

# UPDATE 17 LACRO COVID-19 EDUCATION RESPONSE: SCHOOLS REOPENING

[September 30, 2020]

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for every child

Next update: October 28, 2020

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As of September 30, 8 countries in the LAC region have opened their schools, in 9 countries (Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Colombia, Chile, Cuba, Grenada and Saint Lucia) schools are partially open, and in the remaining 19 countries schools are still closed. This is still impacting an estimated 137 million<sup>1</sup> children and adolescents. Where schools are still closed, UNICEF continues to support distance learning through various distance home-based learning

resources (online platforms, printed materials, radio, TV, podcasts, WhatsApp, etc.). However, reaching everyone remains a challenge. With the ease of the lockdown measures, UNICEF COs are supporting MOEs in the development of protocols for the reopening of schools.

This update aims to provide COs and partners some key information about the progress in the schools' reopening process.

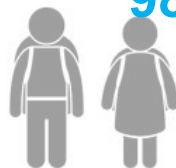


<sup>1</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute of Statistics, 'Welcome to UIS.Stat', <http://data.uis.unesco.org/#>>.

## 2. SITUATION OVERVIEW



**19** countries and territories in the LAC region with **schools completely closed**.



**98%** of children (137M approx.) are not receiving **face-to-face classes** in the region due to school closures.



**154** school days on average without **face-to-face classes** since school closures in mid March to September 1.



**8** countries and territories in the region (Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Haití Montserrat, Nicaragua, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Uruguay) have all their schools **fully open**.



**9** countries and territories in the region (Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Colombia, Chile, Cuba, Grenada and Saint Lucia) have some schools **partially open**.



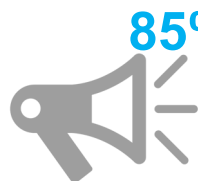
**21** countries and territories in the region have developed **protocols** for the safe reopening of schools.



**20M** children in 24 countries supported by UNICEF in the provision of **distance learning programmes** during school closures.



**55%** of countries in the LAC region have decided on a **date for school reopening**.



**85%** of countries and territories have engaged in **advocacy or communications** for school reopening.



**22** countries and territories in the region continue school lessons through **remote learning** online or via television, radio, WhatsApp etc.



### COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES WITH REMOTE LEARNING:

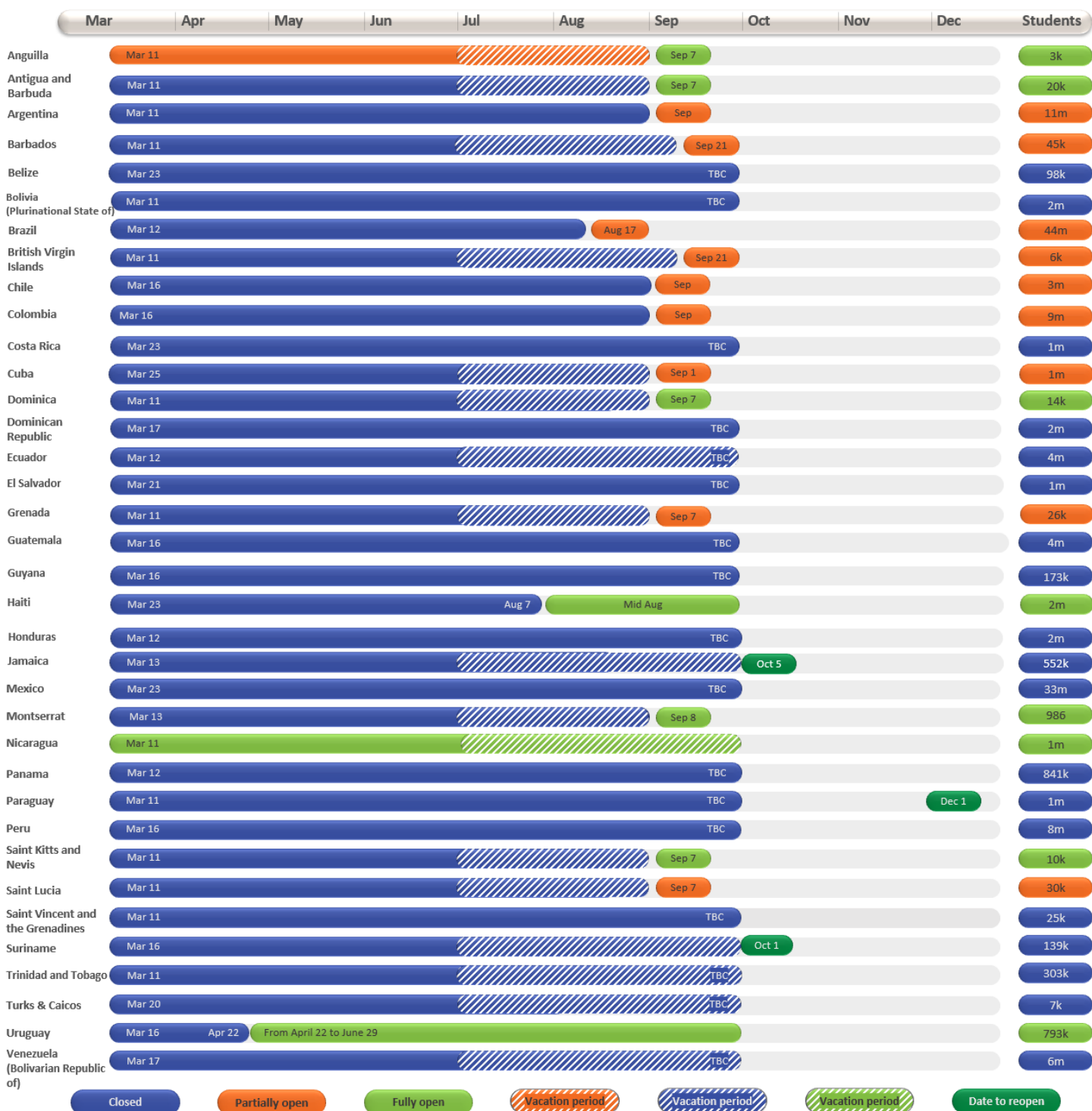
Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, ECA, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela.

