 percent continued as planned
- 7 percent staggered exams
- 14 percent distanced students during exams
- 44 percent postponed or rescheduled
- 10 percent used online assessments
- 25 percent reduced the content covered
- 13 percent used alternative assessments
- 15 percent cancelled exams

Of 96 countries that hold **secondary graduation exams**, the following plans were reported:

- 23 percent continued as planned
- 8 percent staggered exams
- 20 percent distanced students during exams
- 54 percent postponed or rescheduled
- 13 percent used online assessments
- 22 percent reduced the content covered
- 13 percent used alternative assessments
- 6 percent cancelled exams

Of 66 countries that hold **university entrance exams**, the following plans were reported:

- 26 percent continued as planned
- 3 percent staggered exams
- 17 percent distanced students during exams
- 41 percent postponed or rescheduled
- 18 percent used online assessments
- 17 percent reduced content covered
- 17 percent used alternative assessments
- 6 percent cancelled exams

Source: "Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures," World Bank Group, UNESCO, and UNICEF, accessed September 11, 2020, <http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/survey-education-covid-school-closures/>.

COVID-19, education authorities need to communicate with local education officials to understand how exams were affected for different learners in different regions.

✓ **Identify which exams are a priority.**

Some exams will continue to be required, but other exams may be eliminated or used for formative purposes only. National and district education leaders should engage educators to explore if/how exams can be modified to test only what has been taught. Policymakers will need to revise policy to reflect examination approaches, including promotion. Adaptations to exam practices should continue to be valid, reliable, and equitable, and adhere to health and safety protocols.

Tool 4.1: Decision-Making for High-Stakes Examinations can help education planners decide whether to cancel, maintain, postpone, or adapt important exams.

✓ **Develop a learner promotion strategy.**

Learner promotion plans will have implications on what remediation and testing will be needed when education reopens. In some cases, prior term teacher-run exams may be used to determine learner promotion. Some countries have pre-existing policies on automatic promotion at certain grades/levels of education or have announced that all learners will be automatically promoted to the next level. Demographic pressures, availability of pre-primary education, and parent/community preferences may influence learner promotion strategies. Education authorities at national and local levels must work with education stakeholders to make decisions about how learners will progress from one grade to the next, as well as how learners will receive certifications and promotion to the next level.

Tool 4.2: Decision-Making for Learner Promotion assists education planners to weigh the factors that influence learner promotion decisions.

✓ **Communicate with learners, families, and educators.**

Learners, families, and educators will need to know when and how exams will be administered, how the results will be used (e.g., for certification, promotion, or formative purposes only), and what will be covered. Education authorities must clearly communicate new procedures for taking exams, especially those designed to adhere to health and safety measures. Educators and local education authorities involved in proctoring or hosting examinations will also need to be trained on any new or additional safety procedures to keep learners safe.



RESILIENCE TIP

Deciding to postpone, cancel, or adapt examinations as a result of COVID-19 is an absorptive response. However, education systems can use the opportunity inherent in the crisis to evaluate their examination practices and policies. Revising exam content (e.g., prioritizing learning outcomes) and practices (e.g., reducing summative and increasing formative assessments, leveraging technology to be more inclusive) with an equity and inclusion lens offers the opportunity to build more equitable education systems. Systems in which all learners, including the most marginalized, have the opportunity to access and complete high-quality education (which is often mediated by exam performance) is a system that is more resilient.

- ✓ **Ensure that monitoring systems to track access to exams and pass rates are in place.**

National, local, and institution-level education leaders may need to improve systems for tracking exams. Measuring who sits and passes exams will be an important way to better understand the effects of a crisis on the education system, as well as ensure equitable access to and completion of education in line with country priorities. Monitoring systems can also help ensure non-formal education is recognized and learning is certified.

- ✓ **Mobilize resources needed to implement adapted exams.**

Due to physical distancing measures, additional infrastructure, human, and financial resources may be needed to effectively administer exams. As a result of the interrupted academic calendar, standardized examinations may need to be revised to test only what was taught. National and local education authorities will need to revisit budget and human resource allocations to ensure the new exam strategy is feasible. Where examination fees are collected, education authorities may consider waiving examination fees for all learners, or at least for the most marginalized.

PRIORITY 5: RE-ENGAGE EDUCATORS AND PREPARE THE LEARNING SPACE

When education institutions close due to a crisis, educators and other personnel, as well as education institutions, are affected. **Educators and personnel need to be mobilized, and schools, non-formal learning centers, training and vocational institutes, and higher education institutions will need to be prepared to welcome learners back safely.**

In the COVID-19 pandemic, educators may have fallen ill, lost family members, or taken on additional caretaking roles. They may have experienced economic difficulty and stress, and may have psychosocial support needs. Some may have left the teaching profession due to lack of payment, and many, especially those who are older or have pre-existing health conditions, may be afraid of returning. Sadly, some educators may no longer be part of the workforce due to COVID-19. Educators who return to teaching will need to adapt to changed teaching and learning practices, which may require additional training, continuous support and mentoring, additional resources, and a supportive environment at all levels—community, institutional, and policy—of the education system. Box 14 provides information on how countries have been addressing the issues of educators and the educator workforce during the pandemic.

Likewise, learning spaces (e.g., schools, higher education institutions, and non-formal learning centers) may require repair due to long closures. Spaces that have been used as testing sites, quarantine facilities, or laboratories in a health crisis need to be sanitized before they are usable. Many education institutions will require additional infrastructure (e.g., handwashing stations, new or temporary classrooms), furniture (e.g., more desks), hygiene and safety supplies (e.g., soap, hand sanitizer, water, masks and face coverings), and signage and floor markings (e.g., indicating one-way movement and spacing of individuals, instructions for handwashing and physical distancing). Education authorities will need to take explicit actions to build trust with learners and families and demonstrate that they are serious about reducing risks and avoiding putting young people or educators at great harm in the learning environment.



Box 14: COVID-19 and Educators

According to the Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures, teachers have generally been receiving pay (n=122):

- In 78 percent of countries, teachers have continued to receive their full salary during school closures.
- In 6 percent of countries, teachers are receiving their salary with some cuts, while they receive supplements in 2 percent of countries.
- Only 4 percent of countries surveyed indicated that they have not continued to pay teachers during school closures.
- 10 percent of country respondents did not indicate how teachers are currently being paid.
- As plans to reopen are developed, new teachers are being recruited in 24 percent of countries.

Source: "Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures," World Bank Group, UNESCO, and UNICEF, accessed September 11, 2020, <http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/survey-education-covid-school-closures/>.

ACTIONS WITH MOEs, MOHEs, AND EDUCATION PLANNERS

✓ Revisit workforce needs.

While education institutions are closed due to a crisis, many educators are out of work. Cancellation of educator licensing exams may also exacerbate the workforce gap.

As a result, MOEs/MOHEs, administrators, and implementers will need to re-engage the education workforce. This may mean remobilizing existing educators, recruiting and training new educators, or deploying educators to areas hard hit by the crisis. To do this, education authorities will need to conduct a rapid assessment of the education workforce. This is a great opportunity to work with teacher and faculty unions, networks, and parent-teacher associations to understand not only how many educators plan to return to the classroom, but also their expectations and support needs. Based on the results of this assessment, education authorities will have a sense of the scale of adaptations that will need to be made. In order to accommodate smaller class sizes, adjusted school calendars, or a reduced workforce, it may be worth exploring rapid or emergency certification processes. Meeting workforce needs will require close collaboration with teachers' and faculty unions.



RESILIENCE TIP

Absorptive responses to the COVID-19 pandemic to meet the needs of educators and the education workforce, if well planned and maintained, can serve to strengthen the resilience of education systems in the long-term. For example, recruiting new teachers, exploring alternative options for rapidly certifying teachers, and expanding the workforce can be a way to ultimately have more women and educators with disabilities in the workforce. Training teachers on the pedagogy, practices, and technology needed to support the return to learning from an equity and inclusion lens can contribute to gender transformative, conflict sensitive, and inclusive teaching and learning practices.

✓ Address educator capacity development needs.

Educators will need continuous professional development and psychosocial support to adapt to teaching after the crisis. Educators may need training and support to: 1) re-engage learners and identify those at risk of dropping out; 2) assess learning loss and plan for remediation; 3) implement a catch-up curriculum; 4) meet learners' social-emotional and protection needs; and 5) talk with learners about the crisis in age-appropriate ways.

In addition, trainers should help educators be able to implement health and safety measures. In the COVID-19 pandemic, educators must learn how to prevent the spread of the virus in the learning environment and promote hygiene, in collaboration with local public health authorities to ensure adherence to local guidance and consistency of messages.

Moreover, educators themselves may require psychosocial support to process the hardships of the crisis and supporting learners who are struggling academically and emotionally.

TOOL 5.1: Identifying and Addressing Educator Needs is a checklist to help education planners identify workforce gaps and training and support needed for educators

✓ **Develop or revise policy to meet education workforce needs.**

Re-engaging the educator workforce may also include reviewing and revising educator policies. Some education policies restrict who can teach and who can become a certified educator (e.g., excluding refugees), while others require strict ratios of certified and non-certified teachers in learning spaces. Policies that deploy teachers to schools outside of their community or region may also need to be revised so as to limit community spread of the disease, or teacher housing may need to be provided in order to limit teacher travel between communities and inter-communal disease spread. Policy changes that allow refugee educators to teach, that accelerate teaching credentials from higher education institutions, or that waive mandatory retirement may be critical to address workforce needs.

✓ **Assess the need for repairs and creation of new learning spaces, additional furniture and materials, disinfection of learning spaces, and signage and floor markings.**

To mitigate infection and disease transmission in and around learning environments, education planners will need to assess the capacity of all schools to implement health and safety measures. Where gaps exist, facility construction or maintenance may be required. This may include investments in hygiene facilities (e.g., handwashing stations, water supply), and supplies (e.g., thermometers, soap, and non-medical personal protective equipment). Learning spaces are likely to need additional cleaning before they reopen, especially if used for quarantine or as treatment units. Learning spaces may also need to incorporate signs and floor markings to indicate where individuals must sit or stand, which direction to walk, and how to adhere to safety precautions.



RESILIENCE TIP

Adaptations to the infrastructure of education institutions, including retrofitting schools with WASH facilities, presents an opportune time to also explore the possibilities around having gender-separated latrines, or adding ramps for learners with physical disabilities.

Different learning institutions may require different health and safety measures. For example, higher education institution labs used for testing may require additional sanitation procedures. Health and safety considerations to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in education institutions is provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Operational Considerations for Schools](#). When learning spaces are adapted, local education authorities are encouraged to adhere to [humanitarian inclusion standards for people with disabilities](#).

Adaptations to learning spaces must be layered with comprehensive behavior change efforts and administrative policies and processes to keep people safe in and around education institutions. It is particularly important for children and young adults that explicit instruction in healthy hygiene and safety behaviors is reinforced with practice and modeling by adult staff. Education authorities, education personnel, and educators must communicate early, often, and consistently about the health and safety measures required of learners, parents, and community members in the learning environment.

TOOL 5.2: Adapting Learning Spaces is a checklist to help education planners consider and plan for four areas related to ensuring learning spaces are safe: physical distancing, respiratory hygiene, hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection.

✓ Mobilize financial resources to fill gaps.

Additional funding may be needed to implement the above action items: re-engaging the educator workforce and preparing education infrastructure. In order to build a more resilient education system, education authorities should develop a short-term plan to address immediate needs, as well as a longer-term plan to prepare for a future health crisis.

