

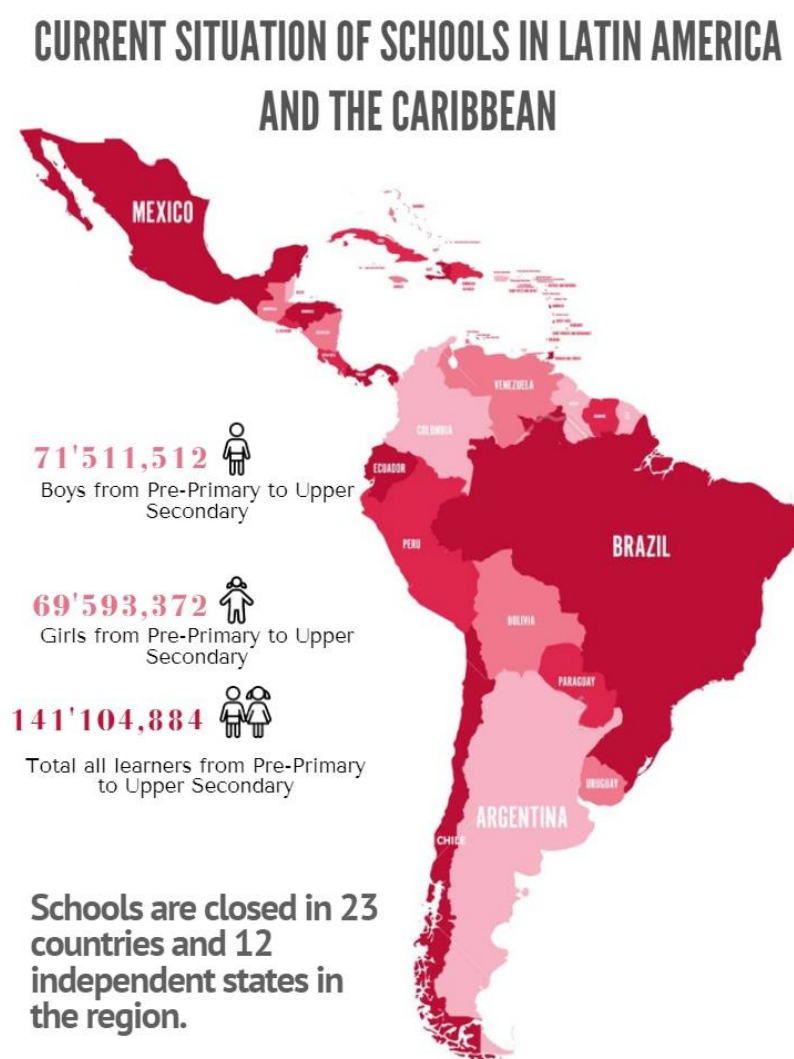
Latin America & the Caribbean COVID-19 Education Response

[27th of May 2020]

I. SITUATION ANALYSIS

As COVID-19 has grown in the **Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC) region**, Ministries of Education (MoEs) have started to close schools progressively at preschool, primary and secondary levels. As of May 27th, **schools are closed in 23 countries and 12 independent states in the region**. As a result, it is estimated that **over 141 million children^[1] from pre-primary to upper secondary and around 12 million out-of-school children have been affected in LAC, representing more than 95% of enrolled learners in LAC.**

COVID-19 Impact on Education in the Latin America & the Caribbean Region (LAC)



Note¹: The estimated data below has been collated from information either from UIS database, except for El Salvador, Guyana, Haiti, Anguilla, Montserrat, Trinidad & Tobago and Turks & Caicos Islands. The data will be updated once a standardized method is agreed upon.

While the length of school closures is still uncertain, it is known school closures have serious consequences: children risk to fall far behind in their learning and those who were already vulnerable may never return to school. Moreover, school closures have also entailed the interruption of access to other important basic services provided by schools such as school feeding, health, water, sanitation, hygiene, recreational programs, extracurricular activities, as well as pedagogical and psychosocial support.

LAC national governments are putting in place multiple educational responses to ensure the continuity of learning by (a) putting national curriculums online and making available to students, teachers and parents various flexible and distance home-based learning resources (on-line platforms, mobile phones, radio and TV learning content, broadcasts, learning content through social media, podcasts, etc.); (b) providing open access to teachers at various educational levels and carrying out pedagogical planning; and (c) by distributing printed learning kits (exercises, books, etc.) for families with less resources.

