

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNICEF EAPRO Education Section has supported Country Offices throughout the region with technical support in the context of responding to COVID-19. As part of this technical support, the UNICEF EAPRO Education Section has closely collaborated with other Sections in the Regional Office, Country Offices, HQ and other stakeholders (eg. Global Education Cluster) in the development of a number of guidance notes and briefs, which are summarized below.

ENSURING AN INCLUSIVE RETURN TO SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Ensuring an inclusive return to school for children with disabilities June 2020
UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Region COVID-19 Technical Guidance



This guidance has been produced by CBM Australia for UNICEF's East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office and UNICEF Australia. The document is intended for UNICEF staff, education policy makers and planners in the East Asia and Pacific Region. Its purpose is to provide guidance on critical considerations and actions that should be undertaken to ensure an inclusive return to school for children with disabilities, as children return to school after the temporary closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the year, the COVID-19 pandemic brought about school closures in almost all countries in the East Asia and Pacific Region and negatively affected the education of more than 300 million children. The rapidity and scale of the educational disruption is unparalleled and threatens the progress achieved in access and learning; millions of children are likely to suffer a loss or regression in learning. Children with disabilities and children who rely on classroom support staff or who use learning aids and equipment which make mobility more difficult during school closures are more likely to have missed out on their learning and are particularly at risk of completely dropping out of their education the longer the school closures continue.

These COVID-related education challenges are compounded by the barriers children with disabilities faced before the pandemic. Before the COVID-19 pandemic children with disabilities faced serious barriers to attaining quality education. Children with disabilities are significantly less likely than their peers to attend primary school; one out of four children with disabilities is out of school. In some countries, the enrolment rate of children with disabilities in primary school is less than 1%. Segregated models of education delivery dominate where learners with disabilities are taught in special schools despite the significant progress in transitioning to systems that are more inclusive. Limited understanding and negative attitudes towards disability primarily push the education system in this direction. Even when children with disabilities are enrolled in the formal

The guidance on '[Ensuring an inclusive return to school for children with disabilities](#)' is intended for UNICEF staff, education policy makers and planners in the East Asia and Pacific Region. Its purpose is to provide guidance on critical considerations and actions that should be undertaken to ensure an inclusive return to school for children with disabilities, as children return to school after the temporary closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The guidance document has been developed by CBM Australia for UNICEF Australia and UNICEF EAPRO. The education and disability teams of UNICEF EAPRO provided technical support in its development.

NUTRITION AND EDUCATION COLLABORATION - CHECKLIST FOR REOPENING SCHOOLS

unicef
Nutrition and Education Collaboration - Checklist for Reopening Schools
A coordinated response for children to return to school

UNICEF EAPRO
The closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that children have been unable to access school meals and nutrition services for extended periods. Stunted and/or malnourished children are at increased risk of poor cognitive and physical development. School nutrition services include the delivery of nutritious meals, the provision of health and nutrition checks, nutrition literacy and a school environment that supports healthy diets are critical for helping children to have a nutritionally diverse diet and avoid over-consumption of fat, sugar and salt. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted all these nutrition-related measures delivered through schools. In addition, the number of many school children who have suffered during the pandemic, as diets have been compromised due to loss of income, lack of availability of some foods and changing dietary practices due to lock-down. There is an urgency for public measures in place to protect and enhance the nutrition of school children as they return to school.

The agenda to re-open better schools presents an opportunity to provide a menu of considerations for improved or new school nutrition initiatives within Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health policies and plans. These considerations may have a longer term horizon but may be included on the agenda of re-opening better schools and promoted for uptake in the longer term.

Based on the Framework for Reopening of Schools, this checklist provides a non-exhaustive list of suggested actions for Government and UNICEF to consider as part of their short and longer term planning for and implementation of school reopening that will support healthy diets and good nutrition in children. Actions will require cross-sectoral cooperation between the education and health sectors. The actions are divided into those that should be put in place prior to schools re-opening and after schools have opened. Each section covers actions to address four main nutrition-related areas:

- (1) School meals
- (2) School nutrition services
- (3) School nutrition education
- (4) School food environment

(1) School meals

Reopening school meals services that meet nutritional standards will be critical both to encourage school attendance and ensure good nutrition. Although it is unlikely that the virus is transmitted through food, it is imperative to ensure food safety standards and practices in preparation, serving and consumption of meals.

- Conduct an assessment of school kitchens, canteens and eating areas, and mobilize resources to address existing gaps. Considerations include:
 - Upgrading water, hygiene and sanitation infrastructure including facilities for regular handwashing with safe water and soap
 - Supplying cleaning and disinfection materials including, where appropriate, masks and gloves
 - Revising existing school health and food safety protocols and guidance in line with recommendations for preventing the spread of COVID-19
- Develop a plan for delivery of school meals that meet national nutrition standards, locally or school meal prepared outside:
 - At least 30 percent of total energy and protein requirements and, if possible, 50 percent of key micronutrients (e.g. iron, vitamin A, zinc) for children.