CONCLUSION

For many countries, districts, and education institutions, addressing the above priority areas is an opportunity to plan for prevention, response, recovery, and resilience in the face of future crises. In planning for reopening, education actors will reflect on what would have helped to mitigate the impact of this crisis on learners, educators, and educational infrastructure. They will also identify what was needed to respond to the crisis, for example, by conducting an after-action review to determine what actions were effective or not. Therefore, countries, districts, and education institutions will be well placed to develop or update comprehensive crisis preparedness and response plans to prevent and mitigate the impact of future crisis situations. The preparation that goes into crisis response and recovery ultimately will allow countries to learn from a time of adversity and build more resilient education systems.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL REOPENING

- [The Alliance and INEE. Weighing the Risks: School Closure and Reopening Under COVID-19: When, Why, and What Impacts?](#)
- [Center for Global Development. Planning for School Reopening and Recovery after COVID-19](#)
- [Humanity and Inclusion. 10 TOP TIPS for Returning to School](#)
- [IASC Global Education Cluster. Safe Back to School: A Practitioner's Guide](#)
- [UNICEF. Framework for Reopening Schools](#)

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND MEL

- [Accelerated Education Working Group. Accelerated Education Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit](#)
- [Global Education Cluster. Key Indicators and Questions for COVID-19 Assessment](#)
- [USAID. Education Sector Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning \(MEL\) during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [USAID Rapid Education and Risk Analysis](#)
- [USAID Safer Learning Environments Toolkit](#)

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WASH

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Operational Considerations for Schools](#)
- [The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. Technical Note: The Protection of Children during the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)
- [WASH in Schools Network. WASH in Schools and Coronavirus: Safe Reopening of Schools](#)
- [Global Working Group to End School-Related Gender-Based Violence. COVID 19: Policy Brief and Recommendations: Strengthening efforts to prevent and respond to school-related gender-based violence as schools reopen](#)
- [IASC. Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools and Supplemental Content](#)

CATCH-UP PROGRAMS AND ACCELERATED EDUCATION

- [Accelerated Education Working Group. COVID-19 Pathways for the Return to Learning: Decision Tree and Brief](#)
- [Accelerated Education Working Group. COVID-19 Pathways for the Return to Learning: Guidance on Condensing a Curriculum](#)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

- [Buck Institute for Education. PBL + SEL + Trauma-Informed Teaching for the Times We're In](#)

- [CASEL. SEL Resources for COVID-19](#)
- [IASC. Briefing Note on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Aspects of COVID-19 Outbreak](#)
- [INEE. Guidance Note on Psychosocial Support](#)
- [IRC. Safe and Healing Learning Spaces Toolkit: Social-Emotional Learning](#)
- [United for Global Mental Health. The Impact of COVID-19 on Global Mental Health: A Brief](#)
- [Parenting for Lifelong Health. COVID-19 24/7 Parenting](#)

ENGAGING MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

- [Malala Fund. Girls' Education and COVID-19](#)
- [UN. Policy Brief: A Disability-Inclusive Response to COVID-19](#)
- [UNC Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute Autism Team. Supporting Individuals with Autism through Uncertain Times](#)
- [USAID. Universal Design for Learning to Help all Children Read](#)
- [World Education Blog. How is the coronavirus affecting learners with disabilities?](#)

TEACHERS

- [Aga Khan. Teacher Resources](#)
- [UNESCO. Supporting Teachers in Back-to-School Efforts: A Toolkit for School Leaders](#)
- [UNESCO. Supporting Teachers in Back-to-School Efforts: Guidance for Policymakers](#)
- [World Bank Group. Three Principles to Support Teacher Effectiveness During COVID-19](#)

FURTHER RESOURCES

- [The Alliance for Protection for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action Resources](#)
- [INEE. Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Resources](#)
- [INEE. Learning Must Go On: COVID-19 Advocacy Brief](#)
- [INEE. Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery](#)
- [INEE. Technical Note on Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Planipolis. Portal of Education Plans and Policies](#)
- [USAID. EducationLinks Resources](#)
- [World Bank Group. The COVID-19 Pandemic: Shocks to Education and Policy Responses](#)

TOOLS

Tool 0.1: Equity and Inclusion Self-Assessment: [Print Version](#) | [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

Tool 0.2: Action Planning for Resilience: [Print Version](#) | [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

Tool 1.1: Identifying Barriers and Strategies to (Re)engage the Most Marginalized Learners: [Print Version](#) | [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

Tool 1.2: Monitoring (Re)Enrollment, Especially of the Most Marginalized Learners: [Print Version](#) [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

[Learner Enrollment Monitoring Table Electronic-fillable Version](#)

Tool 3.1: Revising the Academic Calendar: [Print Version](#) | [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

Tool 3.2: Revising the Daily/Weekly Academic Schedule: [Print Version](#) | [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

[Instructional Hours Calculations Table Electronic-fillable Version](#)

Tool 3.3: Planning for Accelerating Learning and Catching Up: [Print Version](#) | [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

Tool 3.4: Identifying and Addressing Learners' Protection, Mental Health, and Psychosocial Needs: [Print Version](#) | [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

Tool 4.1: Decision-Making for High-Stakes Examinations: [Print Version](#) | [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

Tool 4.2: Decision-Making for Learner Promotion: [Print Version](#) | [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

[Multi Factor Decision Matrix for Learner Promotion Electronic-fillable Version](#)

Tool 5.1: Identifying and Addressing Educator Needs: [Print Version](#) | [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

Tool 5.2: Adapting the Learning Space: [Print Version](#) | [Electronic-fillable Version](#)

TOOL 0.1

EQUITY AND INCLUSION SELF-ASSESSMENT



USERS

National education officials;
Local education officials;
Educators and administrators;
Implementers



PURPOSE

To ensure that return to learning policies and practices are equitable and inclusive, prioritizing access to safe, quality education opportunities (both in person and at a distance) for all learners during a crisis



ENGAGE

Learners (children and youth), families, and communities; Teachers' unions; Child protection actors and social workers; Representatives of organizations for and led by marginalized populations

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Having completed the tools for Return to Learning priorities 1 through 5, and the Action Plan ([Tool 0.2](#)), with an equity and inclusion (E&I) lens, use this tool to assess your plan, identify gaps, and improve your plan to be more equitable and inclusive of marginalized groups.** (See definitions on page 3).
 - a. For example, if you developed a strong back-to-school campaign delivered via Internet, TV, and radio, this tool may help you realize it will not reach those without access to technology and connectivity. You can then update your plan to include social mobilizers.
 - b. During roll-out of your plan, continuously review your plan using this tool. Especially consider: What has been effective? What isn't working? Who is my intervention reaching? Who is being left out and why?
 - c. Building on the example above, you might later discover that social mobilizers are not effective at re-engaging all learners because they have limited understanding of issues affecting marginalized communities. Therefore, you may use additional strategies to specifically reach marginalized populations.

TOOL 0.1 EQUITY AND INCLUSION SELF-ASSESSMENT

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

2. **Gather and review your notes and decisions made in the Action Plan, debrief pages of all tools, and especially [Tool 1.1, Identifying Barriers and Strategies to \(Re\)engage the Most Marginalized Learners](#).** Bring together relevant stakeholders, including:
 - a. Key decision-makers involved in return to learning policies and practices (e.g., MOEs/MOHEs, Ministry of Health officials, implementing partners, donors, multilateral agencies).
 - b. Specialists working in the area of equity and inclusion, including organizations led by and for different marginalized populations (e.g., organizations of persons with disabilities, representative organizations of Indigenous Peoples, etc.).
 - c. Other partners, such as teachers' unions, social service providers and community leaders.
3. **Be open, honest, and willing to reflect on both your plan's strengths and areas for improvement.**
4. **Go one-by-one through each priority area. Circle the score you assign your plan for each priority area, according to the following scoring system.**

E&I Transformative	E&I Responsive	E&I Unresponsive	E&I Absent/Exploitative
3	2	1	0
Plans recognize inequities and exclusion and take action to address root causes, challenging norms and unequal power relations	Plans recognize inequities and exclusion and address practical aspects but not underlying causes	Plans recognize inequities and exclusion but do not address them	Plans do not recognize inequities and exclusion, or they reinforce or take advantage of them

Write notes that explain the score you have given your plan. If you score your plan 0, 1, or 2 on the priority, document proposed adaptations that you can make.

5. **Once complete, seek constructive feedback from a “critical friend” or moderator who is familiar with the context, the return to learning plans, and related issues of equity and inclusion of marginalized populations in your area.**
6. **Update your Action Plan and carry out adaptations.**
7. **Set dates or time periods to reassess your plan regularly (e.g., two times per year and whenever you make changes in your plans).**

TOOL 0.1 EQUITY AND INCLUSION SELF-ASSESSMENT



DEFINITION

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

[USAID's Education Policy](#) (p. 29), notes that “Marginalized children and youth are more likely to not enter or complete education opportunities. These populations vary by context, and frequently include girls, rural populations, individuals marginalized because of their sexual orientation, individuals with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and children and youth from poor households.” Therefore, an explicit focus on equity and inclusion in the return to learning is essential. For the purposes of this toolkit, equity refers to fair opportunity for all individuals according to their respective needs to achieve their full education potential, regardless of demographic, social, economic, geographic, or other status. Inclusion refers to ensuring that all individuals, including marginalized populations, are fully included in, can actively and directly participate in, and benefit from education activities.

TOOL 0.1 EQUITY AND INCLUSION SELF-ASSESSMENT

PRIORITY I: (RE)ENGAGE ALL LEARNERS, ESPECIALLY THE MOST MARGINALIZED

	E&I Transformative	E&I Responsive	E&I Unresponsive	E&I Absent/Exploitative
	3	2	1	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conduct rapid assessments (either through existing data or primary data collection) to identify marginalized groups. ✓ Collaborate with communities to (re)engage all learners. ✓ Ensure education information and monitoring systems are functioning and capable of tracking (re)enrollment of all learners, especially marginalized populations, in real time. ✓ Promote alternative pathways back to education. ✓ Address policy barriers that exclude some learners from returning to education. 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Equity indicators tracked and used to inform approaches that transform education systems to be more equitable and inclusive</i> • <i>Exclusive policies revised (e.g., those excluding pregnant/parenting teens, refugees)</i> • <i>Opportunities leveraged for equitable participation of women and men, girls and boys, individuals with and without disabilities in return-to-learning decision-making</i> • <i>Resource allocations include funding for specific initiatives to make the return to learning more equitable and inclusive</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Data disaggregated by sex, disability, or other groupings and used to inform inclusive approaches</i> • <i>Back-to-school campaigns rolled out in a variety of media that can reach all learners, including those without access to technology and connectivity and those with disabilities</i> • <i>School fees are waived and/or financial/material support is provided</i> • <i>Alternative education options developed for those who are not able to attend formal education</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Data disaggregated by sex, disability, or other groupings but not used to inform inclusive approaches</i> • <i>Back-to-school campaigns rolled out primarily online, TV, or radio despite evidence and recognition of unequal access to technologies</i> • <i>School fees maintained regardless of known economic hardships of families</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Data not disaggregated by sex, disability, or other groupings</i> • <i>(Re)engaging learners relies primarily or entirely on teachers, teachers' assistants, and community groups, taking advantage of unpaid labor, particularly of women who may be more likely to volunteer their time</i> • <i>Policies exclude girls/young women who became pregnant from attending school, furthering gender inequity in secondary school</i>

Your Plan's Score: _____	Why did you assign your plan the score you did?
Proposed Changes to Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 	

TOOL 0.1 EQUITY AND INCLUSION SELF-ASSESSMENT

PRIORITY 2: DEVELOP EDUCATION REOPENING PLANS

	E&I Transformative	E&I Responsive	E&I Unresponsive	E&I Absent/Exploitative
	3	2	1	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Involve learners, educators, parents, and communities in decision making. ✓ Develop an education reopening plan, including safe operations guidance. ✓ Develop an outbreak response plan at the school level. ✓ Communicate clearly and consistently. ✓ Monitor the situation regularly. 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marginalized communities actively involved in decision-making processes • Long-term budget adaptations planned to increase resources (financial, human, time) to low-resource, marginalized districts and schools to ensure they can meet safe operations standards • All new and rehabilitated equipment and infrastructure meets physical accessibility standards • Access and safety continuously monitored for all learners and staff and improvements routinely made 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultations with organizations representing the needs and priorities of marginalized communities inform inclusive strategies • Budget reallocations made in the short term to help poor districts and schools purchase needed equipment and rehabilitate infrastructure • Plans made to accommodate learners who cannot return right away (e.g. those with underlying medical conditions, those who have to work) • Communications understood by all and available in accessible formats 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs of marginalized communities considered in plan development but without their direct input • Policies require schools to remain shut unless they meet strict safety protocols, but financing not provided despite known wealth gaps between schools • Reopening and response plans only made available in the majority language or an official language and not in accessible formats, despite recognition of a variety of language and accessibility needs 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to learning plans do not consider the needs of marginalized learners • Private or non-state schools that primarily serve wealthy, urban learners reopen first, causing disadvantaged and marginalized groups to fall further behind • No plans exist for monitoring issues of equity and inclusion of marginalized learners in the return to learning

Your Plan's Score: _____	Why did you assign your plan the score you did?
Proposed Changes to Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 	