Nevertheless, these home-based modalities are not guaranteed throughout the region, nor do all families have access to them, especially the most vulnerable ones. In addition to the lack of access to remote learning modalities, the adaptation of the content to specific needs such as the adaptation to local languages and to disability-accessible formats is being another pressing challenge during school closures.

UNICEF Country Offices and Regional Office in the LAC region are providing provide technical support to MoEs to ensure safe, quality and continued learning for all children, with particular focus on most vulnerable children, as well as coordinate their actions and efforts with other program sectors such as nutrition, protection, C4D, ECD and WASH, inter alia.

II. GOVERNMENT COVID-19 EDUCATION PRIORITIES

Governments in the LAC region are providing diverse educational responses to COVID-19. For more information about the education responses taken in the LAC region please check [here](#).

Currently countries are ensuring the continuity of education during school closures through a variety of distance modalities including online, TV, radio SMS and printed materials and often a combination of all of these. Some countries, such as **Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, ECA, Guyana, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay**, to name a few, are offering various educational proposals through online MoE platforms. Other countries in the region such as **Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras, Panama and Venezuela**, among others, have designed virtual education proposals to integrate families with less resources without access to technological equipment or the Internet using voice memos via WhatsApp, Social Networks, television and radio programs. And some countries such as **Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela** are exploring alternative options to continue their school feeding, subsidies and WASH programs in schools.

Remote learning strategies vary according to the country, but almost all governments in the region are implementing different strategies to ensure learning continuity, mainly through television, radio and internet platforms. In some cases, MoEs are distributing home learning kits (exercises, books) for families with less resources. Across the LACRO region, a key challenge is ensuring equity in learning by reaching children in rural and remote areas, migrants, refugees and returnees, and indigenous children through various alternative

-Figures for Haiti were based on data reported from the Haiti Reference Website, as data for this country was missing in the UIS database: <https://www.haiti-reference.com/pages/plan/education/education-chiffres-et-faits/>

-Figures for El Salvador were based on data reported from SIGES 2020: <https://siges.sv/inicio>

-Figures for Guyana were based on most recent data reported in Guyana's Ministry of Education website: <https://education.gov.gy/web2/index.php/digest-of-education-statistics>

- Figures for Anguilla, Montserrat, Trinidad & Tobago and Turks & Caicos Islands were based on the data provided by the Barbados CO.

- Blank cells show the unavailability of data in the UIS database.

options. In addition to school closure, some governments are also adjusting the academic year and extending school breaks with the purpose of planning.

Most countries in the LAC region have also started to plan the safe reopening of schools so that children's learning, health and safety needs are covered. The reopening process involves policy and financing considerations, but also an intersectoral effort led by professionals working in education, WASH, nutrition, health, protection and gender.

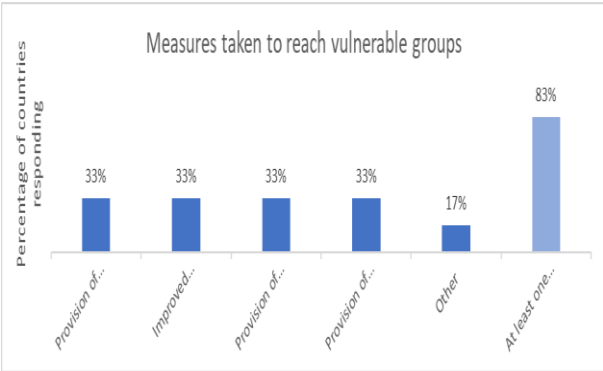
REOPENING OF SCHOOLS IN LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN



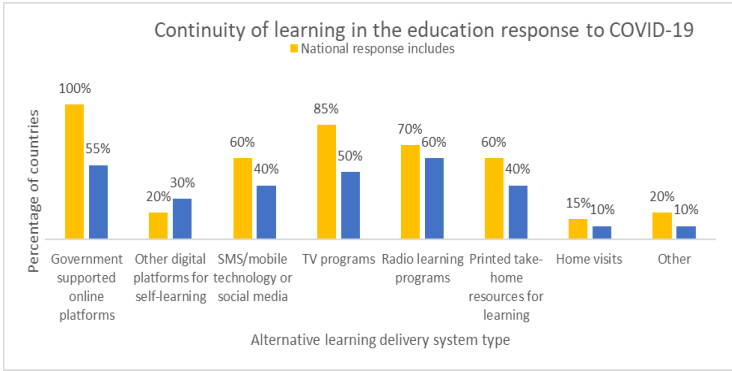
III. UNICEF LAC CURRENT DATA:

The below information is based on the response of 20 COs on the global education tracker.

