

## Latin America & the Caribbean COVID-19 Education Response [July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020]

### COVID-19 Impact on Education in the Latin America & the Caribbean Region (LAC)<sup>1</sup>

#### I. SITUATION ANALYSIS

### CURRENT SITUATION OF SCHOOLS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN



See source of data in note 1.

<sup>1</sup> Note: The estimated data from this section has been collated from information either from the UIS database, UNICEF, and other sources:

-UNESCO Institute of Statistics <http://data.uis.unesco.org/#>

- <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>

As of July 8<sup>th</sup>, many countries still have their schools closed, however, some countries like Uruguay, and some countries and territories from the Eastern Caribbean Area, have started to open their schools.

UNICEF Country Offices and Regional Office in the LAC region are still providing technical support to MoEs to ensure safe, quality and continued learning for all children, as well with the elaboration of protocols to ensure the safe reopening of schools.

## II. PROGRESS TOWARDS THE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

Ministries of Education continue to support distance learning through 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.). However, most countries in the LAC region have already started to prepare for the reopening of schools -some countries are in the planning stages, whereas other have already initiated the reopening process in stages. Here are the last updates on schools' closures and reopening plans:

- **NEW Argentina:** Argentina has released their official protocol for reopening schools. UNICEF was part of the Commission which elaborated the document. Argentina is now in the process of finalizing the Survey of families together with the MoE which will be ready in two weeks. [The protocol can be accessed in the following link.](#)
- **Anguilla:** Primary Schools: Grades K to 4 will continue with E-Learning until further notice. Grades 5 and 6 will return to the classroom half day from 8:25am to 12 noon. There will be no afternoon sessions Students in Special Education Needs (SEN) Units will continue remote learning with their teachers until further notice. For more information check [here](#).
- **Antigua y Barbuda:** Schools have opened at the fifth form level further to the completion of a sanitization programme. All schools have been outfitted with hand sanitizing stations and hand washing facilities have been installed at the entrance of each classroom.
- **Barbados:** Class Four students (around 3300) will return to the classrooms from Monday, June 15, in order to prepare for the 2020 Barbados Secondary Schools' Entrance Examination to be held on Tuesday, July 14. [The MoE has developed guidelines for the safe reopening of schools.](#)
- **NEW British Virgin Islands:** [School reopening guidance](#) was released and partial reopening commenced early June for senior secondary students.
- **NEW Bolivia:** A few days after the Ministry of Education issued decree 4260 which legalizes virtual education, the Minister of Education announced that given the dire situation of COVID-19 in Bolivia, education will continue to be virtual until December. Nevertheless, autonomous governments at decentralized level have requested UNICEF support to work on the reopening protocols.
- **NEW Chile:** Starting on July 1<sup>st</sup>, the schools of Easter Island began the return plan to school, starting with the last grade of secondary school and progressively the other levels will be reintegrated. For the rest of the country there is no defined date. The Ministry of Education is preparing a Protocol for schools.
- **Colombia:** The MoE has released the directive [011](#), giving guidance on the provision of education services in the framework of the health emergency of COVID-19, and the directive [012](#), which provides additional guidance for the provision of educational services for initial, pre-primary, basic and middle levels. You can also find the directives towards reopening schools in the following [link](#).

- **Costa Rica:** The Ministry of Education has set up an interdisciplinary and expert working team to assess the gradual and controlled [return to attendance in the medium term](#), in accordance with the strictest prevention protocols and when health conditions permit.
- **Cuba:** Since June 18th, Cuba has begun de-escalation in all provinces except Havana and Matanzas. The Ministry of Education has planned to carry out this process in 3 phases: **Phase 1:** (For all provinces except Havana and Matanzas): Guarantee conditions in educational institutions and the preparation of directors, teachers, students, families and the community for the completion of the school year, resuming in September. **Phase 2:** Restart and completion of the 2019-2020 school year, which runs until October 31st. **Phase 3:** The new school year will begin on Monday, November 2. In this phase the new forms of work experienced in the III Improvement of the educational system will be generalized. The official communication from the MoE can be found in this [link](#).
- **NEW Dominica:** The MoE issued protocols to guide the partial reopening of schools for senior primary and senior secondary students from mid-May.
- **Dominican Republic:** The High-Level Commission created by the National Council of Education has launched the protocol to follow during the academic school year 2020-2021, which is planned to start on August 24. Such protocol includes measures on personal protection, use of transport, arrival conditions, measures for students, teachers and other education staff, etc.
- **Ecuador:** The Ministry of Education, as part of the "Plan Educativo Aprendemos Juntos en Casa", has launched the optional progressive return to schools of rural educational institutions of the Costa-Galapagos zones. Approximately 2,071 schools with 35 students or less must meet the sanitation protocols in order to receive authorization for their return to face-to-face education combined with the home-schooling modality. For more information check [here](#).
- **El Salvador:** The Ministry of Education has a response strategy with actions identified in 3 phases: 1) facing the closure of schools, 2) recovery and educational continuity (Plan: "La alegría de regresar a la escuela") and 3) transformation and improvement towards multimodal education.
- **NEW Grenada:** The Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Religious Affairs and Information has developed [guidelines for the reopening of schools](#).
- **NEW Guyana:** Schools re- opened for a specified period **June 14 through to August 15** to facilitate face to face revisions and sitting of the National Grade 6 Assessment and Caribbean examinations. All schools were sanitized during the week of June 8 and followed the protocols for the re-opening, and administration of the I Examinations gazette "as COVID -19 Special Measures". UNICEF Guyana as Grant Agent, for the GPE C19 Accelerated Funding received (US\$ 3.745 million) for continuity of learning; wellbeing/psychosocial support; WASH and safe schools. Implementation is in progress with the MoE focusing on a hybrid approach on and offline platforms and print based and manipulatives targeting the most marginalized in the hinterland, riverine areas and including children with disabilities.
- **UPDATED Honduras:** [The Secretary of Education has presented the protocol for the reopening of schools](#). Strategy for the Safe Return to Government and Non-Government Education Centers in the face of COVID-19 crisis. 6 working groups have been established in coordination with SEDUC and Donors' Round Table (MERECE); the group of Biosecurity is led by UNICEF.
- **Jamaica:** The MoE has issued new protocols established for students returning to the classroom. Jamaican students will sit the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC), and Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) tests starting July 27 and to that end welcomed back these external exam students in 5<sup>th</sup> and

6<sup>th</sup> form on June 8<sup>th</sup>. Students and teachers with underlying health conditions are encouraged to remain home. All public health and safety [protocols](#) are being observed system wide to ensure the safety of students and teachers.

- **Mexico:** The Public Secretary of Education has established that in order to take care of the health of children, adolescents and professors, public and private schools, the return to school has been postponed to 10 August and will depend on the indications defined by the health authority according to the health risk. Also, some States have already indicated that they will open schools later. The formal distance learning strategy “Aprende en Casa” has ended with the end of the formal school year and is replaced by a summer programme “Verano Divertido”, using the same platforms (internet, TV, radio).
- **Panama:** [Has presented its action plan of the MEDUCA strategy to address COVID-19](#). The strategy will align the efforts of the education sector, both public and private actors, to respond effectively to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis.
- **NEW:** The Ministry of Education has presented its prioritized curriculum for the remote reopening of schools scheduled on July 20<sup>th</sup>. On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Ministry has approved this modified curriculum with a governmental decree that rules the alignments for a remote schooling. MEDUCA has launched the self-learning website ‘Esther’ for all educational actors.
- **Paraguay:** In a meeting of the Educational council and the Health authorities a preliminary plan designed for a possible gradual return to classes was analyzed. The Ministry of Education and Science (MEC) of Paraguay proposes four possible scenarios for the gradual return of schools. For more information check [here](#).
- **NEW:** Consensus was reached on how to carry out evaluations during the school year. Each school should decide how to best evaluate progress through qualitative assessments since this is the first time that students in Paraguay take tests in a virtual manner. The minimum percentage to pass the school year will be 60% for primary and 70% for secondary.
- **NEW Peru:** The government has established a first regulation that guides the reopening of schools only for certain rural areas, without connectivity and contexts without COVID-19 cases (RM 229-2020-MINEDU). The protocol to be observed for the start of the face-to-face educational service for the 2020 school year has also been presented ([RVM 116-2020-MINEDU](#)).
- **NEW St Lucia:** Plan and protocols developed for Safe Reopening of schools and phased reopening of schools commenced 2 June 2020 for Grade 6 Primary and senior secondary.
- **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:** Schools for fifth and sixth form students reopened on May 25<sup>th</sup>. The hours will be reduced to 9am–2pm.
- **NEW Suriname:** Schools reopened on July 6<sup>th</sup> until the first week of August for the exam grades in primary and secondary reopened with adjusted opening hour. Revised [school reopening protocols](#) have been issued.
- **NEW Trinidad and Tobago:** Schools scheduled to reopen 1 September 2020 however some schools in Tobago opened from mid-May for selected grade levels.
- **NEW Turks and Caicos Islands:** Reopening date still to be confirmed however currently tentatively scheduled for September 2020.
- **Uruguay:** It is the only case of progressive reopening, which started with rural schools and will deepen its strategy in the coming weeks. Uruguay has developed the [protocol](#) of implementation for the return of students to schools. The country has also some [recommendations](#) for the return to school.
- **NEW Venezuela:** Venezuela has moved from the phase of external imported infections to community cases, which represents the beginning of a critical phase of the COVID.19. Although the vacation period (July 1 to September

15) is beginning, which would later give way to the new school year 2020-2021, the most likely scenario is to continue with the distance education modality. However, the Ministry of Education is analyzing the possibility of continuing with this modality from September or modifying the school calendar to start in January 2021. For the time being, work has been done on the Global Framework for the Reopening of Schools and the plan for the start of the school year at a distance and the plan for the safe return to schools are being drawn up.