#### Information sources:

United Nations Children's Fund, Reopening of schools: Safe school operations to ensure the right to education, <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/reopening-schools>, 2020.

## 3. SCHOOLS REOPENING STATUS

## FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES TIMELINE



## Information sources:

United Nations Children's Fund, Regional UNICEF LACRO COVID-19 Response Progress Report No2, August 2020.

United Nations Children's Fund, [Latin America & the Caribbean COVID-19 Education Response Update #13](#), consulted on August 23, 2020.

Data reported from Cos updates, consulted from the 21 to the 25 September, 2020.

### 3. SCHOOLS REOPENING STATUS

Given the variation of the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic across the Latin America and the Caribbean region, countries in the region are in different stages regarding how and when they plan to reopen schools: while some countries are in the planning stages of the reopening process, others have initiated the schools' reopening in stages or have already fully opened their schools throughout the country.

Here are the last updates in LAC on schools' reopening plans:

#### ARGENTINA

22,537 (0,20% of total estimated students) students attend face-to-face classes today and belong to the provinces of La Pampa and Formosa, the only 2 provinces that have enabled the return to the classroom. In both cases, they are students at the primary and secondary levels, and attendance, in both cases, is optional. In 3 provinces, Catamarca, Jujuy and San Juan, the schools reopened but in recent days they decided to close again due to the epidemiological situation. Another 7 provinces had announced a staggered return a weeks ago, although due to epidemiological data some postponed it and others still have not defined a date. The remaining 16 provinces have not yet set deadlines for the return of students to classrooms.

#### BELIZE

Schools were slated to be open physically on August 10<sup>th</sup> but due to an increase in the COVID 19 cases in the first week of August, the Ministry of Education made the decision to reopen schools for distance education only for Preschools and Primary Schools on September 7, and for Secondary Schools on October 5. The official start date for those students approved for home schooling is Monday, September 7, 2020 and tertiary institutions have already been given approval to commence online classes. The Ministry will continue to monitor the public health situation. Schools and parents will be informed if and when schools will be allowed to deliver face-to-face instruction.

#### BOLIVIA

Following the decision to cancel the school year through Ministerial Resolution 0050, the First Constitutional Chamber of the Departmental Court of Justice (TJD) in La Paz rescinded the Ministerial Resolution on 19 August on the grounds that the right to education was being violated and gave the Government ten days to present a comprehensive

policy to guarantee the right to education. After requesting some clarifications, the Ministry of Education presented the requested Public Policy on 8 September. From a legal point of view, the submission of the document means that the Ministry is complying with the decision of the Departmental Court of Justice and as such, the management of the 2020 school year would have been resumed. However, no official communication has been made and to date, the Tribunal de Justice Departmental has not ruled on this policy so uncertainty remains.

Although no classroom is expected to be available before 2021, UNICEF has launched Safe Return to School Plans with 7 school districts, delivery 87 mobile handwashing stations, for the students of Educational Units in the border educational districts of Cobija and Guayaramerín, Riberalta in the department of Beni, Puerto Villaroel, Entre Ríos and Independencia in Cochabamba, El Alto in the department of La Paz, and distributed bio-security supplies to 103 educational units will support the safe return to classes for 55,000 students.

#### BRAZIL

Even though, slowly, the biggest subnational education systems started defining reopening dates (most of them in October). Amazonas state has already reopened their schools. MoE gave up his role of national coordination. In the Minister's own words: reopening of schools, as well as connectivity, are not Ministry of Education's agenda. UNICEF and Municipal secretaries of Education Union (UNDIME) are working together to disseminate UNICEF's and UNDIME's own materials regarding safe reopening of schools.