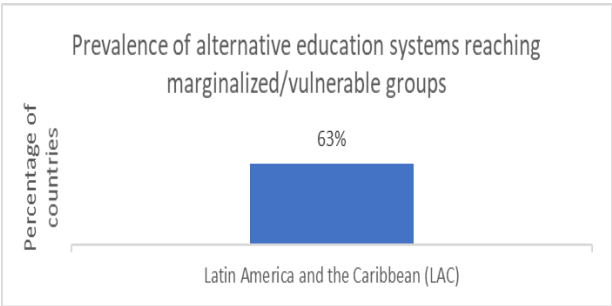
Measures to reach vulnerable groups in LAC:



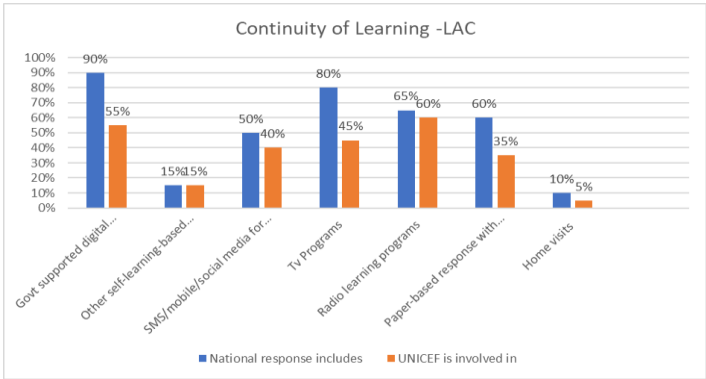
Monitoring alternative education delivery systems in LAC:



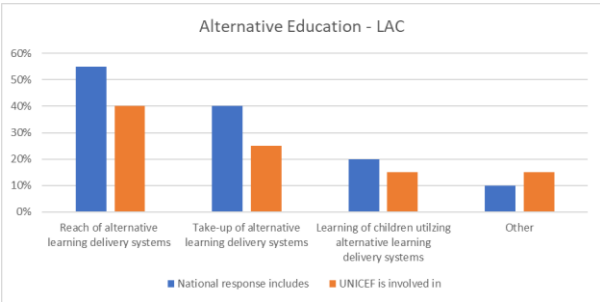
Reach of Vulnerable/Marginalized Groups:



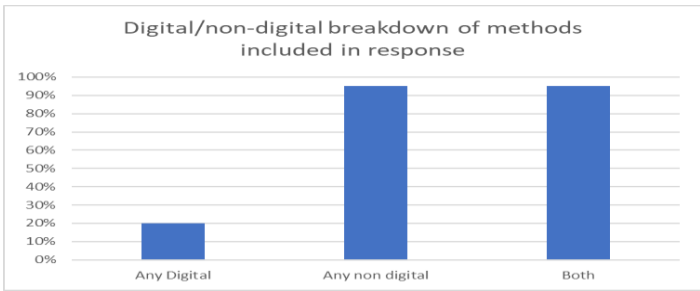
Continuity of Learning:



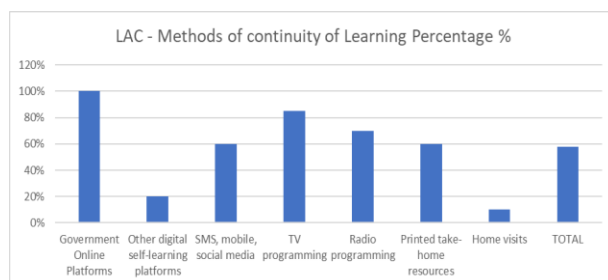
Alternative Education:



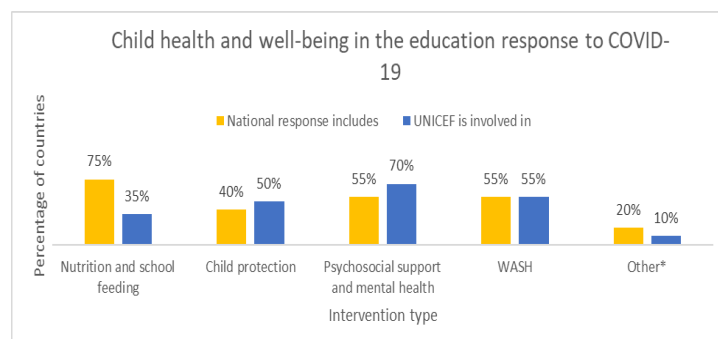
Digital/non-digital methods of continuity of learning (percentage of Cos):



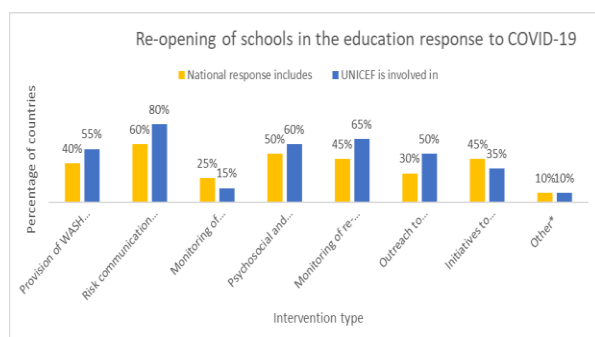
LAC Methods of continuity of learning:



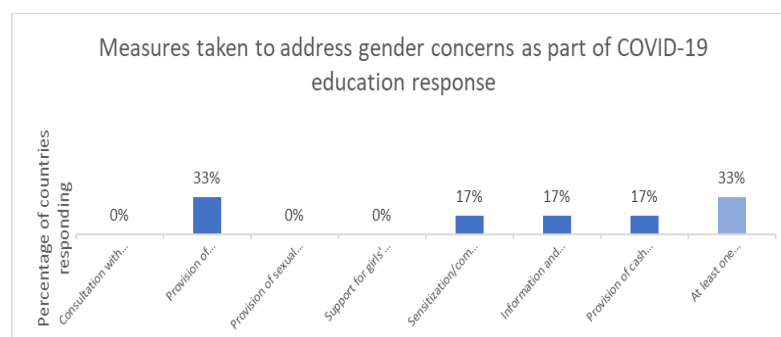
Child health & well-being:



Re-opening of schools



Gender concerns:



IV. UNICEF COUNTRY OFFICE & GOVERNMENT COVID-19 EDUCATION ACTIONS

Since the start of the outbreak in the Latin America & the Caribbean region, the **twenty-four UNICEF national offices in the region** have supported the MoEs in their response to COVID-19.

To see the country updates (including the COs and MOEs education actions) please access the following link updated on a weekly basis:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Xk4lleJbon7Pf_FITqtZlZMNPEh-KTyHvr4pQ0xirNQ/edit?usp=sharing

V. REGIONAL OFFICE SUPPORT STRATEGY

Over the last weeks, the Regional Office Education Team has been in constant communication with LAC Country Offices to assist with technical support, share information, and facilitate knowledge-sharing. The below are the main activities that UNICEF LACRO is focused on:

Education in Emergencies (EiE)	• Collation, organization, analysis and dissemination of relevant information (UNICEF reports, MoEs and COs updates, best practices, recommendations, and guidelines, etc.) with HQ, ROs and COs. All information has been stored and organized per categories in the regional share-point for information and knowledge sharing developed SharePoint's LACRO COVID-19 Education section ; • In the process of developing a checklist for the reopening of schools in the LAC region to be used by MOEs with the aim to assess their readiness for the safe reopening of schools, as well as support the reopening process in their respective countries. The
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	checklist will be available in the four main languages of the region.
Disabilities	• In collaboration with ECD and COMM, the #LearningAtHome ("Aprendo en Casa" in Spanish) campaign was adapted to digitally disability-accessible format; • Assistance in the development of online material available on UNICEF regional webpage within the COVID-19 context, including a page dedicated to family orientation on "learning-at-home" activities for families with CWD and the recommended resources: Aprendemos juntos en casa. Actividades divertidas para niños y niñas con discapacidades (<i>Learning together at home. Fun activities for children with disabilities in English</i>).
Secondary-age Education and Skills Development	• Together with America Solidaria, Caserta Foundation and the CONCAUSA Youth Network, LACRO launched the "Plan12 - Learn to transform", campaign aiming to support adolescents in the region to develop transferable skills in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. • Based on the 12 skills included in our Global Framework on Transferable Skills, every week a podcast, a video and a challenge will be launched focused on one specific skill. In the podcasts and videos, adolescents interview experts and peers on the "Skill of the Week", and every week adolescents from the region are invited to put into practice the same skill through a social media challenge. The "Skills of the Week" and the very first skill of #Plan12 is CREATIVITY, the next one will be CRITICAL THINKING.
Early Child Development (ECD)	• Second edition of the ECD newsletters (in English and Spanish) to support share of information and experiences between countries; • Dissemination of a guide to help parents combine teleworking with care of young children (available in Spanish –English, Portuguese and French versions to be available very soon); • On-going discussions with Afinidata, Peru CO and its government counterparts to explore the piloting of Afinidata's technology solution. The objective would be to establish an SSFA with Afinidata and LACRO to pilot Afinidata in 2 countries. • On-going discussions with Afinidata, Peru CO and its government counterparts to explore the piloting of Afinidata's technology solution. The objective would be to establish an SSFA with Afinidata and LACRO to pilot Afinidata in 2 countries.

VI. GLOBAL RESOURCES

At the headquarters level, several key documents have been developed to support the education response to COVID-19, all available [here](#):

- ✓ The COVID-19 Education: Contingency planning, risk reduction, preparedness and response framework;
- ✓ The guide with key Messages and Actions for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools;
- ✓ Several supplementary documents on key topics such as cleaning and supply, mental health and psychosocial support, child protection and accelerated education, to name a few and;
- ✓ The Framework for Reopening of Schools.

Other global resources:

- ✓ [Global Education Cluster](#)
- ✓ [Sesame Street Materials COVID-19](#)
- ✓ [INEE COVID-19 Resources](#)

VII. REGIONAL RESOURCES

At the regional level, the LACRO Education Section has translated and adapted to the region the key documents developed at the global level mentioned above. Here you can find the translation into Spanish, French and Portuguese of the documents, as well as a catalogue in English and Spanish with a brief overview of the documents' content.

This material is available for UNICEF staff at [LACRO COVID-19 Education Section in SharePoint](#)

UNICEF LACRO Education repository: The LACRO Education team has also launched a **public access repository of documents** with materials available to support the educational response to COVID-19. This space will be updated frequently to include new resources. [The categories are:](#)

1. Continuity of learning.
2. School reopening.
3. Education and learning (ECE).
4. Education and learning for adolescents.
5. Mental health and psychosocial support.
6. Inclusive education.

Regional Coordination: The regional Education Group (REWG)² has been actively working to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. The group is advancing towards the development of several regional activities, aimed to support regional actors in reestablishing the education services in LAC. These activities are done in conjunction of most members of the REWG.

- ✓ A guidance to adapt the curriculum to the current COVID-19 crisis.
- ✓ Creation of the REWG website in OCHA's *Humanitarian Response site*.
- ✓ Development of regional webinars on the COVID-19 crisis response.
- ✓ An online teachers' course to respond to the educational needs that emerge during and after the emergency of COVID-19.
- ✓ A regional repository of COVID-19 related documents, [hosted by UNESCO with all resources and tools by the REWG](#).
- ✓ Data on the [national education responses from all MoEs in the LAC region](#).

VIII. NATIONAL RESOURCES

At the national level, Ministries of Education have developed and/or started using their online learning platforms. You can access the list of MoEs remote learning platforms [here](#), including a brief overview of each of them both in English and Spanish.

² The REWG was established in 2011 under the framework of REDLAC (Risk Emergency Disaster Working group for Latin America and the Caribbean) to support Ministries of Education in their education in emergencies response (including risk management, disaster and migration), based on the Sendai Framework, the World Initiative for Safe Schools (WISS) and the Global Education Cluster, to ensure the right to education to all children in the LAC region. The Group is co-led by UNICEF and Save the Children and comprises the following members: AECID, ECHO, IFRC, INEE, IOM, NRC, OCHA, PLAN International, RET, UNAIDS, UNDRR, UNESCO, UNHCR, and UN WOMEN