# REOPENING OF SCHOOLS IN LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN

## CARIBBEAN

**Anguilla:** Grades 5 and 6 will return to the classroom half day from 8:25am to 12 noon. For more information [check here](#).

**Barbados:** The MoE has developed [guidelines](#) for the safe reopening of schools.

**British Virgin Islands:** The MoE has released the [School reopening guidance](#).

**Jamaica:** The MoE has issued new schools [protocols](#).

**Cuba:** The MoE has released the official communication about the measures to be implemented in the school reopening process [link](#).

**Grenada:** The Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Religious Affairs and Information has developed [guidelines for the reopening of schools](#).

**St Lucia:** Schools commenced 2 June 2020 for Grade 6 Primary and senior secondary.

**Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:** Schools for fifth and sixth form students reopened on May 25th, from 9am–2pm.

**Trinidad and Tobago:** Schools scheduled to reopen 1 September 2020 however some schools in Tobago opened from mid-May for selected grade levels.

**Turks and Caicos Islands:** Reopening tentatively scheduled for September 2020.

## CENTRAL AMERICA

**Honduras:** The Secretary of Education has presented the [protocol](#) for the reopening of schools.

**Panama:** Has presented its [action plan](#) of the MEDUCA strategy to address COVID-19.

## SOUTH AMERICA

**Argentina:** Argentina has released their official [protocol for reopening schools](#).

**Colombia:** The MoE has released guidance [011, 012](#), for the provision of educational services [link](#).

**Ecuador:** The Ministry of Education has launched the optional progressive return to schools of rural educational institutions of the Costa-Galapagos zones. [here](#).

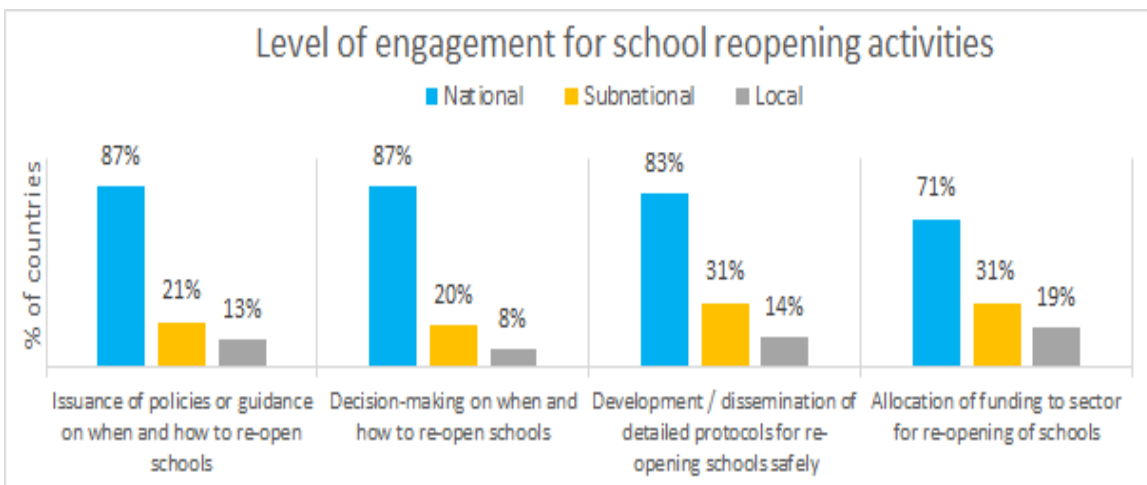
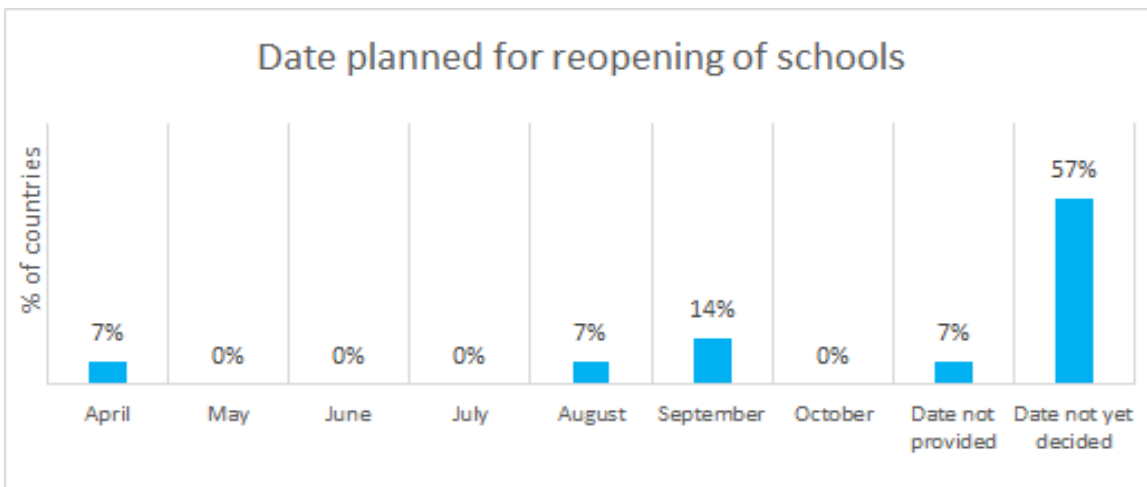
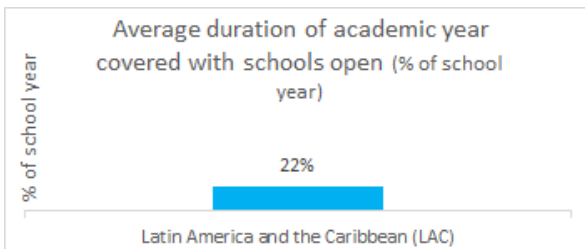
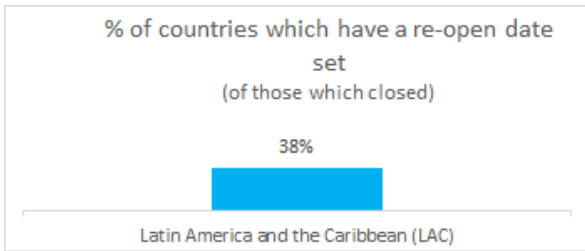
**Paraguay:** The Ministry of Education and Science (MEC) of Paraguay proposes four possible scenarios for the gradual return of schools. [here](#).