TOOL 0.1 EQUITY AND INCLUSION SELF-ASSESSMENT

PRIORITY 3: ADAPT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME, CURRICULA, AND LEARNING SUPPORTS

	E&I Transformative	E&I Responsive	E&I Unresponsive	E&I Absent/Exploitative
	3	2	1	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Understand the range of options for helping learners catch up. ✓ Revise the academic calendar and schedule. ✓ Adapt (or condense) the curriculum and teaching and learning materials. ✓ Identify learners' social-emotional, protection, and academic needs. ✓ Consider where distance learning should continue. ✓ Mobilize financial and human resources for planning for catch-up programming. 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Alternative education pathways that consider diverse needs of marginalized learners integrated into education system plans for long-term system transformation</i> • <i>Structures for long-term engagement with marginalized communities built out of short-term processes</i> • <i>Universal Design for Learning principles applied to adaptations to instructional time, curricula, and learning supports</i> • <i>Social-emotional learning and child protection responses are gender transformative</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Alternative learning pathways offered as a short-term, stop-gap measure to allow marginalized learners to return to learning</i> • <i>Marginalized communities consulted in decision-making about the adapted schedule and calendar</i> • <i>Plans made for learners who struggle with (in)accessibility of distance learning and have diverse learning styles</i> • <i>Adaptations (e.g., take-home packets, Internet hubs) made for those without access to technologies</i> • <i>Social-emotional learning and child protection responses are gender responsive</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No education option built in to meet the needs of working learners, teen mothers, and others who cannot attend formal school hours</i> • <i>Marginalized communities not consulted regarding schedule and calendar adaptations</i> • <i>Social-emotional learning and child protection plans lack gender-responsive strategies</i> • <i>Distance learning opportunities established but not accessible to learners with disabilities or those who lack access to technology or connectivity</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Strict attendance policies exist that punish those who do not return right away</i> • <i>A "lost year" or "dead year" is declared, which will likely increase learning loss and dropout for the most marginalized</i> • <i>Adapted class schedule requires attendance during key harvest periods, religious holidays, or other times marginalized groups cannot attend</i> • <i>Curriculum is not adapted in a way that considers the learning needs of marginalized learners</i>

Your Plan's Score:- _____	Why did you assign your plan the score you did?
Proposed Changes to Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 	

TOOL 0.1 EQUITY AND INCLUSION SELF-ASSESSMENT

PRIORITY 4: MODIFY EXAMS AND LEARNER PROMOTION PRACTICES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify how exams have been affected by the crisis. ✓ Identify which exams are a priority. ✓ Develop a learner promotion strategy. ✓ Communicate with learners, families, and educators. ✓ Ensure monitoring systems to track access to exams and pass rates are in place. ✓ Mobilize resources needed to implement adapted exams. 	E&I Transformative	E&I Responsive	E&I Unresponsive	E&I Absent/Exploitative
	3	2	1	0
	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assessment and promotion policies and practices revised to allow for different ways of demonstrating achievement of competencies and readiness for the next grade/level, and financing reallocated so new strategy is sustainable</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exam fees waived for disadvantaged learners and childcare vouchers provided so teen mothers can sit exams</i> • <i>Exams provided in accessible formats and reasonable accommodations are provided for learners with disabilities</i> • <i>Auto-promotion of all learners implemented with remedial support for learners who are struggling</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exams only offered during hours that are hard for working learners to attend</i> • <i>Exam modality (in-person, online) not accessible to all learners (e.g., those who cannot access online exams or come to test sites)</i> • <i>Monitoring of pass rates and promotion disaggregated by sex, disability status, displacement status, and/or other subgroupings, but not used to develop inclusive strategies</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>One-size-fits-all exam and promotion strategies implemented without proper remediation, further marginalizing some learners</i> • <i>Monitoring of pass rates and promotion does not disaggregate by sex, disability status, displacement status, or other subgroupings</i>

Your Plan's Score: _____	Why did you assign your plan the score you did?
Proposed Changes to Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 	

TOOL 0.1 EQUITY AND INCLUSION SELF-ASSESSMENT

PRIORITY 5: RE-ENGAGE EDUCATORS AND PREPARE THE LEARNING SPACE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Revisit workforce needs. ✓ Address educator capacity development needs. ✓ Develop or revise policy to meet education workforce needs. ✓ Assess the need for repairs and creation of new learning spaces, additional furniture and materials, disinfection of learning spaces, and signage and floor markings. ✓ Mobilize financial resources to fill gaps. 	E&I Transformative	E&I Responsive	E&I Unresponsive	E&I Absent/Exploitative
	3	2	1	0
	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Educator policies revised to allow refugee educators to teach</i> • <i>Community members engaged to monitor representativeness of education personnel</i> • <i>Hardship pay policies developed to compensate educators in crisis-affected communities</i> • <i>Universal Design for Learning principles integrated throughout the design and implementation of educator training and the learning space</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Childcare vouchers provided for female educators to improve the gender balance of educators</i> • <i>Recruitment of new educators or teaching assistants includes equal and fair hiring requirements, e.g. at least 50 percent female; at least 15 percent with a disability; ethnically and linguistically representative of the student population</i> • <i>Reasonable accommodations provided for people with disabilities</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Educators not trained and supported to meet the needs of marginalized learners</i> • <i>Construction and renovation of new and existing learning spaces do not consider accessibility for persons with disabilities</i> 	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Plans rely on community women to volunteer to facilitate small learning groups, which exploits women's unpaid labor</i> • <i>Plans rely on community members to educate or provide unpaid support to marginalized learners (e.g., learners with disabilities, language minority groups)</i>

Your Plan's Score:	Why did you assign your plan the score you did?

Proposed Changes to Plan:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 	

TOOL 0.2

ACTION PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE



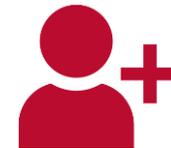
USERS

National education officials; Local education officials; Educators and administrators; Implementers



PURPOSE

To create an action plan by prioritizing next steps, considering how actions contribute to building resilience capacities, and establishing what resources/preconditions are needed, who is responsible to carry them out, and by when



ENGAGE

Learners (children and youth); Families and communities

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **As you move through the toolkit, list strategies you will take to support the education system's ability to adapt, absorb, and transform** in emergency response and recovery in the Building Resilience Organizer. Review a suggestive [list of adaptive, absorptive, and transformative capacities](#) and the [framework for resilience in the education sector](#). Some capacities may span across multiple columns, but note where it fits best.
2. **Once the Building Resilience Organizer is complete, review it and identify key actions under each priority area.** List key actions in the Action Planning Matrix by timeline: short-term, medium-term, and long-term.
3. When you complete the toolkit, return to this action plan. **Update any key actions required. Then, add in the steps required to achieve those actions and the resources or preconditions needed. Finally, assign a person for carrying out the action and a due date.** Be sure to plan for following up to ensure actions were completed and for changing course if needed.



TOOL 0.2 ACTION PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE

Locality: _____

Grade/Level: _____

Today's date: _____

Developed by: _____

BUILDING RESILIENCE ORGANIZER			
ACTIONS FOR MOEs, MOHEs, AND EDUCATION PLANNERS	STRATEGIES TO ABSORB	STRATEGIES TO ADAPT	STRATEGIES TO TRANSFORM
<p>PRIORITY 1: (RE)ENGAGE ALL LEARNERS, ESPECIALLY THE MOST MARGINALIZED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conduct rapid assessments (either through existing data or primary data collection) to identify marginalized groups. ✓ Collaborate with communities to (re)engage all learners. ✓ Ensure education information and monitoring systems are functioning and capable of tracking (re)enrollment of all learners, especially marginalized populations, in real time. ✓ Promote alternative pathways back to education. ✓ Address policy barriers that exclude some learners from returning to education. 			
<p>PRIORITY 2: DEVELOP EDUCATION REOPENING PLANS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Involve learners, educators, parents, and communities in decision-making. ✓ Develop an education reopening plan, including safe operations guidance. ✓ Develop an outbreak response plan at the school level. ✓ Communicate clearly and consistently. ✓ Monitor the situation regularly. 			



TOOL 0.2 ACTION PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE

Locality: _____

Grade/Level: _____

Today's date: _____

Developed by: _____

ACTIONS FOR MOEs, MOHEs, AND EDUCATION PLANNERS	STRATEGIES TO ABSORB	STRATEGIES TO ADAPT	STRATEGIES TO TRANSFORM
<p>PRIORITY 3: ADAPT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME, CURRICULA, AND LEARNING SUPPORTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Understand the range of options for helping learners catch up. ✓ Revise the academic calendar and schedule. ✓ Adapt (or condense) the curriculum and teaching and learning materials. ✓ Identify learners' social-emotional, protection, and academic needs. ✓ Consider where distance learning should continue. ✓ Mobilize financial and human resources for planning for catch-up programming. 			
<p>PRIORITY 4: MODIFY EXAMS AND LEARNER PROMOTION PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify how exams have been affected by the crisis. ✓ Identify which exams are a priority. ✓ Develop a learner promotion strategy. ✓ Communicate with learners, families, and educators. ✓ Ensure that monitoring systems to track access to exams and pass rates are in place. ✓ Mobilize resources needed to implement adapted exams. 			



TOOL 0.2 ACTION PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE

Locality: _____
 Grade/Level: _____

Today's date: _____
 Developed by: _____

ACTIONS FOR MOEs, MOHEs, AND EDUCATION PLANNERS	STRATEGIES TO ABSORB	STRATEGIES TO ADAPT	STRATEGIES TO TRANSFORM
<p>PRIORITY 5: RE-ENGAGE EDUCATORS AND PREPARE THE LEARNING SPACE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Revisit workforce needs. ✓ Address educator capacity development needs. ✓ Develop or revise policy to meet education workforce needs. ✓ Assess the need for repairs and creation of new learning spaces, additional furniture and materials, disinfection of learning spaces, and signage and floor markings. ✓ Mobilize financial resources to fill gaps. 			



TOOL 0.2 ACTION PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE

Locality: _____

Grade/Level: _____

Today's date: _____

Developed by: _____

ACTION PLANNING MATRIX

PRIORITY 1: (RE)ENGAGE ALL LEARNERS, ESPECIALLY THE MOST MARGINALIZED				
KEY ACTION	STEPS	RESOURCES	WHO?	WHEN?
SHORT TERM				
MEDIUM TERM				
LONG TERM				



TOOL 0.2 ACTION PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE

Locality: _____
 Grade/Level: _____

Today's date: _____
 Developed by: _____

PRIORITY 2: DEVELOP EDUCATION REOPENING PLANS				
KEY ACTION	STEPS	RESOURCES	WHO?	WHEN?
SHORT TERM				
MEDIUM TERM				
LONG TERM				



TOOL 0.2 ACTION PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE

Locality: _____

Grade/Level: _____

Today's date: _____

Developed by: _____

PRIORITY 3: ADAPT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME, CURRICULA, AND LEARNING SUPPORTS				
KEY ACTION	STEPS	RESOURCES	WHO?	WHEN?
SHORT TERM				
MEDIUM TERM				
LONG TERM				



TOOL 0.2 ACTION PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE

Locality: _____

Grade/Level: _____

Today's date: _____

Developed by: _____

PRIORITY 4: MODIFY EXAMS AND LEARNER PROMOTION PRACTICES				
KEY ACTION	STEPS	RESOURCES	WHO?	WHEN?
SHORT TERM				
MEDIUM TERM				
LONG TERM				



TOOL 0.2 ACTION PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE

Locality: _____

Grade/Level: _____

Today's date: _____

Developed by: _____

PRIORITY 5: RE ENGAGE EDUCATORS AND PREPARE THE LEARNING SPACE				
KEY ACTION	STEPS	RESOURCES	WHO?	WHEN?
SHORT TERM				
MEDIUM TERM				
LONG TERM				

TOOL 1.1

IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES TO (RE)ENGAGE THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS



USERS

Educators and administrators;
Implementers; Local education
officials; National education officials



PURPOSE

To understand how the pandemic has
affected learners, especially the most
marginalized, and to identify strategies to
re-engage them



ENGAGE

Learners (children and youth);
Families and communities; Child
protection actors and social workers

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Complete the information checklist to identify useful sources of information and data to help you identify barriers to returning to learning for marginalized learners.** Check the box if you have or can obtain the information. For information you can obtain, be sure to gather it before continuing. Whenever possible, gather information directly from learners, family members, and communities and be sure to disaggregate by, at a minimum, gender, disability, and displacement status (if applicable).
2. **In the Barriers and Strategies Matrix, in the left-hand column, review the list of all the groups of learners in your context who might need additional attention to (re)engage in education.** This should be based on your review of information and data you noted in the checklist. Additional needs assessment/situation analysis should be conducted where recent, relevant information is not available. Adapt the groups of learners by adding or deleting groups to fit your context.