The document '[Nutrition and Education Collaboration - Checklist for Reopening Schools](#)' provides a non-exhaustive list of suggested actions for Government and UNICEF to consider as part of their short- and longer-term planning for and implementation of school reopening that will support healthy diets and good nutrition in children. Actions will require cross-sectoral cooperation between the education and health sectors. The actions are divided into those that should be put in place prior to schools re-opening and after schools have opened.

The guidance document has been collaboratively developed by the nutrition and education teams of UNICEF EAPRO.

COVID-19: INTEGRATION OF CHILD PROTECTION IN RETURN TO SCHOOL - TIPS FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT



This document provides general tips for teachers and school management as students return to school to:

- Identify and respond to child protection concerns;
- Identify and respond to mental health concerns;
- Ensure support is available and accessible for students; and
- Promote the mental health and professional wellbeing of teachers.

This document supports the implementation of the well-being and protection pillar of the *Framework for Developing Schools*. This is not a guidance document for an individual teacher. It is developed by UNICEF EAPRO to assist those who are responsible for school-level policy and operational context. Tips should also be accompanied by relevant teacher training and supervision resources, if possible, to ensure that teachers can support their students' return to school, while aware of distress or significant changes in the children's behaviour, which may indicate abuse and violence, and take appropriate action.

This document was developed by UNICEF EAPRO, with inputs from the Child Protection Area of Responsibility and the Social Education Cluster. It builds on complementary COVID-19 responses of UNICEF EAPRO in the region – Messages for Children and Adolescents Returning to School.

I. Your critical role in supporting students as they return to school

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on children, adolescents and their families. Sadly, during containment measures children's mental health may have been impacted and they may have been exposed to violence, abuse and exploitation. Further, children in households affected by the financial impact of containment measures may be at risk of exploitation and harmful traditional practices. These impacts of COVID-19 might affect both school attendance and school adjustment in the short- and long-term.

As schools reopen, teachers, school management and other trusted school personnel are in a position to play a critical role in protecting and supporting children:

- Schools may be the first place where a child has contact with a trusted adult outside their family after months of home confinement. You may be the first person to whom children can report abuse or other problems.
- This may be the first time that students who are suffering abuse and harm or who are struggling to cope with the impact of COVID-19 and containment can be identified, and
- You will be able to flag observations, which may be a sign of abuse or exploitation.

This document provides a summary of risks and impacts of COVID-19 and containment measures on children to be aware of tips for identifying signs that your students may be suffering abuse and harm or struggling to cope, and where you can turn to for support.

II. Understanding the impact of COVID-19 and containment measures on your students

The impact on your students' mental health and well-being

- Some children have suffered health and psychosocial consequences from the pandemic. They may have lost close family members and been isolated from their family. Their family member or friend may have contracted COVID-19 and they may have lost loved ones from the virus. They may have experienced or still be experiencing fear and worry about themselves or their family and friends contracting the virus and they may be worried about the risks of coming back to school.
- School closures and lockdowns have disrupted children's daily routines, interrupted their education and disrupted their ability to socialise and seek support from their friends, impacting their mental health and ability to cope with increased stress.
- Children may also be worried about the future and be concerned about the economic impact of COVID-19 on their family.

The document [‘COVID-19: Integration of Child Protection in Return to School - Tips for Teachers and School Management’](#)

provides general tips for teachers and school management as students return to school to identify and respond to child protection concerns, identify and respond to mental health concerns, ensure support is available and accessible for students and promote the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of teachers.

The guidance document has been collaboratively developed by the child protection and education teams of UNICEF EAPRO.

COVID-19: INTEGRATION OF CHILD PROTECTION IN RETURN TO SCHOOL – MESSAGES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS RETURNING TO SCHOOL



The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on children, adolescents and their families. Sadly, during containment measures children's mental health may have been impacted and they may have been exposed to violence, abuse and exploitation. Further, children in households affected by the financial impact of containment measures may be at risk of exploitation and harmful traditional practices. These impacts of COVID-19 might affect both school attendance and school adjustment in the short- and long-term.

As schools reopen, teachers and other school personnel can play a key role in protecting and supporting their students.

Teachers and other trusted school personnel may be the first contact for children outside of their family after months of home confinement, allowing children the opportunity to report concerns related to abuse and violence. This may be the first time that students who are suffering abuse and harm or who are struggling to cope with the impact of COVID-19 and containment can be identified.

Returning to school may also expose children to distress and violence, as a result of stigma and bullying because of associations with COVID-19.

The following messages have been developed to support conversations, primarily with children and adolescents, on recovery, abuse and student well-being. In particular, they are designed to raise awareness on types of abuse and violence and the right of children to be protected, raise awareness on well-being and mental health, and to provide information on how to report concerns and access support, employment rights, discrimination and safety associated with COVID-19. Country offices are encouraged to contextualise the messages.

These messages can be adapted and used in posters or other types of media.