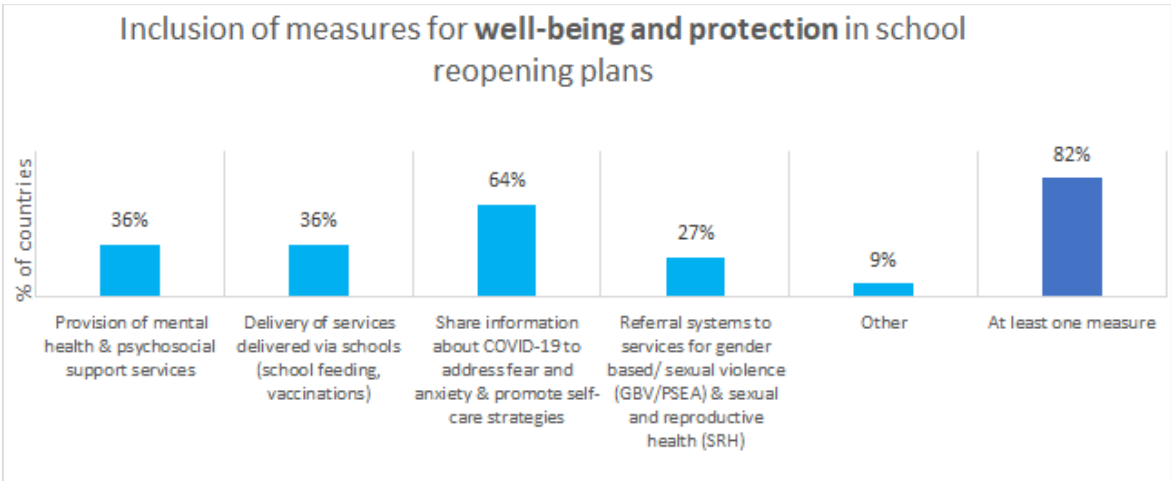
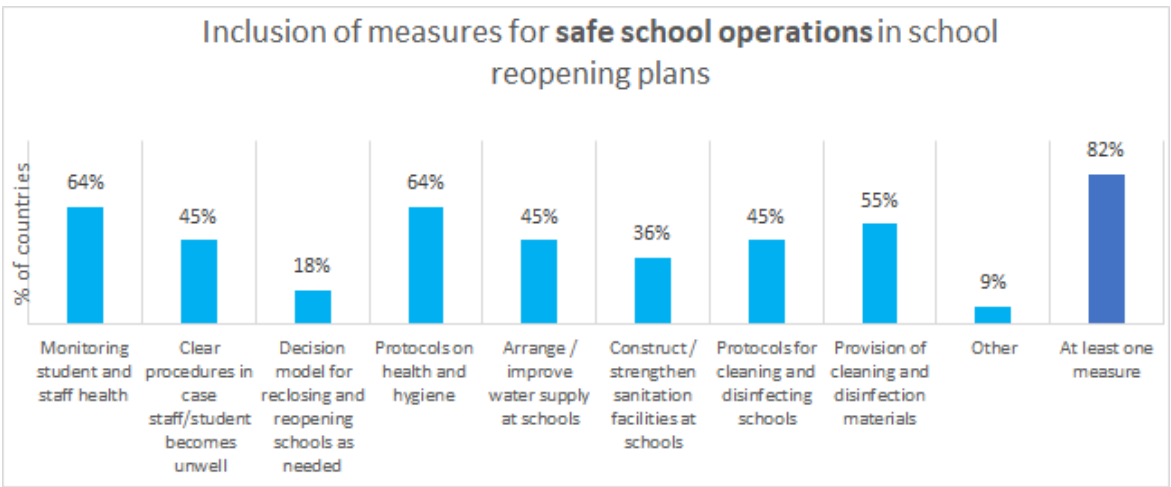
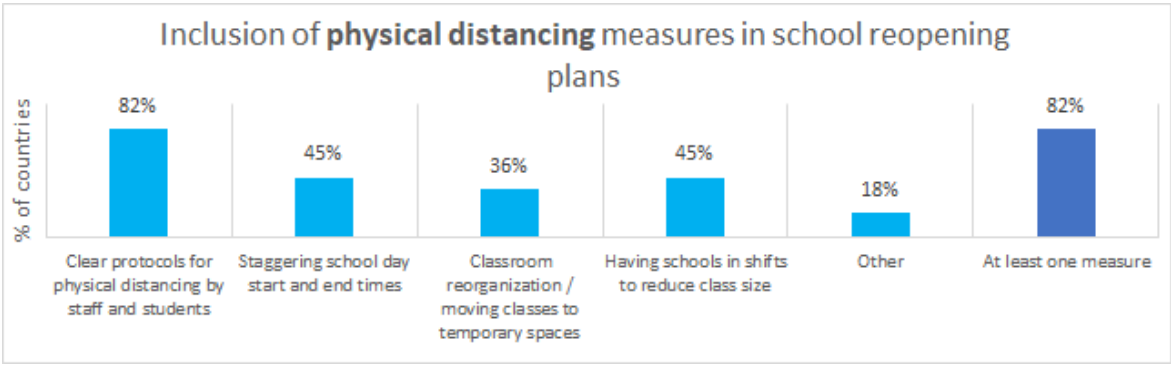
**Peru:** The MoE presented the protocol for the face-to-face educational service ([RVM 116-2020-MINEDU](#)).

**Uruguay:** Uruguay has developed the [protocol](#) of implementation for the return of students to schools. The country has also some [recommendations](#) for the return to school.

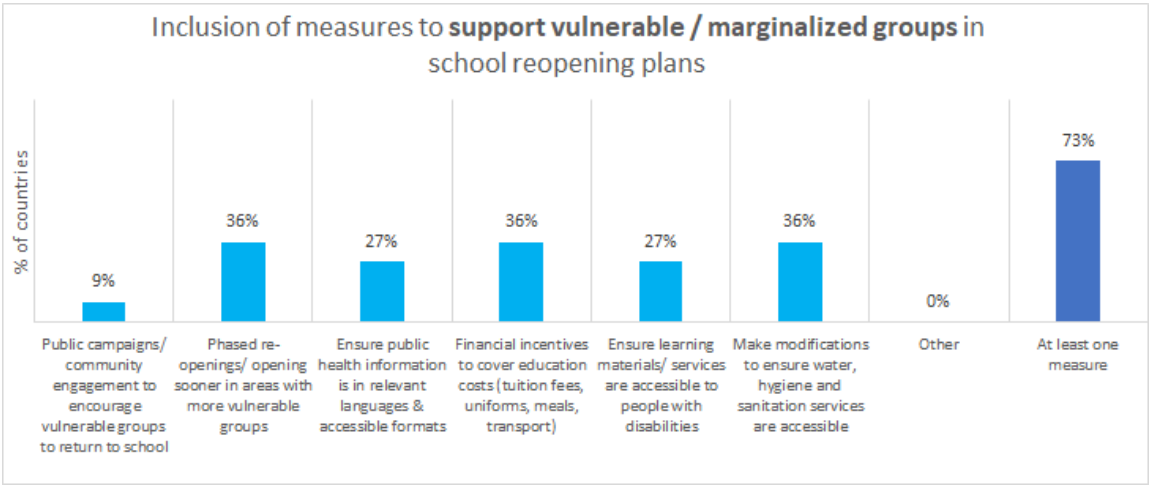
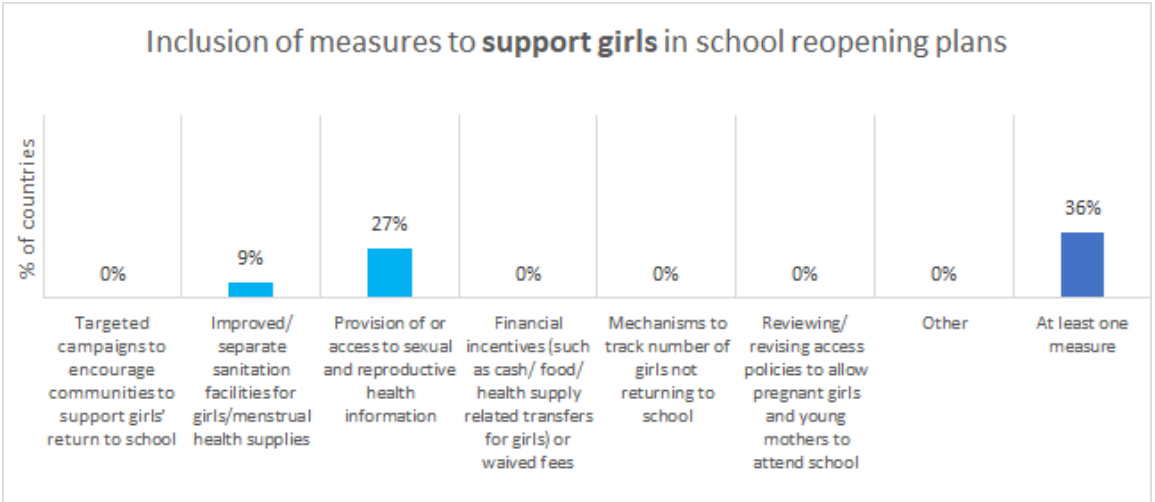
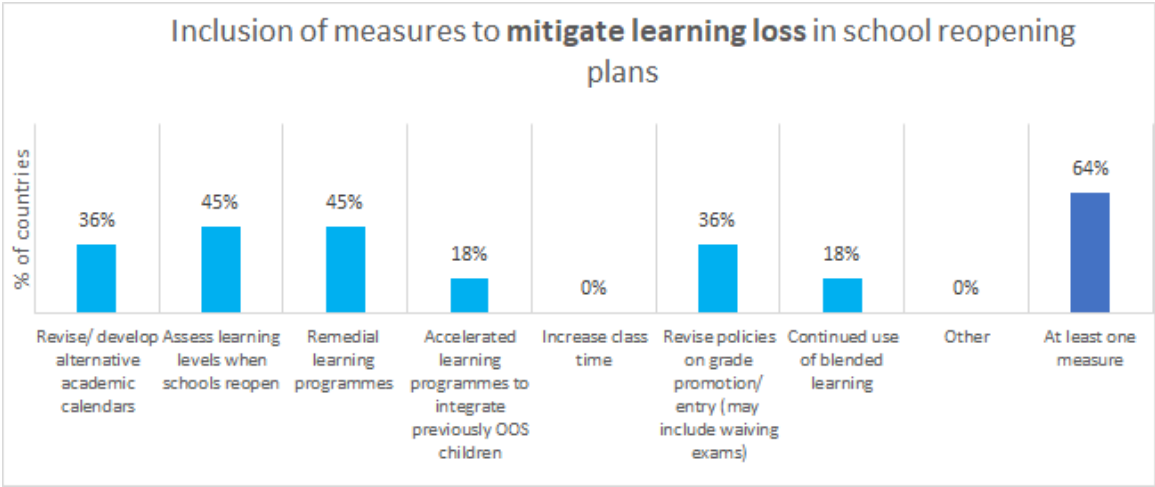
### III. UNICEF LAC CURRENT DATA

The information below is based on responses from 11 COs in the region on the global tracker (Bolivia (Pluri-national State of), Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay).