TOOL 1.1 IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES TO (RE)ENGAGE THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

- 3. For each group, list the specific barriers this group faces to (re)engage in education.** Barriers should be based on information or data, rather than on assumptions or stereotypes. Barriers for most groups will include lack of information about reopening dates/processes, fear of getting sick, or over-crowded classrooms that don't allow for physical distancing. Some groups may also face barriers related to restrictive policies (e.g., pregnant girls, refugees), stigma (e.g., learners who had/whose family members were sick), poverty and need to work, being over-age and behind grade level, or social-emotional issues. Consider supply-side barriers related to schools, institutions, or the education system, as well as demand-side barriers related to individual learners, families, and communities.
- 4. In the second column, list what each group needs in order to overcome those barriers. Then, in the third column, list the strategies you can use to (re)engage those young people in education by providing for those needs.** Learners may need, for example, information, a supportive policy environment, financial and material support, additional space in classrooms or schools, etc. Therefore, strategies may include new or revised policies, additional funding, interventions and practices, training to educators, adaptations to infrastructure, etc. Review the [resilience capacities](#) for strategies. Strategies to (re)engage the most marginalized will benefit all learners.
5. It may be helpful to complete this tool for different geographic regions or age groups, since there are likely to be differences between these groups.
6. Ensure you track the return to learning by marginalized groups using [Tool 1.2](#).
7. **When you complete this tool, answer the debrief questions** to identify what you have learned, what it means for the return to learning, and what must happen next.
8. **Finally, complete the Action Plan in [Tool 0.2](#)** to list strategies to enhance resilience of the education system and compile, in a single plan, the key actions for follow-up.

TOOL 1.1 IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES TO (RE)ENGAGE THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS

EXAMPLE			
POPULATION	WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT THESE LEARNERS FROM RETURNING TO EDUCATION DURING COVID-19?	WHAT WILL THEY NEED TO OVERCOME THOSE BARRIERS AND RETURN TO EDUCATION?	WHAT STRATEGIES CAN BE IMPLEMENTED TO MEET THOSE NEEDS THAT ARE FEASIBLE?
Adolescent girls/young women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adolescent girls and young women are not prioritized for education, especially in poorer households. Data from recent needs assessment show an increase in girls'/women's time spent on household chores, as well as selling and trading in the market. Data show that many households have increased poverty levels. Data show an increase in pregnancy while schools were closed. Policy prevents visibly pregnant girls and young women from attending school, and stigma adds an additional burden. Data show young mothers struggle to find childcare and pay to support their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls, families, and communities need to understand the value of ensuring girls and young women return to education, including human rights issues, child protection issues, income generation benefits in the long-run, etc. Girls from poor households may need financial/material support to return to school. Pregnant girls/young women may need alternative education in the short-term, and a supportive policy environment in the long term. Young mothers need childcare options and financial support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Back-to-school campaign that emphasizes importance of returning to school for girls and young women, especially those who are pregnant or parenting. Social mobilizers in communities to visit homes of those most at risk of dropping out or those who were out-of-school prior to COVID-19. Waive school fees for all learners. Provide school feeding and school materials to families in need. Unconditional cash transfers to families who need the additional income. Childcare vouchers or flexible schedule options for young mothers. Alternative education options for pregnant girls/young women, and eventually, modifications to policy so it doesn't exclude pregnant girls/young women.

TOOL 1.1 IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES TO (RE)ENGAGE THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS

INFORMATION CHECKLIST

1. Do you have recent, relevant information about enrollment and barriers to enrollment (e.g., conversations, interviews, focus groups) from:

- Girls and boys, children and youth with and without disabilities, host community and displaced learners**

Notes:

- Parents or caretakers**

Notes:

- Administrators and educators of pre-primary, primary, secondary, and higher education**

Notes:

- National and local government officials**

Notes:

- Child protection and social service providers, and other child- and youth-serving organizations**

Notes:

2. Do you have recent, relevant data on enrollment and barriers to enrollment from:

- Education management and information system (EMIS), school enrollment records, and other administrative data**

Notes:

- Household surveys, such as UNICEF MICS, USAID DHS, and World Bank HFS**

Notes:

- Program evaluations or needs assessments**

Notes:

- Context, situation, or risk analyses (e.g., RERA)**

Notes:

3. Do you have other recent, relevant information or data? (List all.)

Notes:

TOOL 1.1 IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES TO (RE)ENGAGE THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS

BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES MATRIX			
POPULATION	WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT THESE LEARNERS FROM RETURNING TO EDUCATION?	WHAT WILL THEY NEED TO OVERCOME THOSE BARRIERS AND RETURN TO EDUCATION?	WHAT STRATEGIES CAN BE IMPLEMENTED TO MEET THOSE NEEDS THAT ARE FEASIBLE?
Girls/Young Women			
Boys/Young Men			
Learners with Disabilities			
Displaced Populations			

TOOL 1.1 IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES TO (RE)ENGAGE THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS

POPULATION GROUP	WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT THESE LEARNERS FROM RETURNING TO EDUCATION?	WHAT WILL THEY NEED TO OVERCOME THOSE BARRIERS AND RETURN TO EDUCATION?	WHAT STRATEGIES CAN BE IMPLEMENTED TO MEET THOSE NEEDS THAT ARE FEASIBLE?
Host Community Populations			
Young Children			
Adolescents & Youth			
Out-of-School Children and Youth			
Most/All Learners			

TOOL 1.1 IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES TO (RE)ENGAGE THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS

POPULATION GROUP	WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT THESE LEARNERS FROM RETURNING TO EDUCATION?	WHAT WILL THEY NEED TO OVERCOME THOSE BARRIERS AND RETURN TO EDUCATION?	WHAT STRATEGIES CAN BE IMPLEMENTED TO MEET THOSE NEEDS THAT ARE FEASIBLE?
Other: _____			
Other: _____			
Other: _____			

TOOL 1.1 IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES TO (RE)ENGAGE THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS

PLANNING DEBRIEF

WHAT?

What have you learned from this tool? What decisions have you made? What is missing?

SO WHAT?

What implications does this have for planning the return to learning? Why is this important?

NOW WHAT?

What must you do next? What challenges must you address?

TOOL 1.2

MONITORING (RE)ENROLLMENT ESPECIALLY OF THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS



USERS

Educators and administrators;
Implementers; Local education
officials; National education officials



PURPOSE

To rapidly estimate which learners are
struggling to return to education,
disaggregated by group, in order to
intervene and re-engage them



ENGAGE

Learners (children and youth);
Families and communities; Child
protection actors and social workers

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **In the Monitoring Table, Column 1, review the population categories.** Add or delete population groups that need to be disaggregated in your context. Consider gender, disability, displacement status, rural/urban location, religious/ethnic minorities, and socio-economic status, among other groups. Ensure you can collect data disaggregated by sub-group.
2. **In the Monitoring Table, Column 2, enter the number of learners enrolled prior to the emergency.** Be sure to check enrollment records to verify.
3. **Review the time points for monitoring.** Monitoring of (re)enrollment should be conducted at least three times to see progress and gaps over time. Adjust time points as needed. If education institutions close again, adapt the monitoring table.

TOOL 1.2 MONITORING (RE)ENROLLMENT ESPECIALLY OF THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

- 4. In the Monitoring Table, Columns 3-8, enter the number of learners in each group enrolled at each time point.** Calculate the percentage of those who have returned. (This methodology does not give the exact rate of return, as some students will be new and replace some students who have dropped out. However, it will be a “good enough” estimate for identifying gaps in return rates.)
- 5. Review and validate data with learners, families, and educators.**
- 6. Complete this table for as many schools, levels, or grades as needed.** E.g., you may have one table for all junior secondary learners and one table for all senior secondary learners in a locality. Or you may complete one table per grade level if tracking at a school level.
- 7. When you complete this tool, answer the debrief questions** to identify what you have learned, what it means for the return to learning, and what must happen next.
- 8. Finally, complete the Action Plan in [Tool 0.2](#)** to list strategies to enhance resilience of the education system and compile, in a single plan, the key actions for follow-up.

TOOL 1.2 MONITORING (RE)ENROLLMENT ESPECIALLY OF THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS

Locality: _____ Today's date: _____
 Grade/Level: _____ Developed by: _____

Complete the following calculations or [use this spreadsheet](#) to auto-calculate.

LEARNER ENROLLMENT MONITORING TABLE							
COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4	COLUMN 5	COLUMN 6	COLUMN 7	COLUMN 8
SUB-GROUP	# LEARNERS ENROLLED WHEN EDUCATION WAS CLOSED	# AND % OF LEARNERS ENROLLED WHEN SCHOOLS REOPEN AT:					
		WEEK 1		WEEK 4 (MONTH 1)		WEEK 12 (MONTH 3)	
		#	% (COLUMN 3 DIVIDED BY COLUMN 2)	#	% (COLUMN 5 DIVIDED BY COLUMN 2)	#	% (COLUMN 7 DIVIDED BY COLUMN 2)
Total # of Learners							
Girls/Young Women							
Boys/Young Men							
Learners with Disabilities							
Displaced Learners							

PLANNING DEBRIEF

WHAT?

What have you learned from this tool? What decisions have you made? What is missing?

SO WHAT?

What implications does this have for planning the return to learning? Why is this important?

NOW WHAT?

What must you do next? What challenges must you address?

TOOL 3.1 REVISING THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR



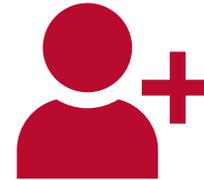
USERS

National education officials;
Local education officials;
Educators and administrators;
Implementers



PURPOSE

To make decisions about how
to adapt the academic calendar
so learners can catch up and get
back on track



ENGAGE

Learners (children and youth);
Families and communities;
Curriculum and instruction specialists;
Child development and learning
specialists; Teachers' unions

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Complete the reflection questions** to think about some of the key considerations for adapting the academic calendar.
2. **Identify which group** you are adapting the calendar for and write that in the space provided at the top of the calendar. (You may need to create separate calendars for primary, secondary, and higher education learners; learners in districts that will return earlier or later; etc.).
3. **Complete the appropriate calendar** (January–November or September–June) for the “best case scenario” for that group:
 - a. On the first row of the calendar, indicate the standard academic calendar for that group by shading/coloring the boxes partially or fully. Use different colors for different academic years. Label semesters/trimesters.
 - b. In the second row, shade/color the calendar to indicate schooling completed before the education disruption (i.e., COVID-19) and shade in a different color where the emergency interrupted education.
 - c. In the second row, continue to shade/color (in a different color) the time frame for the following school year.
 - d. Finally, complete important dates in the boxes below the calendar. This will be transferred to [Tool 3.2](#).

TOOL 3.1 REVISING THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

EXAMPLE: The following is an example of a COVID-19 Adapted Academic Calendar:

Date of School Closure: April 1, 2020

Projected Return Date: October 1, 2020

	2020												2021															
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec				
Standard Calendar		Semester 1							Semester 2							Semester 1							Semester 2					
COVID-19 Calendar		Semester 1		COVID-19				Catch-up Semester 1 & 2 of Academic Year 2020						Condensed Semester 1 & 2 of Academic Year 2020														

- Then, complete this activity a second time** for a “realistic scenario” or “next best case” scenario. Ideally you will complete it a third time for “worst case scenario.” The purpose of completing multiple scenarios is to prepare for the possibility that the original date for reopening will change.
- When you complete this tool**, answer the debrief questions to identify what you have learned, what it means for the return to learning, and what must happen next.
- Finally, complete the Action Plan in [Tool 0.2](#)** to list strategies to enhance resilience of the education system and compile in a single plan the key actions for follow-up.