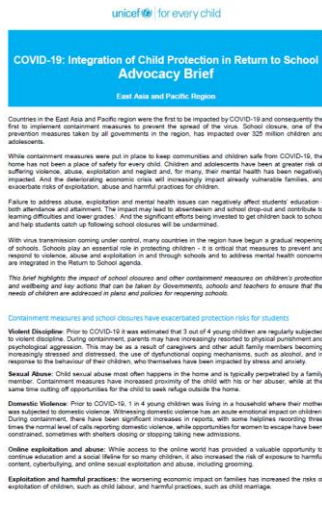
These messages are intended to complement COVID-19 responses of UNICEF EAPRO in the region – Tips for Teachers and School Management – as well as school-level and provincial-level child protection and training for teachers and school personnel.

The document [‘COVID-19: Integration of Child Protection in Return to School – Messages for Children and Adolescents Returning to School’](#) have been developed to support

communication, primarily with children and adolescents, on violence, abuse and student well-being. In particular, they are designed to: raise awareness on types of abuse and violence and the right of children to be protected; raise awareness on well-being; provide them with information on how to report their concerns and access support; and prevent stigma, discrimination and bullying associated with COVID-19.

The guidance document has been collaboratively developed by the child protection and education teams of UNICEF EAPRO.

COVID-19: INTEGRATION OF CHILD PROTECTION IN RETURN TO SCHOOL ADVOCACY BRIEF



The brief '[COVID-19: Integration of Child Protection in Return to School Advocacy Brief](#)' highlights the impact of school closures and other containment measures on children's protection and wellbeing and key actions that can be taken by Governments, schools and teachers to ensure that the needs of children are addressed in plans and policies for reopening schools.

The guidance document has been collaboratively developed by the child protection and education teams of UNICEF EAPRO.

PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS AS PARTNERS IN LEARNING: HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR THE COVID-19 CRISIS AND BEYOND



The '[Parents and Caregivers as Partners in Learning: Home Learning activities for the COVID-19 crisis and beyond](#)' provides guidance and a set of activities to help parents and caregivers, especially the most marginalized and vulnerable, to engage with and support their children's learning at home. These activities are intended to complement distance learning and home-based assignments during school closures due to COVID-19.

The guidance document has been developed by the education team of UNICEF EAPRO.

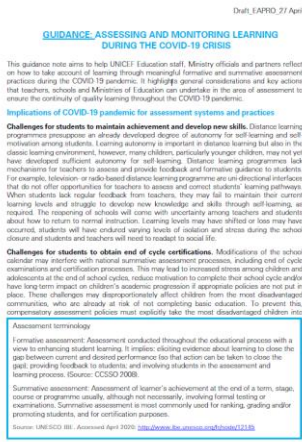
PRESCHOOL CHALLENGE #LEARNINGATHOME



The '[Preschool Challenge #LearningAtHome](#)' provides parents and caregivers a set of daily challenges and activities to help to engage with and support their children's early childhood education at home during the closure of pre-schools due to COVID-19. The guide provides challenges and activities for 15 days and all activities are complemented by reference videos for easy adaptation by parents and caregivers.

The document has been developed by the education team of UNICEF EAPRO.

GUIDANCE: ASSESSING AND MONITORING LEARNING DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS



The guidance note '[Assessing and monitoring learning during the COVID-19 crisis](#)' aims to help UNICEF Education staff, Ministry officials and partners reflect on how to take account of learning through meaningful formative and summative assessment practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. It highlights general considerations and key actions that teachers, schools and Ministries of Education can undertake in the area of assessment to ensure the continuity of quality learning throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The guidance document has been developed by the education team of UNICEF EAPRO.

MONITORING ATTENDANCE DURING SCHOOL CLOSURE AND RE-ENROLMENT AND ATTENDANCE AFTER SCHOOL RE-OPENING: A GUIDANCE NOTE



This Guidance Note aims to provide an overview of entry points and means for monitoring the attendance and re-enrolment of students in the context of COVID-19 related school closures and re-openings. It is intended for UNICEF education staff, and education policy makers, planners and practitioners.

I. INTRODUCTION

The global COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented education crisis. At the end of June 2020, schools were still closed in 116 countries according to UNESCO, interrupting the education of over 1 billion children. Prolonged school closures and secondary effects of the pandemic, most notably the negative economic impact, increase the risk of school drop-out among the most vulnerable children and threatens gains made in education access and participation over the years. According to recent research by the World Bank, 7 million students from primary up to secondary education could drop out due to the income shock of the pandemic alone, and the pandemic could

This Guidance Note '[Monitoring attendance during school closure and re-enrolment and attendance after school re-opening](#)' aims to provide an overview of entry points and means for monitoring the attendance and re-enrolment of students in the context of COVID-19 related school closures and re-openings. It is intended for UNICEF education staff, and education policy makers, planners and practitioners.

The guidance document has been developed by the education team of UNICEF EAPRO.