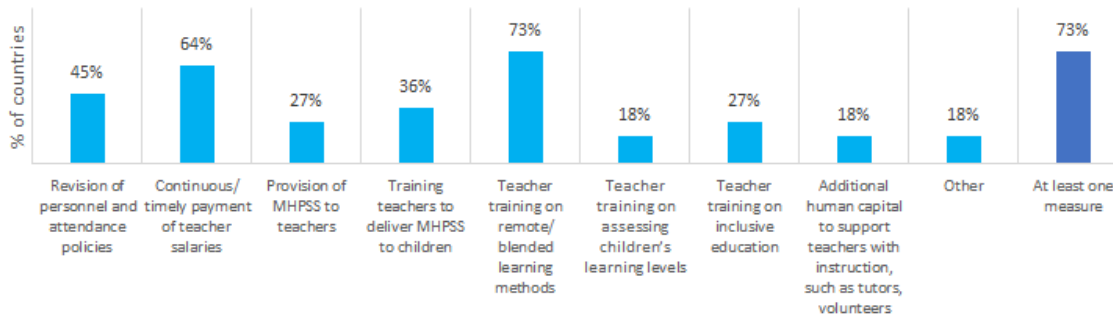




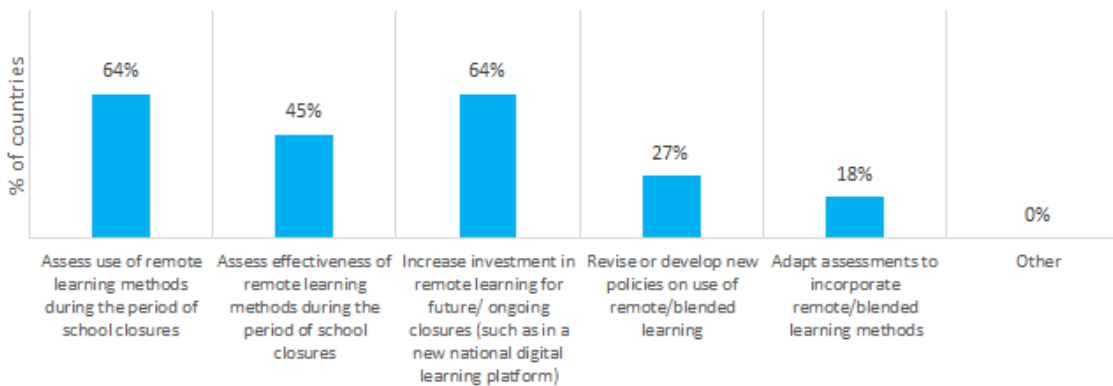




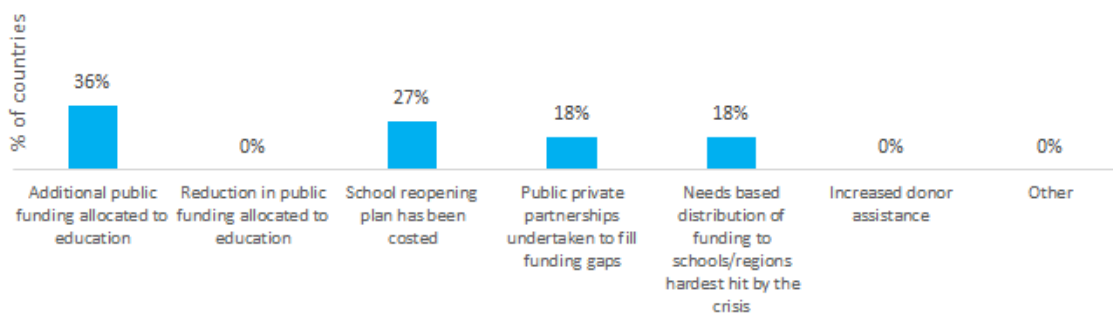
### Inclusion of measures to **support teachers** in school reopening plans



### Inclusion of measures to **prepare remote/blended learning programs for the future**



### How **education financing** has been addressed or affected by COVID-19





\*Where the disaggregation was provided by the reporting organization, the sum does not amount to the total. \*\*Figures subject to Food Security Sector system. Source: Data collected by national and sub-regional partners corresponding to the reporting period of 1 January to 15 May; last updated on 1 May.

For more information on R4V, please access the following [link](#):

#### IV. UNICEF COUNTRY OFFICE & GOVERNMENT COVID-19 EDUCATION ACTIONS<sup>2</sup>

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.

**Argentina:** UNICEF has provided support to the national government (MoE) in the implementation of a national survey in homes to know the educational situation of the children and adolescents during the COVID19. This study is part of an evaluation program that has been launched nationwide. Fieldwork begins the week of June 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**NEW:** Evaluation program fieldwork began on 18th of June and will be completed on 2nd of July. Pedagogical and management resources to strengthen capacities on COVID19 context.

**ECE: "The stories of Oscarcito":** A handbook aimed for preprimary children and their families, a compilation for the older children (mothers, fathers, uncles, great aunts, grandmothers, older brothers and sisters) to read stories to the younger children and share with them sensations, feelings, learning and games. This edition also includes guidelines aimed at families with the aim of supporting and accompanying them in reading the stories, to promote exchanges, learning and shared games at home.

**School Management Toolkit:** School management teams in front of the COVID-19: Guidance for teachers, families and students in emergency contexts. The series is organized into six brochures that address institutional management bottlenecks and offer different resources for ordering reflection as well as key guidelines for the role of management. Each handbook presents five challenges and five proposals and is complemented by an audiovisual capsule and a podcast to share on different supports. It was presented to provincial education teams on 18th of June.

**Bolivia:** UNICEF has received requests for support from some Autonomous governments to contextualize and apply the framework for back to schools. MoE has legalized virtual education through a decree.

UNICEF has developed and distributed an orientation booklet for parents so that they can support their children to continue educational activities at home. In partnership with Tigo, UNICEF is providing training to teachers to improve

<sup>2</sup> For any corrections or updates, kindly send your inputs to Tania G. Veiga ([tgonzalez@unicef.org](mailto:tgonzalez@unicef.org)), with Ruth Custode and Juan Pinzón in copy. The next update will be on July 22<sup>nd</sup> and we will be accepting COs updates until July 20<sup>th</sup> 12pm.

their skills and knowledge of tools to be able to carry out educational activities online. MoE has requested UNICEF's support on the procurement of hygiene (biosecurity) kits and educational materials. UNICEF will also support MoE with technical support to adapt content for the Virtual Education platform.

**NEW:** UNICEF has reached over 4,000 teachers through virtual training webinars providing them with the contents of e-rights and how to reach every child. This content is being delivered within the framework of a partnership with Tigo. The partnership aims to support the Ministry on its request for all teachers to upgrade their skills through these free online trainings. The next round of trainings will include some of UNICEF's flagship topics such as psychosocial support and prevention of violence in schools and among students.

The booklets for parents, developed in partnership with the Ministry of Education have been complemented with four rounds of webinars bringing experts on four different age groups targeting, early childhood education, primary education and two more webinars targeting parents of junior and higher secondary students respectively. These webinars have been viewed by thousands of parents who were able to interact and make questions to these experts on specific concerns.

One of UNICEF's latest U-report has shown that even children with internet connection are not necessarily receiving lessons. Some others are struggling with the costs and 92% claim to be learning, nothing, almost nothing or very little. As expected, connectivity has proved to be a significant gap for which UNICEF's efforts are now geared towards supporting education through community radios.

**Belize:** MoE in Belize is using learning platforms to provide continuing education to children in Belize. Technology - Printed lessons via Special Edition Newsprint to be published every two weeks students from primary school to secondary schools. Radio broadcasted lessons utilizing FM Radio Stations (Monday to Friday). Television broadcasted, 2 - 3 times per week to provide support for psychosocial and life skills to children and parents. Internet based via MoE website -lessons posted daily for children from the class of standard one to six.

UNICEF ECD/Education sector has supported the implementation of safe school operations guidance with government and local partners while schools were still open, including guidance on handwashing and sanitation in schools, revision of protocols, and training and support for school staff. This guidance will also be implemented once school reopen. In addition, technical support to assist the identification and development of context-appropriate strategies to ensure educational continuity through flexible and distance home-based learning methods delivered through on-line platforms. UNICEF is supporting the development of guidance and content for parents and caregivers to assist children including psycho-social support and distance learning for most vulnerable children: migrants, refugees, children with disabilities, children out-of-school, and indigenous children, including support to ongoing school-feeding.

UNICEF is also supporting the ministry with a television programme to support children and families in psychosocial support and learning sessions. UNICEF has reached 387,000 parents, teachers and children with health and hygiene education messages.

**Brazil:** Brazil CO has supported local governments to develop and implement guidelines for safe school operations during the COVID-19 outbreak (e.g. promotion of hand and respiratory hygiene, screening and referral of suspected cases, as appropriate), and education about COVID-19 prevention, once schools reopen. UNICEF has also supported local governments (sub-national level) to develop and make available learning materials for children and adolescents once schools are closed adapted and implemented school active search strategy to reach out the students that eventually don't go back to school when they reopen.

The support given by Brazil Country Office are being materialized by the following actions take to date:

[Educational Podcasts](#) - UNICEF has launched a podcast series to provide children aged 4 to 10 years and their families with educational opportunities in the context of the school closure. *Deixa que eu conto-*

Mobilization Educational Podcasts - UNICEF launched a series of educational podcasts focused on the culture of the people who live in the Amazon region.

[National broadcast](#) viewed by 78,000 people & a [Regional broadcast](#) More than 4,000 people have already been reached with this content.

[Successful School Paths](#) - UNICEF is adapting the implementation of its Successful School Paths strategy to the context of the coronavirus pandemic.

More information -

[Out-School-Children](#) - UNICEF is engaging more than 3,000 municipalities use the opportunity of the school closure to train local staff on the School Active Search strategy that aims to identify and re-enroll out-of-school children to the public-school system. More information -

Inclusion - UNICEF is disseminating to municipalities contents produced in partnership with Sesame Street on inclusion of children with disability. You can see the material [here](#).