TOOL 3.1 REVISING THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

LEARNING LOSS & CATCHING UP

1. What is the projected reopening date(s)? _____

2. How many weeks/months will education institutions have been closed?

_____ weeks months (check weeks or months)

3. How much instructional time will these learners have missed (excluding holidays)?

_____ weeks months semesters (check weeks, months, or semesters)

4. What key education events were rescheduled, postponed, or cancelled?

(e.g., exams, # of semesters/trimesters, holiday/break)? _____

5. If there are no further disruptions, by when do you hope to have learners back on track/caught up in the curriculum?

6. How much instructional time must fit into the next academic year(s)?

(e.g., 4 trimesters into 1 academic year; 6 semesters into 2 academic years)

7. Check which academic calendars (for which learner groups) **need to be adapted separately**

(e.g., if they follow a different calendar or if they will return at different times):

- Early childhood education
- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Technical/vocational education and training
- Non-formal education
- Higher education
- Other: _____

TOOL 3.1 REVISING THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

RETURNING TO LEARNING

8. Will all learners return to school: At the same time In a progressive way; describe: _____

9. Will they return: Full time Part time; describe: _____

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

10. What physical distancing strategies will be required to keep learners and educators safe and healthy?

(e.g., keep learners and educators 6 feet/2 meters apart; learners face in the same direction; learners enter school at different times)

11. How will all of these considerations and adjustments affect instructional time?

(e.g., reduce the number of in-person instructional hours; require attendance during breaks; double shift; staggered start times; blended learning)



TOOL 3.1 REVISING THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

School/Locality: _____

Today's date: _____

Grade/Level: _____

Developed by: _____

ADAPTED ACADEMIC CALENDAR

February–November Academic Year Countries

Date of School Closure: _____

Projected Return Date: _____

	2020												2021											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Standard Calendar																								
Adapted Calendar																								

Important Dates (cross out grey text if not applicable)

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020		
SEMESTER/TERM 1	SEMESTER/TERM 2	TERM 3
First day of classes:	First day of classes:	First day of classes:
Last day of classes:	Last day of classes:	Last day of classes:
Mid-term break:	Mid-term break:	Mid-term break:
Exams:	Exams:	Exams:
Holidays (No class):	Holidays (No class):	Holidays (No class):

ACADEMIC YEAR 2021		
SEMESTER/TERM 1	SEMESTER/TERM 2	TERM 3
First day of classes:	First day of classes:	First day of classes:
Last day of classes:	Last day of classes:	Last day of classes:
Mid-term break:	Mid-term break:	Mid-term break:
Exams:	Exams:	Exams:
Holidays (No class):	Holidays (No class):	Holidays (No class):

TOOL 3.1 REVISING THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

School/Locality: _____

Today's date: _____

Grade/Level: _____

Developed by: _____

ADAPTED ACADEMIC CALENDAR

September–June Academic Year Countries

Date of School Closure: _____

Projected Return Date: _____

	2020												2021											
	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July
Standard Calendar																								
Adapted Calendar																								

Important Dates (cross out grey text if not applicable)

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020		
SEMESTER/TERM 1	SEMESTER/TERM 2	TERM 3
First day of classes:	First day of classes:	First day of classes:
Last day of classes:	Last day of classes:	Last day of classes:
Mid-term break:	Mid-term break:	Mid-term break:
Exams:	Exams:	Exams:
Holidays (No class):	Holidays (No class):	Holidays (No class):

ACADEMIC YEAR 2021		
SEMESTER/TERM 1	SEMESTER/TERM 2	TERM 3
First day of classes:	First day of classes:	First day of classes:
Last day of classes:	Last day of classes:	Last day of classes:
Mid-term break:	Mid-term break:	Mid-term break:
Exams:	Exams:	Exams:
Holidays (No class):	Holidays (No class):	Holidays (No class):

TOOL 3.1 REVISING THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

PLANNING DEBRIEF

WHAT?

What have you learned from this tool? What decisions have you made? What is missing?

SO WHAT?

What implications does this have for planning the return to learning? Why is this important?

NOW WHAT?

What must you do next? What challenges must you address?

TOOL 3.2

REVISING THE DAILY/WEEKLY ACADEMIC SCHEDULE



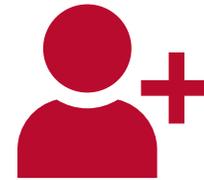
USERS

National education officials;
Local education officials;
Educators and administrators;
Implementers



PURPOSE

To make decisions about how
to adapt the daily/weekly
academic schedule so learners can
catch up and get back on track



ENGAGE

Learners (children and youth);
Families and communities;
Curriculum and instruction specialists;
Child development and learning
specialists; Teachers' unions

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Identify which group** you are adapting the schedule for. (You may need to create separate schedules for primary, secondary, and higher education learners; learners in districts that will return earlier or later; etc.). Complete a separate schedule for all groups that require it following the steps listed below.
2. **Pull important dates for the current academic year** (not next year) for that group into this tool from [Tool 3.1](#). Complete the Instructional Hours Calculation Table.
3. **When you complete this tool**, answer the debrief questions to identify what you have learned, what it means for the return to learning, and what must happen next.
4. **Finally, complete the Action Plan in [Tool 0.2](#)** to list strategies to enhance resilience of the education system and compile in a single plan the key actions for follow-up.

Note: During closures, some learners may have had access to distance learning to deliver essential health and safety messages, reduce learning loss, and ensure continuity of learning. However, this tool assumes that while some learners have engaged in distance learning, for the majority this has not led to new learning. Therefore, it is assumed that nearly all learners have, at a maximum, the knowledge and skills they obtained before closures, and most have lost some of that.

TOOL 3.2 REVISING THE DAILY/WEEKLY ACADEMIC SCHEDULE

ADAPTED ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Important Dates (cross out grey text if not applicable)

Note: Pull this information from [Tool 3.1](#)

ACADEMIC YEAR (20__/20__)		
SEMESTER/TERM 1	SEMESTER/TERM 2	TERM 3
First day of classes:	First day of classes:	First day of classes:
Last day of classes:	Last day of classes:	Last day of classes:
Mid-term break:	Mid-term break:	Mid-term break:
Exams:	Exams:	Exams:
Holidays (No class):	Holidays (No class):	Holidays (No class):

TOOL 3.2 REVISING THE DAILY/WEEKLY ACADEMIC SCHEDULE

School/Locality: _____

Today's date: _____

Grade/Level: _____

Developed by: _____

INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS CALCULATIONS

Complete the following calculations or [use this spreadsheet](#) to auto-calculate.

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In a normal academic year:	
1a	How many instructional hours per academic year?	
1b	How many terms per year (semesters = 2; trimesters = 3)?	
1c	How many in-school weeks per term (excluding holidays)?	
1d	How many instructional hours per week ($1a \div 1b \div 1c$)?	

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
2	With the adapted academic year calendar:	
2a	How many instructional hours must you cover in the academic year (including catch-up and regular instructional hours)?	
2b	How many terms in the adapted year (catch-up + regular terms)?	
2c	How many in-school weeks per adapted term (excluding holidays)?	
2d	How many instructional hours are needed per week in adapted term ($2a \div 2b \div 2c$)?	

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
3	To catch-up and get back on track:	
3a	What is the difference between instructional hours needed in adapted term and instructional hours in regular term ($2d - 1d$)?	
3b	<p>Shade the adapted academic schedule in the schedule template, incorporating additional hours, e.g., by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adding classes on Saturdays or evenings b. Changing start/end times of school day c. Leveraging distance learning/out-of-class time <p><i>NOTE: If using double shifts, ensure there is sufficient time between shifts to clean the educational space.</i></p> <p><i>NOTE: If using distance learning, consider how much time using distance learning is possible for learners of different ages.</i></p>	



TOOL 3.2 REVISING THE DAILY/WEEKLY ACADEMIC SCHEDULE

School/Locality: _____

Today's date: _____

Grade/Level: _____

Developed by: _____

ADAPTED ACADEMIC SCHEDULE

20__/20__ ACADEMIC YEAR							
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
13:00							
14:00							
15:00							
16:00							
17:00							
18:00							

TOOL 3.2 REVISING THE DAILY/WEEKLY ACADEMIC SCHEDULE

PLANNING DEBRIEF

WHAT?

What have you learned from this tool? What decisions have you made? What is missing?

SO WHAT?

What implications does this have for planning the return to learning? Why is this important?

NOW WHAT?

What must you do next? What challenges must you address?

TOOL 3.3

PLANNING FOR ACCELERATING LEARNING AND CATCHING UP



USERS

National education officials;
Local education officials;
Educators and administrators;
Implementers



PURPOSE

To identify which curricular resources are already available and which need to be developed/adapted to help learners develop essential competencies and catch up



ENGAGE

Learners (children and youth), families, and communities; Curriculum and instruction specialists; Child development and learning specialists; Teachers' unions

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Review the [COVID-19 Decision Tree](#)** to identify what type of adaptations need to be made to meet the needs of learners in your context, program, or school.
2. **If you plan to implement a catch-up program, you will need a condensed curriculum. Gather existing curricula and teaching and learning materials**, including any curricula for non-formal education, accelerated education, or catch-up programs that may already be condensed. Starting from the top of the Planning for Accelerating Learning to Catch Up Organizer, ask the series of questions about what adaptations you will need to make in order to prioritize competencies, teach essential social-emotional skills, and help learners get back on track.
3. **As you move through the organizer, take notes.** Notes may include which curriculum can be used as a starting point, where financial resources can be shifted, and what training and supports educators will need to carry out adaptations.

TOOL 3.3 PLANNING FOR ACCELERATING LEARNING AND CATCHING UP

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

4. **Utilize the recommended resources** provided in the organizer, depending on which phase of the planning process your school or educational institution is in and your specific needs.
5. **When you complete this tool, answer the debrief questions** to identify what you have learned, what it means for the return to learning, and what must happen next.
6. **Finally, complete the Action Plan in [Tool 0.2](#)** to list strategies to enhance resilience of the education system and compile in a single plan the key actions for follow-up.

TOOL 3.3 PLANNING FOR ACCELERATING LEARNING AND CATCHING UP

ACCELERATING LEARNING TO CATCH UP ORGANIZER

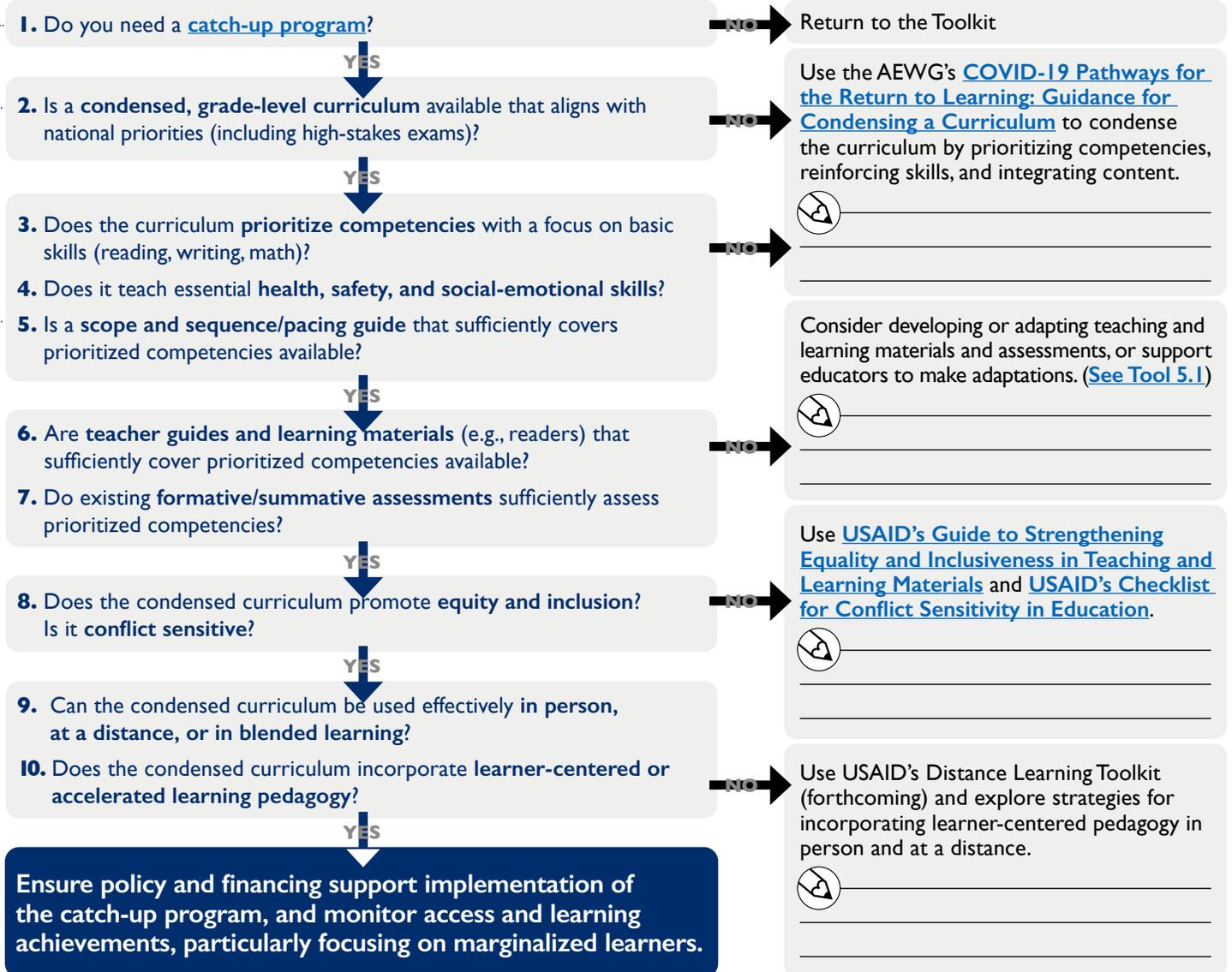
A **catch-up program** is “a short-term transitional education programme for children and youth who had been actively attending school prior to an educational disruption, which provides students with the opportunity to learn content missed because of the disruption and supports their re-entry to the formal system.”