[Always learning](#) – UNICEF and partners launched a digital platform to support educational managers, teachers and family's secure the right to learn of children and adolescents in the context of the coronavirus pandemic.

Mobilization – UNICEF is participating in different [live sessions YouTube](#) and [live sessions in Facebook](#) to mobilize municipal managers of education, technicians and teachers about the challenges of education during the coronavirus pandemic and how to reduce its impact.

**Costa Rica:** UNICEF Costa Rica has supported the development of "Autonomous Learning Guides" of the remote learning program, "learn at home". UNICEF has also assessed the impact on the student population as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and supported the MoE in the development of a return strategy to the educational process at the worktables. In addition, UNICEF has also developed audiovisual and written systematization of good practices and life stories on educational innovations, access to services and prevention of educational exclusion in the context of the pandemic, with a social communication campaign to promote the safe return to the educational process, hygiene measures and the prevention of exclusion in the context of COVID-19.

The MoE of Costa Rica has established three levels of care for students: **Universal:** reaching the entire educational system. **Focused:** Recovers the contexts of the populations, i.e. the indigenous sub-systems, migrant population, population with disabilities, populations in conditions of poverty and greater vulnerability social, economic, emotional **Indicated:** Identification and prioritization of those populations, educational levels, regions, circuits considered to require specific indicated actions.

Five strategic premises for the work have been established: Status of the pandemic situation in the 27 Regional directorates of education, evolution of the distance educational process, scenarios for the restart of face-to-face classes, preparation of the general action protocol, prioritization of learning expected and strengthening distance educational support. Five working groups were established for the generation of protocols for returning to face-to-face classes. Training in digital media for education was provided to 66,000 teachers (99% of the total).

**Chile:** UNICEF - UNESCO -MoE collaboration in a series of Webinars, the first one on Socio-emotional learning in the context of a pandemic. UNICEF has collaborated with technical teams on the reopening of schools and statistics regarding adolescent concerns in the context of a pandemic.

MoE has launched the remote learning platform "Aprendo en Línea" to support continuity of the educational processes. A free downloadable software "Learning to read with Bartolo" was available to support the learning of reading for students from 1st to 3rd grade.

In addition, TVChannel #TVEducaChile, transmits cultural and curricular entertainment of the courses from 1 to 4 basic. MoE has also released graphic and audiovisual resources for socio-emotional support for teachers, students and families. Furthermore, curricular prioritization for all educational levels in response to the educational needs. MoE has launched a public announcement from the educational authority regarding the need to prepare schools for reopening.

**NEW:** UNICEF has started talks with community authorities to support school readiness for reopening.

**Colombia:** UNICEF Colombia has reached 12,000 children with the home learning strategy La Aldea in la Guajira, Norte de Santander and Barranquilla. UNICEF Colombia, as leader of the EiE cluster, has aligned the humanitarian response with the MoE and the local Secretariats, and has supported the Education Needs Assessment done by the Education Secretariats in Norte de Santander and Nariño. Additionally, as a joint action between IRC, NRC and UNICEF, pedagogical material was delivered for the education continuity of 195 children (pendulares) living in Venezuela but studying in Colombia. The MoE of Colombia launched a series of guidelines and protocols for the partial reopening of schools as of August 1st, 2020.

**Cuba:** UNICEF Cuba has contributed to the purchase of essential school supplies and sanitation process for the reopening of schools. UNICEF has also supported families in socio-emotional support, dealing with confinement situations with WhatsApp groups for the care of children with autism. UNICEF has also streamed two Facebook live with counseling to families of children with autism and materials with activations from social networks for early childhood, among other communication actions.

Since June 18<sup>th</sup>, Cuba has begun de-escalation in all provinces except Havana and Matanzas. The Ministry of Education has planned to carry out this process in **3 phases:**

**Phase 1:** (For all provinces except Havana and Matanzas): Guarantee conditions in educational institutions and the preparation of directors, teachers, students, families and the community for the completion of the school year, resuming in September. This phase will run from June 18 to July 18.

**Phase 2:** Restart and completion of the 2019-2020 school year, which runs until October 31<sup>st</sup>. In the last week of August, teachers will finish their preparations and families will be contacted on the restarting the school and ending the school year, sessions of teaching activities, schedules, calendar of final evaluations and continuity of studies. The teaching activities will start on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Phase 3:** The new school year will begin on Monday, November 2, and the curricular adaptations prepared by teams of specialists from the Central Institute of Pedagogical Sciences, the University of Pedagogical Sciences Enrique José Varona and the MoE will be applied, which do not imply reduction of frequencies of the subjects, nor removal of content. In this phase the new forms of work experienced in the III Improvement of the educational system will be generalized.

**NEW:** Cuba's MoE has released resolution #97/2020 with details of the evaluation process for the completion of the 2019-2020 school year, once classes have restarted in September 2020. Document can be once it has restarted next September. Resolution #97/2020 can be accessed in the following [link](#).

**UPDATED Dominican Republic:** The Ministry of Education has developed a website for school continuity with educational guides and materials for all levels, including disabilities, and has supported food distribution at national level (bread, milk, HEBs to families with enrolled children). The CO has worked on the adaptation and design of posters for COVID-19 prevention and has supported the virtual educational proposal with 10 short story videos for children ages 5 to 12 with translation in sign language, which will reach families through educational TV and social networks. The CO is also providing technical support for the adaptation to COVID-19 of the program on psycho-emotional recovery called *Retorno de la Alegría*, which the MoE will implement with UNICEF's support over the first four weeks of the school year when schools reopen on August 24. Lastly, the CO is also supporting the revision of the protocol for the reopening of schools and supporting the MoE with the design of the learning strengthening phase at the primary level.

**Ecuador:** UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Education to ensure that more children and adolescents have access to quality educational content through radio and television and supporting pedagogical mentors and teachers from the



remedial program in the implementation of distance education. UNICEF CO continues providing technical assistance to the MOE to strengthen education policies to ensure safe school operations, wellbeing and protection, and learning as part of the COVID-19 education response strategy.

UNICEF will support the MOE in the elaboration of a rapid diagnosis tool to guide the plan for returning to school.

The Ministry of Education together with the education authorities presented the Educational Plan "Aprendemos Juntos en casa", which will be implemented in the Costa-Galapagos regions for the school year 2020-2021.

**NEW:** The school year in the Coast regime started 1<sup>st</sup> of June. UNICEF supports development and implementation of multiplatform learning for the emergency context and beyond. As the pressure to reopen the schools increased and the numbers of persons infected with coronavirus continued to increase in various territories, the need for a prolonged emergency education plan became evident. UNICEF provided technical support to the Ministry of Education in the design of the school reopening strategy and management model and advocated for prioritization of saving lives and the best interest of the children and adolescents in the process.

As of June 2020, the support to multiplatform learning included support to educational television, education programs in community radios, distribution of printed material in Spanish and indigenous languages, distribution of mobile equipment and connectivity to education staff, pedagogical and psychosocial orientation and support to teachers and student councilors.

UNICEF supported educational television started its second phase which now includes special programs for early childhood development and involves participation of teachers as actors. Two-minute animations on hygiene, health, nutrition, protection and emotional support are being produced by UNICEF and broadcasted in every program. All together 252 programs of 30 minutes each are being broadcasted in 160 national, local and regional channels.

30-minute educational programs are produced and transmitted with UNICEF's support daily in 25 community radios reaching 2.473.177 listeners. The capacities of community radios in production of educational programs are being strengthened simultaneously as most of them did not have experience or capacities in this area. Both the productions as the training process are being published through national media to raise awareness of the importance and the role of community radios in this emergency.

UNICEF continued distribution of educational materials and hygiene kits to students in rural and hard to reach communities of the Northern Border, accompany teachers to conduct levelling and adapt education to multi-grade school reality in the emergency context. Intercultural bilingual material was printed for 240,000 indigenous students and distributed through the Ministry of Education to the territories.

**UPDATED ECA:** UNICEF ECA supported around 130 schools with provision of hygiene kits to support the safe reopening of schools including 7 in Anguilla, 60 Barbados, 30 in Saint Lucia, 25 in Tobago and 8 in British Virgin Islands directly impacting over 16,000 students in the Phase 1 of the reopening of schools. Support was also provided for posters to guide proper handwashing, social distancing and correct use of masks. Support has also been provided to ensure that teachers are sensitized and trained to provide psycho-social supports to students in addressing any issues that may have arisen as a direct or indirect impact of COVID-19 on the students and their families. Provision has also been made for teachers to access online tele-med services to assist them in coping with the current situation. addressing any support

An estimated UNICEF provided support to Ministry of Education St. Lucia for provision of distant learning for 13,000 primary school children through TV and Radio programmes. UNICEF ECA provided 660 digital devices for the most vulnerable children with devices to ensure their access to online education in the 6 island countries which include 43 in Anguilla, 120 in Barbados, 100 in Dominica, 96 in St. Lucia, 50 in Tobago, 200 in Turks and Caicos and 51 in Virgin Islands.

In Trinidad, more than 600 migrant children have been provided with online distant education and during the month of May additional 277 migrant children received tablets and 240 received student kits. Sixteen Facilitators have been assigned to work directly with the Notes Master team to complete outstanding online content and to receive targeted technical support with the platform to better assist migrant children in accessing on-line education.

**UPDATED El Salvador:** On June 5, the Education Cluster was activated with more than 90 participants. The cluster is led by UNICEF and co-led by Save the Children; the World Bank is a strategic partner. The participation of the World Bank is strategic in the framework of the Initiative of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). As a long-term perspective, the objective is to reinvent education in El Salvador. The Ministry of Education actively participates in the cluster and the Minister of Education participated in the first meeting and explained the situation of the sector and the expectations of the ministry.

The education cluster has been organized into four subcommittees:

1. Policies, management and financing - coordinated by the World Bank
2. Continuous learning - coordinated by Save the Children
3. Safe operation- coordinated by Save the Children
4. Well-being and protection - coordinated by UNICEF

The commissions are elaborating their action plans, defining priorities and lines of action to support the Ministry of Education.

**Guatemala:** MoE established a work group with representatives of the teachers' union in order to socialize with them the plan to reopen schools. The engagement of the teachers' union has demonstrated to be a good strategy for a local and close follow-up of the distant learning modalities and trainings. ASH has become a priority in the reopening plan since an important percentage of schools lack these services. CO has done advocacy to support the MoE in requesting IDB the option to use part of the education sector budget to do minor repairs in 5000 schools, in the most vulnerable settings. Another important issue that the MoE has strengthen is parental care for children 0-5 years old through short videos sent to community volunteers by mobile technology.

**NEW:** The High-Level Commission was created by the Ministry of Education in which representatives of the teachers' union participate, is working on a reopening school plan not earlier that October. The plan has prioritized action that include 1) easy to understand protocols on safety and hygiene and physical distancing measures, use of protective equipment and cleaning procedures, 2) progressive opening from rural to urban and prioritizing low transmission territories and also staged, where attendance in only some days a week, restricted schedule and flexible school year, 3) teacher preparedness for psychosocial support, accelerated learning/play, remedial mechanisms and assessment and 4) implementation of a communication and coordination strategy to engage with communities, parents and teachers so all are well informed and involved in the safe reopening of schools.

**Guyana:** Together with UNICEF, the MoE is currently finalizing its protocols for school re-opening under three thematic areas: Wellbeing and Protection/Psychological support; Safe Operations and Learning. UNICEF will build capacity in Ministry of Education's Crisis Management Team.

The MoE is supporting 120, 000 children with distance/home-based learning. From the total of people accessing educational services in the MoEs website, 59.7% are parents/guardians; 19 % are students and 22% are teachers. Out of these people, 95% of these are in the coastal regions with 5% being from the hinterland.

**NEW:** The MoE opened schools on June 14 through to August 15, to facilitate face to face learning sessions for students preparing to write the National Grade Six Assessment (NGSA), and the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC)



and Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) examinations. All schools were sanitized during the week of June 8 and protocols for the re-opening, and administrations of the national Examinations were gazette “as COVID - 19 Special Measures”. The MoE is currently finalizing its protocols for the return to school. UNICEF Guyana as Grant Agent is in receipt of GPE C19 Accelerated Funding (US\$ 3.745 million) and has agreed with the MoE to focus on boosting distance learning, wellbeing/psychosocial support and WASH and safe schools.

**Haiti:** Last month, MoE launched its digital platform (<http://pratic.menfp.gouv.ht/>) with available learning resources for teachers and students and now a monitoring system is being put in place by the EiE local group to gather data on actual use of online platforms. Additionally, the MoE submitted a funding proposal to the GPE and is awaiting approval. As of today, the education sector is underfinanced to ensure learning continuity for all students. Regarding the reopening of schools, the MoE has announced 2 potential dates for reopening schools: 1- August 3rd to Sept 30th or 2- September 3rd to October 30th, depending on the COVID19 situation in the country. These 3 months will serve to catch-up the 2019-2020 academic school year. Furthermore, a working group is set up to develop school reopening guidelines.

The CO supported the MoE in the development of the GPE \$ 10 million funding proposal as Grant Agent and has also provided technological devices such as laptops, WIFI modems, smartphones, printers etc. to MoE’s personnel to facilitate working from home modalities during confinement period. In addition, UNICEF is working with a local newspaper to produce a children’s magazine to give more than 25,000 children access to free reading and learning materials for 6 months and is also working with the MoE to set-up and support a working group for the development of home learning paper-based materials for children (Preschool and basic Education levels).

**NEW:** School reopening has been set for 10 August. MoE has announced the reopening of schools. Officially schools will open on August 10 until October 9 to recover 50 days of the 2019-20 academic year. From 12 to 14 October, national exams for 9th grade and non-formal education centers will take place. Then from 19 to 22 October, the baccalaureate exams will be rolled-out.

GPE approved a 7 million grant for Haiti to support education sector response in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. The initial amount was 10 million and was revised.

**NEW Guatemala:** The High-Level Commission was created by the Ministry of Education in which representatives of the teachers’ union participate, is working on a reopening school plan not earlier that October. The plan has prioritized action that include 1) easy to understand protocols on safety and hygiene and physical distancing measures, use of protective equipment and cleaning procedures, 2) progressive opening from rural to urban and prioritizing low transmission territories and also staged, where attendance in only some days a week, restricted schedule and flexible school year, 3) teacher preparedness for psychosocial support, accelerated learning/play, remedial mechanisms and assessment and 4) implementation of a communication and coordination strategy to engage with communities, parents and teachers so all are well informed and involved in the safe reopening of schools.

**UPDATED Honduras:** UNICEF CO has supported the design and dissemination of the communication strategy to strengthen the support for parents in home activities and is providing technical assistance to the Education Secretary for the revision of reopening schools strategy. SEDUC has presented the reopening schools strategy but has not yet announced the date for the reopening.

The Honduran Secretary of Education continues to disseminate educational content through TV programs and throughout the SEDUC platform. In addition, with the support of UNICEF, the Ministry of Education is preparing printed material to be distributed in the most dispersed areas, reaching more than 10,000 in the first phase (July), and continues training teachers in the use of ICTs.

**Jamaica:** The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MOEYI) has repositories of digital resources for math and language arts that are being used, as well as free access to *edufocal.com* which has content and programs to study for national exams. The MOEYI is partnering with the One on One Learning Management System through a zero-rated data service plan, and One on One and the Jamaica Teaching Council are training teachers through webinars to familiarize them with online platforms. The MOEYI has set up an e-instruction monitoring toolkit to be sure school is functioning in the most efficient way; there are three groups – e-leadership, e-teaching, e-testing.

MOEYI has also recently partnered with Ready TV – a local cable supplier - to establish an education network specifically for the early childhood and primary levels. The station will also be carried by a community cable provider. This will be expanded to the secondary level in the second phase. Ready TV will also provide internet service to 100 communities not being served by our major internet providers.

The ministry has begun to digitize some processes at the school level: Registration of new students at the Grade One level has been converted to the electronic process, attendance and accountability measures are now digitized and plans are afoot to implement a Learning Management System for all schools to support teaching and learning. The tertiary institutions have also begun to transform their programmes to online modality and hybrid formats in some cases. Teacher training will continue in July to build the skill set needed for digital transformation.

The JCO is in dialogue with the MOEYI to support the reopening of schools in relation to aspects of a back to school campaign as well as support for materials to support public health and safety while at school and on the journey to and from school. Handover of 210 tablets earmarked for special needs public schools to use with their student body is being scheduled. Each tablet is equipped with safety mechanisms and zero-rated MOEYI approved apps as well as SIM cards with data free access.

50 handsets with data plans to execute a telehealth system of referrals for students identified as in need of counselling/therapy are being distributed to the Ministry of Health and Wellness as well as MOEYI staff to assist this form of mental health support.

**NEW:** The MOEYI has secured 200,000 tablets for the return to school in September and will be prioritizing supplying children on conditional cash transfer programmes in the ensuing dissemination. The Ministry is also ensuring all teachers have access to technology which had been planned prior to COVID-19 and accelerated thereafter and has embarked upon teacher training over the summer. The first round of 500 school leaders have completed the virtual instructional leadership course and the second round is soon to start.

We are closing our U Report poll of students regarding distance learning this week and so can share on that in the next update. In addition, we are meeting again with the MOEYI soon regarding the return to school plans.

**Mexico:** UNICEF CO is currently developing an Early Recovery Plan; the education activities are aligned with the Framework for the Reopening of schools, especially safe operations, learning, inclusion and well-being. The webinar on Education in Emergencies, Preparedness and Recovery on school life, in collaboration with UNESCO and education authorities will start on June 30. The Office is also planning a “return to school campaign”, complementary to “Salud en tus manos”.

**NEW:** The webinar on Education in Emergencies, Preparedness and Recovery on school life, in collaboration with UNESCO and education authorities was launched in June 30 with over 2000 participants on zoom and Facebook live. The first session had Ruth Custode from UNICEF LACRO; the session was on the importance of education in emergencies. This week the session will be on development effect on early childhood due to confinement. On July 2<sup>nd</sup> Mexico had a 7.5 earthquake, first reports indicate that 524 schools of basic education and 90 of upper secondary education have damages, mainly in Oaxaca where the epicenter was. This might hinder the school reopening strategy in the state.

UNICEF is preparing a needs assessment evaluation with the support of local authorities to provide humanitarian assistance in the areas of education and nutrition.

**Nicaragua:** Until May, UNICEF has delivered a total of 6,150 cleaning kits to the Ministry of Education for the same number of schools, covering about 65 per cent of the schools in the country. Twenty-five technology kits have also been delivered to the same number of basic schools, which serve as teacher training centers at municipal level, supporting the online management and training, given the impossibility of carrying out face-to-face training.