Accelerated Education Working Group, “COVID-19: Pathways for the Return to Learning,” (2020), <https://inee.org/resources/covid-19-pathways-return-learning>.

A **condensed curriculum** is a modification to a standard curriculum that identifies and maps out the most important knowledge and skills that learners need to achieve grade-level proficiency in a shortened time frame.

Accelerated Education Working Group, “COVID-19: Pathways for the Return to Learning: Guidance on Condensing a Curriculum,” (2020), <https://inee.org/resources/covid-19-pathways-return-learning-guidance-condensing-curriculum>.

A **scope and sequence** lays out a learning sequence that focuses instruction on the attainment of priority outcomes and includes revision of prerequisite knowledge and skills. It also includes the suggested number of lessons for each part of the learning sequence.



TOOL 3.3 PLANNING FOR ACCELERATING LEARNING AND CATCHING UP

PLANNING DEBRIEF

WHAT?

What have you learned from this tool? What decisions have you made? What is missing?

SO WHAT?

What implications does this have for planning the return to learning? Why is this important?

NOW WHAT?

What must you do next? What challenges must you address?

TOOL 3.4

IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING LEARNERS' PROTECTION, MENTAL HEALTH, AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS



USERS

Educators and administrators;
Implementers; Educator
trainers



PURPOSE

To plan and make decisions about how to address
protection, mental health, and psychosocial needs
during the return to learning



ENGAGE

Local education officials; Learners (children and
youth), families, and communities; Child protection
actors and social workers; Health actors; Curriculum
and instruction specialists; Child development and
learning specialists

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Review the Protection, Mental Health, and Psychosocial Impacts and Strategies Matrix (below).**
2. **Identify the protection, mental health, and psychosocial impacts and needs of learners.** Identifying such needs can be done through qualitative needs assessments in the form of conversations, focus group discussions, observations, or surveys. Ask learners, their families, educators, and community leaders how the crisis has affected and continues to affect their personal sense of well-being, social interactions, emotional state, and issues of protection. Ask these stakeholders what their most important needs are. Recall that in [Tool 1.1](#) you identified many child protection and social-emotional needs that may prevent learners from re-engaging in education. Remember, protection, mental health, and psychosocial needs will change over time. Any needs assessments, whether formal or informal, should be conducted on a rolling basis to identify new or evolving areas of need.

TOOL 3.4 IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING LEARNERS' PROTECTION, MENTAL HEALTH, AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

Guiding questions to assess protection, mental health, and psychosocial needs:

- **Child Protection:** What risks have children and youth faced due to the crisis? Has child marriage, teen pregnancy, child labor, domestic violence, or other protection issues increased? How will these risks affect learners' ability to return to education?
 - **Mental health:** How has the crisis directly affected the mental health of the learners? How has the crisis indirectly affected the mental health of learners (e.g., due to the crisis, children experienced greater domestic violence, leading to greater distrust in previously trusted adults)? What (new) stressors are learners experiencing?
 - **Readjust back to school:** How will new school structures and protocols affect learners mentally and emotionally? What new challenges will learners face? What routines or skills will learners need to recover?
 - **Thrive academically:** How has the crisis affected learners' feelings toward learning or academics? What new challenges are learners facing academically? How are these new challenges affecting learners' emotional states?
 - **Recover social skills:** What social skills will learners need to recover as they return to school? How will these skills look different due to the crisis?
 - **Equity:** How has the crisis differentially affected girls and boys, learners with and without disabilities, rural and urban populations, younger and older children/youth, religious and ethnic minorities, displaced populations, etc.?
3. **List the protection, mental health, and psychosocial impacts** identified in the needs assessment in Box 2. Indicate if certain sub-groups (e.g., girls, learners with disabilities, displaced learners) are specifically affected or more susceptible to particular risks. Impacts may need to be prioritized based on prevalence, frequency, or degree.
 4. Using the identified child protection, mental health, and psychosocial impacts as a guide, **identify objectives for your education program**. Take care to follow the Do No Harm imperative, referring learners to child protection and mental health professionals when needed. List objectives for child protection, mental health, and psychosocial support in Box 3.
 5. **Plan to address protection, mental health, and psychosocial needs** in the classroom or learning space, through schoolwide policies and practices, and by involving peers, caregivers, and communities. Some strategies may be more appropriate/effective for some groups than for others—as needed, specify the target group of certain strategies.

Be cautious when using or developing measures for protection and psychosocial needs. A universal measure does not exist, and linguistic and cultural adaptation will be required.

The [INEE landscape review](#) on SEL and PSS measures for education in emergencies provides a range of tools for holistic measurement of social and emotional and psychosocial wellbeing.

The [INEE Measurement Library](#) provides a number of tools for holistic measurement of children and youth's learning and development validated for contexts in the Middle East.

TOOL 3.4 IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING LEARNERS' PROTECTION, MENTAL HEALTH, AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

- a. Indicate strategies or practices to integrate in every classroom or learning space. Consider how these strategies could be adapted for distance learning should educational institutions be required to close again. Ensure that both in-person and distance learning practices engage all learners, including those with disabilities and those who lack access to technology. Record classroom-level strategies you will use in Box 4A.
 - b. Indicate strategies or practices that will be used schoolwide or across the educational institution, by all learners, educators, and administrators. Consider how these strategies could be adapted for distance learning should educational institutions be required to close again. Ensure that both in person and distance learning practices engage all learners, including those with disabilities and those who lack access to technology. Record schoolwide strategies you will use in Box 4B.
 - c. Indicate strategies or practices that can be used in collaboration with families and the community. Consider how these strategies could be adapted for distance learning should educational institutions be required to close again. Ensure that both in-person and distance learning practices engage all learners, including those with disabilities and those who lack access to technology. Record family- and community-level strategies you will use in Box 4C.
6. **When you complete this tool, answer the debrief questions** to identify what you have learned, what it means for the return to learning, and what must happen next.
 7. **Finally, complete the Action Plan in [Tool 0.2](#)** to list strategies to enhance resilience of the education system and compile in a single plan the key actions for follow-up.

TOOL 3.4 IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING LEARNERS' PROTECTION, MENTAL HEALTH, AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

PROTECTION, MENTAL HEALTH, AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS MATRIX¹

DOMAIN	IMPACTS OF CRISES ON LEARNERS	POSSIBLE EDUCATION PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	CLASSROOM/ LEARNING SPACE LEVEL STRATEGIES	SCHOOL/ EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION LEVEL STRATEGIES	COMMUNITY LEVEL STRATEGIES
Child Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exacerbated poverty Early marriage Teen pregnancy Child labor Housing insecurity Food insecurity Neglect and abuse Exploitation and trafficking Forced displacement Increased engagement in risky behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destigmatize child protection issues (e.g., COVID-19 related illness, teen pregnancy) Re-engage learners affected by child protection issues (e.g., young mothers, married teens, displaced learners, child laborers) Help staff better understand COVID-19-specific child protection issues Develop linkages with existing resources in the community Help learners connect with existing resources in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educators use referral pathways to ensure protection of learners Eliminate the use of corporal punishment Create a safe, healthy learning environment (During distance learning) Educators reach out to learners via text message or socially distanced meetings to ensure ongoing communication, safety, and engagement in learning Record daily class attendance to identify potential child protection issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build educators' awareness of child protection challenges and referral pathways Provide nutritious food and clean water for breakfast and/or lunch Train educators and staff on physical and psychological first aid Reduce barriers to school entrance to ensure enrollment for at-risk groups (e.g. school fees) Monitor enrollment and attendance of at-risk children and youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate community members and families about referral pathways (e.g. through community meetings) Engage community members in providing and preparing meals for learners Engage families and community members in dialogue about child protection issues Offer parenting or life skills workshops for caregivers Communicate with caregivers (e.g., through SMS) to support them when education institutions are closed

¹ Sources: IASC. (Feb. 2020). Briefing note on addressing mental health and psychosocial aspects of COVID-19 Outbreak-Version 1.1; The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. (2020). Technical Note: Protection of Children during the Coronavirus Pandemic (v.1) 1. RETURNING TO LEARNING DURING CRISES | OCTOBER 2020

TOOL 3.4 IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING LEARNERS' PROTECTION, MENTAL HEALTH, AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

DOMAIN	IMPACTS OF CRISES ON LEARNERS	POSSIBLE EDUCATION PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	CLASSROOM/ LEARNING SPACE LEVEL STRATEGIES	SCHOOL/ EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION LEVEL STRATEGIES	COMMUNITY LEVEL STRATEGIES
Mental Health and Psychosocial Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of contracting the virus • Anxiety • Stress • Obsession with the crisis • Regressive behaviors • Difficulty concentrating and learning • Mental health effects of: teen marriage and pregnancy, child labor, abuse, exploitation, neglect, extreme poverty, displacement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach learners to identify emotions, manage stress, and build empathy • Build learners self-motivation or self-efficacy • Help learners build and maintain relationships and feel respect and responsibility for/toward others • Help learners develop skills for co-regulation and conflict resolution • Help learners develop abilities to control attention • Help learners develop communication skills • Foster a sense of belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators use referral pathways to help learners access mental health and psychosocial support • Implement social-emotional learning within classroom practices • Use learner-centered pedagogy to re-engage learners in academics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build educators' awareness of psychosocial/social-emotional challenges and referral pathways • Train teachers on SEL • Ensure utilization of referral pathways for individuals who need protection or mental health professional support • Implement school policies and practices that foster well-being • Post signs to remind learners to maintain a growth mindset (e.g., "Making mistakes means I'm learning") 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate community members and families about referral pathways (e.g., through community meetings) • Send weekly messages to families and caregivers with SEL tips (e.g., "Model active listening with your child. Ask them one thing they learned today.") • Hold parenting or life skills workshops to share SEL strategies with caregivers

TOOL 3.4 IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING LEARNERS' PROTECTION, MENTAL HEALTH, AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

Locality: _____
Grade/Level: _____

Today's date: _____
Developed by: _____

1. Conduct a child protection, mental health, and psychosocial needs assessment



2. List identified protection, mental health, and psychosocial impacts

Child protection impacts

-
-
-

Mental health and psychosocial impacts

-
-
-



3. Identify protection, mental health, and psychosocial objectives for school or program

Child protection objectives

-
-
-

Mental health and psychosocial objectives

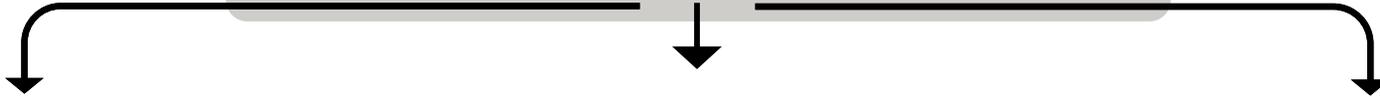
-
-
-



TOOL 3.4 IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING LEARNERS' PROTECTION, MENTAL HEALTH, AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS



4. Plan to address protection, mental health, and psychosocial impacts in the classroom, schoolwide, and in the community.



4A. Classroom/Learning Space

4B. School/Educational Institution Level

4C. Community Level

PLANNING DEBRIEF

WHAT?

What have you learned from this tool? What decisions have you made? What is missing?

SO WHAT?

What implications does this have for planning the return to learning? Why is this important?

NOW WHAT?

What must you do next? What challenges must you address?