**NEW:** UNICEF, in coordination with the World Movement for Children (MMI Nicaragua chapter), has provided MINED with 19 videoconferences prepared by 15 specialists, on issues of education in emergencies, psycho emotional support, health and hygiene, educational strategies, which are to be used for the half-school year training of teachers from the preschool, primary and secondary levels (approximately 57,500 teachers). The videoconferences cover about 15 class hours. Within this same platform, UNICEF is promoting support to MINED in the areas of remote learning, by financing the printing and distribution of study guides for students, and SMS packages for teachers and students to be in contact. In preparation for receiving students back to school after mid-break, UNICEF is preparing the distribution of Recreational Kits to be used for socioemotional related activities to be conducted by the Education Community Counseling Program nationwide. UNICEF will be contributing with 150 kits for selected schools based on their level of vulnerability due to emergencies such as the one caused by covid19.

UNICEF, in association with WFP, were granted a Multi-partner Trust Fund (MPTF) project in the amount of US \$ 1 million (US \$ 600,000 allocated to UNICEF and US \$ 400,000 assigned to WFP), for the rapid response to the crisis for the covid19. This project is under development and covers the following areas: curricular adaptation, psycho-emotional care, technological infrastructure, drinking water infrastructure, hygiene in school snack management.

MINED has developed an educational plan in response to COVID-19, which considers the eventual closure of schools and non-face to face education, if the context requires. Until today, there is no official closure of schools. All MINED activities at the national level are being worked online.

Schools are, at this moment, in their mid-year break (from June 26 to July 20 – a one more week has been added this year), and MINED has instructed schools to prepare study guidelines for students, so that those who have attended schools regularly can reinforce their learnings, and those who have been absent can catch up before the beginning of the school second semester (second semester goes from July to November).

MINED has applied to the special funds of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). US \$ 7.5 million are to be confirmed in the immediate future.

**Peru:** The CO continues to reinforce key messages in the distance learning platform *Aprendo en Casa* with selfcare videos, guides for rural secondary, and general strategies to improve access. The office is also providing technical assistance to three regional governments (Loreto, Ucayali y Huancavelica) in the design and implementation of the regional education response plan to COVID-19. Lastly, the office is also providing technical assistance to the MoE with (1) the pedagogical distance model use in rural areas, (2) with the pilot plan for schools without connectivity and without COVID-19 cases, and (3) with the strategic plan for the reopening of schools. The office has also supported an intensive working plan with 123 schools throughout 4 territories (14,000) students with a comprehensive system of accompanying schools to ensure distance learning, including migrant people.

Classes are still suspended in the country and there is no return date yet. However, there is a special plan for schools located in scattered areas without connectivity and without COVID-cases. The MoE is working on strengthening the strategy of *Aprendo en Casa* and it is purchasing a million tablets for areas without connectivity and for most vulnerable students. Furthermore, technical commissions have been established to define the route for students in their last year

of secondary education. Lastly, a high-level group composed by UNICED, UNESCO, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (BID) and the MoE to present a strategic plan on the reopening of schools.

**NEW:** UNICEF continues to support MoE two main processes: i) develop pedagogical framework to the massive tablet plan (oriented to reach almost half million of students in rural areas without connectivity) ii) provide expertise to several webinars for teachers, parents and students in 'Aprendo en Casa' platform.

UNICEF is involved in MoE's special plan to ensure learning, socioemotional support and promotion in 5th secondary (the final year for compulsory education).

**Panama:** The Ministry of Education (MEDUCA) has announced the safe return to schools scheduled on July 20, 2020. In these weeks, MEDUCA has been developing an ad hoc emergency, remote-oriented curriculum for all grades with the support and endorsement of national education actors. MEDUCA has been also fostering its evidences via national, massive surveys to gather information about the educational spectrum in terms of COVID-free infrastructures, knowledge of e-learning methodologies and modalities from principals, teachers, parents, caregivers and others, among other variables.

UNICEF Panama Country Office has kept its response according the MEDUCA Workplan: in this regard, UNICEF Education team has been supporting the follow-up of the Workplan implementation by facilitating discussions among actors, providing technical assistance in curriculum in emergencies development, capacity building interventions, information technology, and knowledge sharing.

**NEW:** The Ministry of Education has approved a prioritized curriculum for a remote reopening of schools dated on July 20<sup>th</sup>. It has promoted the endorsement of this curriculum with a governmental decree that defines the alignments of the curriculum with the requirements of a high-quality remote education for primary and secondary schools (public and private systems). This decree fosters the setup of support networks among the different educational actors, as well as mechanisms and pedagogical mediation's means to promote different learning modalities among students depending on the use of virtual technology and other educational materials for self-learning. MEDUCA has launched the self-learning website, 'Esther', adapted to the national curriculum that enables the unification and integration of all educational alternatives that has emerged as a response of the current situation. This website offers online and offline versions and contents can be distributed either physically or digitally.

UNICEF Panama Country Office has supported the prioritization of the national curriculum with the review and set of recommendations to enrich it. In addition, UNICEF has enhanced the psycho-emotional component as a response of the emergency (in coordination with the Ministry of Health), with a focus on suicide preventions of students, as well as the focus and prioritization of the most vulnerable clusters of students. Besides, UNICEF has provided a set of recommendations and suggestions to deepen the alignments of the prioritized curriculum, with emphasis on how to overcome school dropouts.

**Paraguay:** The MoE is holding meetings with different stakeholders, including parents, teacher unions and students in order to discuss the "Plan de Educación En Tiempos de Pandemia" and back to school plans. Moreover, the MoE is drafting a back to school protocol although decision for schools to remain closed until December is still maintained.

The Paraguay CO has developed substantive education content to ensure continuity of learning during COVID-19. The office has developed a guide for families on stimulation in early childhood with an inclusive approach and short videos and audios to promote reading at home for children from 0 to 6 years old, as well as math audios and videos and STEAM activities aimed at students from 1st to 6th grade. For those regions where internet access is limited, the CO is providing support to develop adaptations of resources to radio content for rural and indigenous populations and a distribution strategy with national and local radio stations. The CO has also worked on the reactivation of school feeding mechanisms in the region. To this aim, the office has made available repository with information about school feeding, as well as

guides for the stimulation and development of early childhood, COVID-19 prevention and free online resources. Regarding the reopening of schools, the CO is working with UNESCO and the World Bank to advocate for the development and analysis for reopening schools; to ensure safe school operations, proper pedagogical responses and the continuity of healthy practices in education institutions.

**NEW:** The CO with TIGO (Millicom), the MoE, and *Enseña por Paraguay* (a member of the Teach for All network) and AYHU, both as implementing partners, will carry out virtual teacher training courses. The first course, with *Enseña por Paraguay*, is a one on one tutoring with 1,000 teachers on how to apply technological resources in classroom planning as well as to enhance teachers' socioemotional skills. The second course, with AYHU, is an online massive course targeted at approximately 30,000 teachers from public and private schools on how to use technological tools for distance learning.

**Suriname:** The MoE is gradually rolling out decisions on progression of students. In primary, for all non-exam grades advancement to the next grade will be based on the test results students achieved throughout the first 2 semester (2 out of 3) of the schoolyear (When schools closed on March 16<sup>th</sup>, the second semester was 2 weeks to completion). Decisions regarding the exam grades are expected by the end of June, as well as for secondary schools. The current schoolyear (1<sup>st</sup> October 2019-mid August 2020) will be closed off earlier than usual. Further exchange within the sector is ongoing to restart the new schoolyear earlier than the 1<sup>st</sup> of October to kick-off the alignment process of our schoolyear cycle to that of the Caribbean and to allow for remedial support on learning loss. Even though the full lockdown measures have been eased to partial lockdown measures as of June 21<sup>st</sup>, the limitation to gathering of no more than 5 people are still in effect and pose challenges to school reopening.

**NEW:** For all non-exam grades advancement to the next grade will be based on the test results students achieved throughout the first 2 semester (2 out of 3). Exam grades in Primary and Secondary (lower and Upper) started on July 6<sup>th</sup> with adapted school hours based on the reopening protocol. Students will be prepared for the exams in face to face sessions for 3-4 week and exams will take place between the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of July and 1<sup>st</sup> week of August. Examination (core subjects only) will take place in the first week of August for primary and lower secondary and during the last week July - 1<sup>st</sup> week August for Upper Secondary. The progression and exam norms have been adjusted accordingly (one-time measure). The vacation for non-exam grades will be from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020. A decision on the school cycle was reached. The new schoolyear will commence 1 month earlier than usual on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 and will end on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. This will allow for remedial support of learning loss and align the schoolyear in Suriname to that of the Caribbean.

**Uruguay:** Between April 22 and May 4<sup>th</sup> all rural schools been reopened. Some urban schools have reopened on June 1<sup>st</sup>, like for example special schools and schools for vulnerable children (A.P.R.E.N.D.E.R schools). The government has announced that all schools will be reopened on June 29. Furthermore, the national government has designed a protocol for the schools reopening process and elaborated guidelines for teachers during the reopening process. Learning support via WhatsApp groups continues as well as the TV programming.

On its end, UNICEF Uruguay is organizing a cycle of conferences with international speakers to promote educational continuity among teachers and supporting the National TV program organized by the Plan CEIBAL and the National Administration of Public Education (ANEP) to promote educational continuity. In collaboration with the National Administration of Public Education (ANEP), the CO is also designing a scholarship program to promote the return to schools among vulnerable adolescents affected by the economic crisis during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Lastly, the office is providing key support in the systematization of the reopening process throughout the country and the best teacher practices using virtual learning methods. The CO is also designing a teacher training course on virtual learning with the collaboration of the National Administration of Public Education (ANEP) and the Plan CEIBAL.

**NEW:** On June 15 elementary and middle schools reopened in the country, except for Montevideo, and on June 29 schools reopened in Montevideo too. There has been a sudden rise of COVID-19 cases in the department of Treinta y Tres (53 cases), therefore education centers in this department have closed again. Furthermore, the national government has designed a protocol for the schools reopening process and elaborated guidelines for teachers during the reopening process. It has also elaborated guidelines for distance learning. Learning support via WhatsApp groups continues as well as the TV programming. The MoE (ANEP) has also developed a [key document](#) on the challenges of distance education, including strategies and tools for teachers and education communities.

**Venezuela:** Continuing with the cooperation actions between the Ministry of Education (MPPE) and UNICEF, the implementation of minor repairs has begun in a number of prioritized schools, through implementing partners and FEDE (Foundation for school buildings assigned to the MPPE) related to water, hygiene and sanitation in prioritized schools in the following states: Bolívar, Miranda, Capital District, Zulia and Táchira.

UNICEF participates in the commission for the integral care of children and adolescents during the holidays in the context of COVID-19, which seeks to provide the school population and their families with learning opportunities during the holidays, recreation and healthy leisure at home with their families.

Ministerial guidelines and instructions have begun to be adapted to bilingual intercultural education in order to cater for this vulnerable population, which requires a special approach.

**NEW:** School feeding programs have continued within the framework of the quarantine, benefiting more than 45,000 in the states of Miranda, Capital District, Táchira, Zulia, Delta Amacuro and Bolivar, through daily preparation of hot meals from schools and delivery to children in their homes and distribution of bags of non-perishable food to the children's families, with hygiene and prevention protocols.

School materials have been distributed in the states of Táchira, Zulia, Delta Amacuro, Bolívar and Miranda, through individual kits with notebooks, pencils, erasers, crayons, pencil sharpeners, among other resources, to encourage the realization of school activities in their homes. Educational guides have also been given to children outside school and at high risk of dropping out.

Teachers have been trained in distance learning strategies, mental health and socio-emotional support in the states of the Capital District, Bolívar, Apure, Miranda, La Guaira, Zulia and Táchira.

Teenagers are being served in distance learning job and life skills training programs in the states of Bolivar, Zulia, Capital District, Miranda and Delta Amacuro.

UNICEF has provided technical and operational assistance to the Ministry of Education for the design and production of 96 audiovisual capsules aimed at providing comprehensive care for children during the holiday period, which begins on 1 July, through the "Every Family, a School on Holiday" plan.

The Education Cluster and the Ministry of Education, with the support of UNICEF and other organizations, launched a virtual course in emergency education called "The right to education in times of crisis: alternatives for educational continuity", aimed at educators and education technicians in the country. The National Pedagogical Congress was held to present the various distance education practices carried out during the pandemic in the 24 states of the country; 25 pedagogical strategies were identified in various community platforms and dynamics to serve the most vulnerable populations, and the challenge was to move on to the phase of evaluating the quality of learning generated through these strategies. In addition, an inclusive education seminar was held with the participation of the Ministry of Education



and civil society organizations to present experiences in the care of children with disabilities at a distance during the pandemic.

Here are some [relevant resources](#) developed by the Cluster of Education in Venezuela with the support of the MoE and the CO.

## 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:

- 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 an intersectoral guidance for national authorities and another for schools to ensure the safe opening of schools in the LAC region. Each guidance will include a checklist to support the reopening process.
- Development of four videos with key information on the reopening of schools. These videos will be inclusive and will include captioning and sign language to make sure they are available to all children.
- Regional systematization of the Education in Emergencies (EiE) interventions to support strategies for continuous learning in 24 countries of Latin America.
- Development of recommendations of the Education in Emergencies (EiE) interventions to support the most vulnerable communities for continuous learning in Latin America and the Caribbean.

### NEW:

- Four working groups have been established and led by COs (with LACRO support), to support the COVID-19 response. The working groups are Intercultural education, psychosocial support, curricular adaptation and violence.

### Disabilities:

#### NEW:

- As a result of integrated ECD-Communication and Education work with the guidance of the TASK-FROCE-TEAM for inclusion we have begun a rollout of the initiative "A House with Many Windows", consisting of a series of inclusive workshops, where children with and without disabilities and their families, will be participating and expressing through art, music and dance. The first workshops were inclusive drawing workshops with Gusti ([www.gustiart.com](http://www.gustiart.com); [www.windowdown.org](http://www.windowdown.org)--a plastic artist and disability rights activist). Workshops with families and frontline workers in Colombia and Peru were held and transmitted to regional [live platforms](#): Upcoming workshops will be held with Bolivian families and frontline workers.
- UNICEF and Special Olympics are sharing [resources](#) for families and frontline workers. Also, in [NNyA con discapacidad](#) (resources) and [COVID-19](#). Both organizations prepared and delivered a technical webinar for SO frontline workers, UNICEF's CO ECD and Education specialists on disability-inclusion ECD.
- UNICEF, UNESCO and SAVE THE CHILDREN prepared and delivered the webinar No9 of the COVID-19 responses series, organized by the Regional Education Group. The webinar was on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in

Distance Learning responses (3,377 people signed up, there were 500 in the ZOOM meeting room and over 4,500 reproduction in [YouTube](#)) ([the first one to have accessibility features: ISL and closed captioning](#)).

- Together with the Regional Disability Inclusive Task Force Team, we have technically supported the group of organizations in Venezuela. The group lead by the Child Protection AdR Group in association with the Education Cluster, RIADIS, UNICEF, Fe y Alegría, Superatec and Fundación Vanessa. This group is currently delivering a series of webinar on issues of inclusion: child protection, inclusive education and adolescent participation.
- Jamaica’s CO collaborated closely with the Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities (JCPD) to develop a set of infographics re: COVID-19, based on feedback from the disabilities sector about the need for disability-specific content for persons with disabilities and families who have children with disabilities. Please use link below to access all the infographics (12) as well as one [video](#) of all the infographics together:

### Secondary-age Education and Skills Development:

- Together with America Solidaria, Caserta Foundation and the CONCAUSA Youth Network, LACRO continues to support adolescents in the region to develop transferable skills in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic through the “Plan12 - Learn to transform” initiative. Based on the 12 skills, every week a podcast, a video and a challenge are being launched focused on one specific skill. The skill for this week is DECISION-MAKING. You can visit the Plan12 webpage to learn more about this skill, as well as the previous skills on Creativity, Critical Thinking, Empathy, Problem-solving and Cooperation. The raw materials are also available in the SharePoint.
- Currently, LACRO is conducting a systematization of successful experiences and tools on formative learning assessment and developing guidelines to assess and monitor students’ learning outcomes in contexts of distance education provision. The systematization will draw both from literature-based and past experiences, as well as from the current COVID-related experiences in the LAC and other regions.

### Early Child Development (ECD):

#### NEW:

- Dissemination of the advanced draft of the reopening guidance for ECE/ECD services.
- Dissemination of [ECD LAC Strategic Orientation](#) for response and recovery to COVID-19.
- Dissemination of the document “Ten recommendations for mothers, fathers and other caregivers during COVID-19” (available in [Spanish](#), [English](#), [Portuguese](#) and [French](#)).
- ECD LAC team, with the support of other sections, is working on the development of operational tools to support violence prevention, detection, and referral via telephone calls which will be piloted early July in Uruguay and Chile.
- Afinadata’s pilot in Peru was approved by the CO senior management and Peru Gvt. The pilot will target three regions of the country and will provide remote support through health service providers to young children and their families.
- Dissemination of a guide to help parents combine teleworking with care of young children (available in [Spanish](#), [English](#), [Portuguese](#) and [French](#)).

## 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](#)
- ✓ [Safe back to School: A Practitioner’s Guide](#)
- ✓ [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)<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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

- ✓ 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.
  - Check out [here](#) the launching of the Spanish version of the Safe Back to School Guide, developed by the Global Education Cluster and the Child Protection (Global Protection Cluster).
  - Register [here](#) for the next webinar this coming Thursday, July 9<sup>th</sup> at 11 h Santiago, Chile (-4 GMT) on COVID-19 and higher education: impact and recommendations.
- ✓ 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](#).

**NEW:**

- ✓ Register [here](#) for the digital and open-access course organized by the *Universidad Abierta de Recoleta* and the Cluster of Education in Venezuela, among others, focused on the capacity strengthening of public and private actors from education sector to ensure equitable responses to education continuity.
- ✓ Check out [here](#) *El derecho a la educación en tiempos de crisis: alternativas para la continuidad educativa* by Henry Renna, in which the author analyses the national strategies and responses promoted by MoEs in the Latin America and Caribbean region to ensure the right to education in the context of school closures due to COVID-19.
- ✓ 9 Webinars in Spanish and 4 in English on the COVID-19 Education response have been held until June 16<sup>th</sup> benefiting **40,867** participants.



For detail information, please click [here](#)

## 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](#)

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