TOOL 4.1

DECISION-MAKING FOR HIGH-STAKES EXAMINATIONS



USERS

National education officials;
Local education officials



PURPOSE

To make decisions about whether to maintain, postpone, adapt, or cancel high-stakes exams that are used for learner grading, certification, and promotion



ENGAGE

Educators and administrators;
Implementers; Learners (children and youth); Families and communities

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **In the High-Stakes Examination Decisions table, review the list of all high-stakes exams**—those that are used for learner grading, certification, and promotion—affected by the crisis. Add or delete exams from this list as needed. Then make a check mark to indicate if it is being maintained on the same date/time, rescheduled (note new date), cancelled, or moved online. If you don't know, check that option.
2. **For each examination for which a decision has not been made, complete the Options for High-Stakes Examinations table to explore the benefits and drawbacks of various options.** First, write the name of the exam for which you need to make a decision in the first column. For each of the option rows (maintain, reschedule, cancel, online), take notes about the pros and cons of the specified option. Consider the equity implications of these options, as well as the benefits and drawbacks for all groups of learners (e.g., maintaining exams may be safe for most learners, but learners with pre-existing health concerns may be disinclined to participate due to fear of getting sick; online testing may not be feasible for younger learners, learners with disabilities due to tests that were not designed to be accessible, or those in rural areas or without Internet access).
3. **Review the equity considerations and benefits/drawbacks of each of the options.** Make final decisions, then document decisions in the last column of the Options for High-Stakes Examinations table.

TOOL 4.1 DECISION-MAKING FOR HIGH-STAKES EXAMINATIONS

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

4. **When you complete this tool, answer the debrief questions** to identify what you have learned, what it means for the return to learning, and what must happen next.
5. **Finally, complete the Action Plan in [Tool 0.2](#)** to list strategies to enhance resilience of the education system and compile, in a single plan, the key actions for follow-up.

TOOL 4.1 DECISION-MAKING FOR HIGH-STAKES EXAMINATIONS

HIGH STAKES EXAMINATION DECISION MAKING TOOL					
EXAM	CHECK IF THE EXAM HAS BEEN				
Primary School Leaving/Certification Exam	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescheduled Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancelled	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Basic Education or Lower Secondary Leaving/Certification Exam	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescheduled Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancelled	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Upper Secondary Leaving/Certification Exam	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescheduled Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancelled	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Technical/Vocational Certification Exam	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescheduled Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancelled	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Entrance Exam for Post-Secondary Non-Higher Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescheduled Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancelled	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Higher Education Entrance Exam	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescheduled Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancelled	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
End-of-Year Exams (non-certification)	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescheduled Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancelled	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Rescheduled Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancelled	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

TOOL 4.1 DECISION-MAKING FOR HIGH-STAKES EXAMINATIONS

OPTIONS FOR HIGH STAKES EXAMINATIONS				
EXAM	OPTION	WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF THIS OPTION?		DECISION FOR THIS EXAM
		BENEFITS	DRAWBACKS	
	Maintain			
	Reschedule			
	Conduct online			
	Cancel			
	Other: _____			
	Maintain			
	Reschedule			
	Conduct online			
	Cancel			
	Other: _____			

TOOL 4.1 DECISION-MAKING FOR HIGH-STAKES EXAMINATIONS

PLANNING DEBRIEF

WHAT?

What have you learned from this tool? What decisions have you made? What is missing?

SO WHAT?

What implications does this have for planning the return to learning? Why is this important?

NOW WHAT?

What must you do next? What challenges must you address?

TOOL 4.2

DECISION-MAKING FOR LEARNER PROMOTION



USERS

National education officials;
Local education officials



PURPOSE

To make decisions about how to promote learners from one grade to the next after school closures



ENGAGE

Educators and administrators;
Implementers; Learners (children and youth); Families and communities

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Review and complete the reflection questions below to prompt thinking about your country's return to learning.** Note if there is agreement among the group or document divergent perspectives. Ensure you document if the answers vary by learner group (e.g., if the answer is different for girls and boys).
2. **Review the options for learner promotion (Matrix, column 1),** such as auto-promote all learners, promote some learners, or resume previous academic year. Add, delete, or change options so they reflect all options for learner promotion that you are considering.
3. **Review the factors that affect your decision for learner promotion (Matrix, row 1),** such as equity and inclusivity of the option, financial feasibility, etc. Add, delete, or change the factors so they reflect all of the factors that affect your decision. Define each of the factors to establish a collective understanding of each factor that affects learner promotion decisions (row 2, "Definition of Factor"). Equity and inclusion should include girls, children with disability, the extremely poor, or rural residents.

TOOL 4.2 DECISION-MAKING FOR LEARNER PROMOTION

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

- Score each learner promotion option for each of the factors, starting with the first option (Matrix, row 4).** Score each option from 0 (poor) to 5 (very good). Mark this in the white (top) part of the option-factor cell. (You do not need a different score for each option—if all options are poor on a certain factor, all options should score 0.)
- Work out the relative importance of each factor (Matrix, row 3).** In the “weights” row, score the factor (not the option) from 0 (not at all important) to 5 (extremely important).
- Calculate the weighted score for each option-factor cell.** For each option-factor cell, multiply the unweighted score (in the white/top part of the cell) by the factor weight (row 3). Write this score in the grey (bottom) part of the option-factor cell.
- Total the weighted score for each option-factor combination** (grey/bottom part of cell) in the rightmost column. The option with the highest score may be most appropriate in your context.
- When you complete this tool, answer the debrief questions** to identify what you have learned, what it means for the return to learning, and what must happen next.
- Finally, complete the Action Plan in [Tool 0.2](#)** to list strategies to enhance resilience of the education system and compile, in a single plan, the key actions for follow-up.

TOOL 4.2 DECISION-MAKING FOR LEARNER PROMOTION

COMPLETED MATRIX EXAMPLE

1. Complete reflection questions (next page)

2. Review promotion options

3. Complete factor definitions

4. Score each factor for each option

5. Decide factor weights

6. Calculate weighted factor scores

7. Calculate option total scores

FACTORS	SAFETY OF LEARNERS & EDUCATORS	EQUITY & INCLUSION	LEARNER, FAMILY, SCHOOL BUY-IN	POSITIVE EFFECTS FOR LEARNERS	POLICY/POLITICAL FEASIBILITY	INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY/HUMAN RESOURCE COSTS	EDUCATOR WORKFORCE/ CAPACITY	INFRASTRUCTURAL CAPACITY	TECHNOLOGICAL CAPACITY	FINANCIAL/COST FEASIBILITY	TIME FEASIBILITY (EFFICIENCY)	CONTRIBUTION TO RESILIENCE	TOTAL
Definition of Factor:	Based on principles of Do No Harm, safety means no learners or educators will get sick or transmit COVID-19	All young people, regardless of gender, disability, religion, ethnicity, displacement status, etc. will be able to access high-quality education, no matter what modality is used	Learners, families, schools agree with and support decisions that are made about promotion and feel they have contributed to the decision-making process	Learner promotion decisions should be based on the benefit to all learners in terms of learning outcomes, protection, etc. and guarantee their right to an education is upheld	The decision made can be carried out within the current policy environment or the policy can be revised	MOE, schools, and partners have the time, and financial and human capacity to carry out the decision	Educators have the time, knowledge, and skills to carry out the decision	The infrastructure is in place to carry out the decision (e.g., we have enough classroom space)	The technology is in place to carry out the decision (e.g., if promotion is based on an online test)	We have the financial resources to carry out the decision	The decision can be carried out in a timely manner, which will not inhibit the return to learning	How does this decision build transformative resilience capacities? To what extent does it build resilience in the long-term, versus simply reacting and absorbing the challenge?	
Weights:	5	5	3	5	4	4	4	4	3	5	3	5	
Advocate promote all learners	5	4	5	4	3	3	4	5	5	5	5	5	
	25	20	15	20	12	12	16	20	15	25	15	25	220
Promote based on progress prior to closures	5	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	
	25	15	9	15	16	12	12	12	12	15	6	15	164
Promote based on assessment	3	1	3	3	4	1	1	3	3	3	1	2	
	15	5	9	15	16	4	4	12	9	15	3	10	117
Restart/resume academic year	5	1	1	1	5	5	5	1	5	1	5	1	
	25	5	3	5	20	20	20	4	15	5	15	5	142

TOOL 4.2 DECISION-MAKING FOR LEARNER PROMOTION

Complete the following calculations or [use this spreadsheet](#) to auto-calculate.

MULTI FACTOR DECISION MATRIX FOR LEARNER PROMOTION														
FACTORS	SAFETY OF LEARNERS & EDUCATORS	EQUITY & INCLUSION	LEARNER, FAMILY, SCHOOL BUY IN	POSITIVE EFFECTS FOR LEARNERS	POLICY/POLITICAL FEASIBILITY	INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY/HUMAN RESOURCE COSTS	EDUCATOR WORKFORCE/ CAPACITY	INFRASTRUCTURAL CAPACITY	TECHNOLOGICAL CAPACITY	FINANCIAL/COST FEASIBILITY	TIME FEASIBILITY (EFFICIENCY)	CONTRIBUTION TO RESILIENCE	OTHER	TOTAL
Definition of Factor:														
Weights:														
Auto-promote all learners														
Promote based on progress prior to closures														
Promote based on assessment														
Restart/resume academic year														
Other: _____														

TOOL 4.2 DECISION-MAKING FOR LEARNER PROMOTION

PLANNING DEBRIEF

WHAT?

What have you learned from this tool? What decisions have you made? What is missing?

SO WHAT?

What implications does this have for planning the return to learning? Why is this important?

NOW WHAT?

What must you do next? What challenges must you address?

TOOL 5.1

IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING EDUCATOR NEEDS



USERS

Educators and administrators;
Implementers



PURPOSE

To plan for the hiring, training, and ongoing
support of teaching staff



ENGAGE

National education officials; Local
education officials; Teachers' unions,
faculty unions/senates

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Review and complete the checklist** to consider educator needs as you return to learning. Include notes specific to your school or education or training program. Whenever possible, consult with educators themselves when identifying needs and creating plans.
2. **When you complete this tool, answer the debrief questions** to identify what you have learned, what it means for the return to learning, and what must happen next.
3. **Finally, complete the Action Plan in [Tool 0.2](#)** to list strategies to enhance resilience of the education system and compile in a single plan the key actions for follow-up.

TOOL 5.1 IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING EDUCATOR NEEDS

EDUCATOR NEEDS CHECKLIST

Ensure sufficient teaching staff for the school/educational institution.

1. Conduct an inventory of educators returning to the school/educational institution.

Identify how many educators will be returning when the school reopens. Given new policies and protocols to promote health and safety, such as physical distancing or decreased class sizes, identify how many new educators or staff members must be hired to meet the human resources needs post-crisis.

Notes:

2. Identify individuals or community groups that could assist the teaching staff.

The school or educational institution's teaching staff can be aided by pulling in volunteers and teaching assistants from the community. Gather a list of local community groups, universities, technical schools, religious institutions, organizations for individuals with disabilities, or other organizations that may be interested in supporting local schools and educational institutions. Community members, youth, university students, and teachers in training may be able to act as teaching assistants. Be mindful of the fact that such volunteers or assistants will require training and should not replace qualified educators. In addition, remember that learners themselves are assets, and can support one another through peer-to-peer collaboration and learning.

Notes:

3. Hire educators and teaching assistants and onboard volunteers to meet the school/educational institution's needs.

Ensure that there are adequate qualified educators in each class, as determined by national policy. Follow national guidelines for onboarding and training, which may include background or reference checks, in addition to new teacher, staff, or volunteer training (see points 4 through 6 below).

Notes:

TOOL 5.1 IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING EDUCATOR NEEDS

Build the capacity of the teaching staff to provide education during and after the crisis.

4. Conduct a needs assessment to gauge the staff's strengths and areas for improvement for the return to learning.

Needs assessments can be formal or informal, but should gather information about the educators' strengths and areas that need improvement. When collecting information, consider basic pedagogical and content knowledge, especially for new and under-qualified educators. Given the nature of teaching during and following crises, assess all educators' competencies in:

- Safety and health procedures
- Distance and blending learning structures
- Education technology, specifically those used for blended and distance learning
- Learner-centered pedagogy
- Teaching a condensed curriculum and/or prioritized competencies
- Student assessment
- Remedial support for struggling learners
- Differentiation
- Academic content
- Social-emotional learning

Notes:

5. Identify existing structures that support capacity development and adapt these structures for distance professional development.

Structures might include a designated time period for educator professional development, set communication channels, lead teachers or professional development facilitators, mentorship programs, or capacity development support from outside organizations. Ensure that existing structures can be adapted to distance learning models should schools/educational institutions be required to close once again.

Notes:

6. Provide ongoing professional development for new and returning educators.

Ensure that educators have access to ongoing professional development opportunities, as well as opportunities for mentoring and active collaboration, as possible. Administrators and others in leadership should prepare to provide such opportunities in person or remotely, building on resources and practices already in place.

- Useful Resource: [Coaching in Early Grade Reading Programs: Evidence, Experiences and Recommendations](#)

Notes:

TOOL 5.1 IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING EDUCATOR NEEDS

7. Provide educators with the materials necessary for in-person, blended, and distance learning.

Ensure educators have the necessary curricula, teaching guides, and learning aids. If the school or educational institution is accelerating learning, teaching materials may include a new condensed curriculum or prioritized competencies. For distance or blended learning, educators may require specific technology, such as mobile phones or computers. Educators should not be faced with acquiring these resources independently, nor should they be required to purchase phone credit or Internet access.

Notes:

Support the teaching staff's well-being.

8. Ensure the teaching staff's basic needs are being met.

Educators who are physically, mentally, and emotionally well will be most effective in the classroom. Ensure that educators are receiving a reliable salary and have access to adequate housing, food, and any other basic necessities. In addition, given that educators and staff have experienced the same emergency as the learners, make sure that they have access to emotional and psychosocial support.

Notes:

9. Provide opportunities for educator and staff check-ins and ongoing communication.

Educators and other staff have been affected by the pandemic just as learners have been. Structure regular check-ins and open communication with the teaching staff to identify new challenges and opportunities, collaborate, and maintain a positive morale.

Notes:

Engage with policymakers to advocate for policies that ensure the hiring and support of all educators.

10. Ensure adequate communication to district and national officials and policymakers.

As learners and educators return to learning, educational institutions must ensure their needs are being met. As challenges arise, an adequate communication channel to district and national officials allows individuals and institutions to campaign for policies to meet their needs. Consider policies regarding required certification, hiring caps, language of instruction, and the number of students per class. Use these communication channels to advocate for changes using specific language and solutions that would benefit the educators and learners.

Notes:

TOOL 5.1 IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING EDUCATOR NEEDS

PLANNING DEBRIEF

WHAT?

What have you learned from this tool? What decisions have you made? What is missing?

SO WHAT?

What implications does this have for planning the return to learning? Why is this important?

NOW WHAT?

What must you do next? What challenges must you address?

TOOL 5.2

ADAPTING THE LEARNING SPACE



USERS

Educators and administrators;
Implementers



PURPOSE

To plan for infrastructure, resource, personnel, and school policy modifications to reinforce health and safety standards during the return to learning



ENGAGE

National education officials; Local education officials; Teachers' unions, Learners (children and youth), families, and communities

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Review the health and safety guidelines** in the Adapting Learning Spaces Matrix below, as well as those released by your national governing body. You can also refer to Operational Considerations for Schools released by the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).
2. **Answer each question in the four sections (physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection)** to identify what infrastructure, resources, and personnel are in place at your school or educational institution.
3. **As you move through the matrix, take notes expanding on your responses.** Record what steps your school/educational institution has taken in planning for the learning spaces, any challenges that have arisen, and adjustments you have made. For example, if the number of classrooms and educator-pupil ratio does not allow for physical distancing, describe why, e.g., “There are too many children in each class so they cannot maintain distance, and we do not have enough classrooms to split into smaller class sizes.”
4. **At the end of each section, answer the planning questions** to identify concrete steps for adapting the learning space for the return to learning.

TOOL 5.2 ADAPTING THE LEARNING SPACE

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

5. **When you complete this tool, answer the debrief questions** to identify what you have learned, what it means for the return to learning, and what must happen next.
6. **Finally, complete the Action Plan in [Tool 0.2](#)** to list strategies to enhance resilience of the education system and compile in a single plan the key actions for follow-up.

TOOL 5.2 ADAPTING THE LEARNING SPACE

ADAPTING LEARNING SPACES MATRIX

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Learners, educators, and staff should maintain the recommended distance between individuals who do not live in the same household as specified by your country's operating procedures (e.g., 2 meters recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).
- Groups should avoid mixing whenever possible (e.g., learners should remain with the same group throughout the day).
- Limit crowding by restricting access to the school/educational institution and setting norms and standard procedures for physical distancing.

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	EXPLAIN YOUR RESPONSE
1. Does the number of classrooms/learning spaces and the educator-pupil ratio allow learners and educators to maintain physical distancing (e.g. 2 meters apart)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If no, answer a – c		
a. Are there extra communal areas that can be used as temporary learning spaces (e.g. cafeteria, library, or outdoor space)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
b. Can blended learning, distance learning, or double-shifting be used to reduce class size? Refer to Tool 3.2 and Tool 3.3 .	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
c. Can volunteers and teaching assistants be used to help reduce class sizes? Refer to Tool 5.1 .	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Have protocols been developed and shared with staff to limit the mixing of learner/educator groups in the learning environment? What additional resources are needed to implement protocols at the school/educational institution level?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3. Are there visual cues to reinforce physical distancing throughout the school/educational institution (e.g. tape or chalk on the floor, signs on walls)? Are these cues accessible to and understood by all learners, including those with disabilities (e.g., uses pictures for learners who cannot read, braille formats, taught to learners in spoken and signed languages)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful Resource: Print Resources by the CDC 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

TOOL 5.2 ADAPTING THE LEARNING SPACE

4. Are there visual cues and a physical barrier to indicate where caregivers can drop off learners and limit visitor access to the learning environments?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
5. Are plans in place to ensure that learners with disabilities continue to receive support services required at the school (e.g. physical rehabilitation, speech therapy) in a safe manner?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
6. Have ALL learners, caregivers, and community members been informed of new physical distancing requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Planning Questions

1. Considering your answers above, what are your school/educational institution's next steps in implementing physical distancing?

2. What resources (financial, personnel, time) are required to move forward with physical distancing?
 - a. Financial:

 - b. Personnel:

 - c. Time:

3. What further information needs to be communicated with learners, caregivers, and community members?

4. How will protocols be enforced?

5. Who will lead physical distancing efforts at your school/educational institution? Who will be able to answer questions for fellow staff, learners, families, and community members?

TOOL 5.2 ADAPTING THE LEARNING SPACE

HAND HYGIENE

- Learners, educators, and staff should wash hands regularly, including when they enter and exit the school/educational institution; after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing; before and after eating; and after using the bathroom.
- Hands should be washed for 20 seconds with soap and clean water OR alcohol-based hand rub (≥60 percent alcohol). If soap and alcohol-based hand rub are unavailable, a 0.05 percent chlorine handwashing solution may be used as a short-term substitute. Due to skin and eye irritation with prolonged use, this solution should be used only temporarily, and learners should be closely monitored when using.

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	EXPLAIN YOUR RESPONSE
1. Does the school/educational institution reliably and consistently have access to clean water?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Does the school/educational institution have sufficient hand-washing stations around the school (refer to your local WASH guidance)? Are these hand-washing stations physically accessible to all learners and staff, including those with disabilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3. Does the school/education institution have access to sufficient soap to provide for learners, educators, and staff?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
4. Does the education institution have access to sufficient alcohol-based hand rub (≥60 percent alcohol)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
5. Does the school have a safe, locked storage space to store all hygiene supplies (e.g., soap, alcohol-rub, hand-washing stations)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
6. Have all educators and staff been trained to model appropriate hand hygiene?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
7. Are signs, posters, or other visual cues posted to remind learners and staff about healthy hygiene behaviors? Are these messages accessible and understood by all, including those with disabilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
8. Have all caregivers been informed of hand hygiene policies and provided with strategies to reinforce healthy hand hygiene in the home?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

TOOL 5.2 ADAPTING THE LEARNING SPACE

RESPIRATORY HYGIENE

- Learners, educators, and staff should wear face coverings while at school or in training, in accordance with your country’s operating procedures. This is especially important when indoors and when physical distancing is not possible.
- Learners, educators, and staff should stay home when they are sick (e.g., have symptoms of fever, sore throat, severe cough, difficulty breathing, severe headaches, diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain) or after coming in close contact with someone who is sick, regardless of COVID-19 status.
- Learners, educators, and staff should cover coughs and sneezes with their elbow or a tissue.

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	EXPLAIN YOUR RESPONSE
1. Are all learners, educators, and staff able to provide their own masks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If no, answer a – c		
a. Is the school/educational institution able to provide masks for all learners, educators, and staff (or all of those who cannot provide their own)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
b. Are there local community organizations, religious institutions, and parent groups that are able to provide masks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
c. Can learners and educators make masks as a classroom activity, given appropriate materials, training, and adult supervision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Are age-appropriate signs, posters or other visual cues posted to show learners how to properly wear and remove masks and cover coughs and sneezes? Are these messages accessible and understood by all, including those with disabilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3. Have staff been trained on how to model appropriate use of masks and covering coughs/sneezes?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
4. Have caregivers and staff been informed on how to screen for COVID-19 exposure and symptoms before coming to school each day?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
5. Does the school have an outbreak response plan (Refer to Priority 2)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
6. Have all staff been trained on the protocol if a learner or staff member is identified with symptoms?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

TOOL 5.2 ADAPTING THE LEARNING SPACE

Planning Questions

1. Considering your answers above, what are your school/educational institution's next steps in implementing appropriate hand hygiene standards and protocols?

2. What resources (financial, personnel, time) are required to move forward with the hand hygiene protocols?
 - a. Financial:

 - b. Personnel:

 - c. Time:

3. What further information needs to be communicated with learners, caregivers, and community members?

4. How will protocols be enforced?

5. Who will lead hand hygiene efforts at your school/educational institution? Who will be able to answer questions for fellow staff, learners, families, and community members?

TOOL 5.2 ADAPTING THE LEARNING SPACE

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

- Schools/educational institutions should ensure regular cleaning and disinfection,¹ especially for frequently touched surfaces such as desks and tables, railings, and learning materials.
- Cleaning and disinfection should include routine cleaning of assistive devices and technology for learners with disabilities.

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	EXPLAIN YOUR RESPONSE
1. Does the school/educational institution have sufficient designated and trained staff to maintain increased cleaning and disinfection efforts?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If no, answer a – b		
a. Can educators and staff feasibly conduct cleaning and disinfection in addition to their daily responsibilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
b. Can adult community or family volunteers be trained to help in cleaning and disinfection, while still maintaining physical distancing standards?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Have all designated staff or volunteers received verbal and written instructions for describing cleaning and disinfection processes and proper mixing of solutions? Are instructions accessible for all individuals, including those who cannot read and those with disabilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3. Does the school/educational institution have access to sufficient cleaning materials (e.g. water, soap, disinfectant, bleach) and water?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	

¹ According to the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (p. 7), “Cleaning refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. It does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their number and the risk of spreading infection. Removing dirt and impurities also helps disinfectant be more effective. Disinfecting refers to using chemicals, for example, diluted sodium hypochlorite (bleach), to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.”

TOOL 5.2 ADAPTING THE LEARNING SPACE

4. Does the school/educational institution have personal protective equipment for cleaning staff (e.g. single-use gloves and washable aprons/protective clothing)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
5. Does the school/educational institution have safe, locked storage for cleaning/sanitation supplies and materials?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
6. Is there an established, written, and posted cleaning schedule that meets health and safety guidelines?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
7. Have the cleaning and sanitation protocols and schedule been communicated to all learners, caregivers, and staff?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Planning Questions

1. Considering your answers above, what are your school/educational institution’s next steps in implementing strong cleaning and disinfection protocols?

2. What resources (financial, personnel, time) are required to move forward with the cleaning and disinfection plan?
 - a. Financial:

 - b. Personnel:

 - c. Time:

3. What further information needs to be communicated with learners, caregivers, and community members?

4. How will protocols be enforced?

5. Who will lead cleaning and efforts at your school/educational institution? Who will be able to answer questions for fellow staff, learners, families, and community members?

TOOL 5.2 ADAPTING THE LEARNING SPACE

PLANNING DEBRIEF

WHAT?

What have you learned from this tool? What decisions have you made? What is missing?

SO WHAT?

What implications does this have for planning the return to learning? Why is this important?

NOW WHAT?

What must you do next? What challenges must you address?