#### CHILE

The Ministry of Education has established 3 fundamental pillars for the process of returning to face-to-face classes: a) voluntariness for schools and families, b) compliance with sanitary conditions that safeguard the health of the educational community and c) gradualness that will depend on the sanitary conditions, with the possibility of going back if necessary.

On 14 August, Exempt Resolution No. 3431 approved the document ["Opening Schools Step by Step"](#), which provides support guidelines for the resumption of face-to-face classes according to this resolution those educational establishments that are located in territories whose deconfinement stage is ["Preparation"](#) or ["Initial Opening"](#) can request the reopening of the Ministry of Education.

To date, 47 educational establishments have returned to attendance with criteria of gradualness and voluntary assistance. The majority of these are schools on the island with a low number of students per classroom. Most of them have given priority to levels III and IV.

## COLOMBIA

In August, the Colombian government issued a series of technical guidelines for local governments and schools that are interested in reopening schools under alternation models. Seeking to complement this exercise, UNICEF Colombia developed a series of pedagogical protocols for the reopening of schools, focused on strengthening school organization, prioritizing learning and socio-emotional support in educative communities. In that sense, currently, UNICEF Colombia is working together with the Colombian National Ministry of Education to define the local governments and school communities that decide to return to face-to-face classes under alternation models.

## COSTA RICA

Schools will continue to be closed until February 2021. For the reopening process, the Ministry of Public Education is continuing with the strategy of progressive opening in terms of educational levels and number of groups per level. This reopening would follow the guidelines of the Ministry of Public Health in terms of dates and health protocols to avoid contagion.

## CUBA

With a total of 1,322,691 children and adolescents (77% of those enrolled in the country) the school year began on 1 September for the entire country except in territories with a complex epidemiological situation, unfortunately after 2 weeks, the sectoral authorities have decided to suspend classes due to cases of COVID-19 in the municipalities of Majagua and Ciego de Ávila, Province of Ciego de Ávila, Jatibonico, in the province of Sancti Spíritus. The course has been restarted after the improvement of the epidemiological situation in the municipality of La Palma, in the province of Pinar del Río, and Bauta, in the province of Artemisa. Teleclasses are maintained for all levels of education, including guidance to families with children in early childhood.

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The Back to School Committee has created the 2020 School Opening Plan (Plan de apertura de clases 2020 in Spanish) that provides specific actions for the logistical organization of the next

school year 2020-2021. The MoE has confirmed that next school year will start on November 2, and will be carried out through distance learning, using internet for those students that have access to internet connection and the necessary equipment, and using TV, radio and phone in those cases in which children have not access to connectivity or the required equipment. Furthermore, the plan also recommends developing a protocol to provide the necessary equipment to children and teachers (including portable phones and radios), as well as defining the textbooks and booklets, according to the contents of the different grades and the learning modality.

## ECA

In the Eastern Caribbean region thousands of children at the Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary School level have returned to school. Across the region there is a mixture of approaches being employed by which children are accessing their educational experiences. In Barbados, the Management of Schools were given autonomy to make decisions at the individual school level. The majority of the countries are using a blended modality to education delivery inclusive of Face to Face / Online instruction, shift systems including staggered days by age groups and form levels. This is to ensure that schools are able to meet the Standards for Social/ Physical Distancing established by the National COVID-19 Monitoring Unit. A key challenge of the Blended approach is that many children still have difficulty accessing the online components of their schedule. There are also concerns around the availability of safe childcare when children are learning from at home and parents have to go to work. Some island States such as Trinidad and the Turks and Caicos Islands have re-opened to fully online instruction, but this decision will be reviewed and amended based on the evidence and guidance provided by the National COVID-19 monitoring units.

The Early Childhood Sector have re-opened to mainly Face to Face participation but being able to meet the Standards for Social / Physical Distancing remains a concern for many Service Providers, many of whom are in the Private Sector.

In all countries and at all levels there are consistent efforts to comply with the Protocols for Safety and Health.



## ECUADOR

The Ministry of Education of Ecuador has been implementing the Plan for Continuing Education composed of three phases: Home Education, Alternative Education, Face-to-Face Education. Phase 1, Home Education, has three main axes focused on educational continuity, connectivity and psychosocial support and protection. To speed up the transition to Phase 2 of the Continuing Education Plan, which involves face-to-face meetings in schools, a virtual course on biosecurity protocols has been developed and consequent training of all teachers and student counselling staff nationwide. In addition, 50 diagnoses of priority schools on hygiene and sanitation conditions have been carried out, and each educational unit has been given a WASH KIT with basic hygiene and prevention material for COVID-19.

Currently, UNICEF is developing a national educational-communication campaign on the right to education, the legal framework and methodologies that promote educational inclusion of the mobile population and other vulnerable populations, and on education as a protection factor.

## EL SALVADOR

In accordance with Ministerial Circular No. 13 of 2020, the Ministries of Education (MINED) and Health (MINSAL) are informing the population of the decision to maintain the suspension of face-to-face educational and academic activities until 31 December 2020. The same Circular mentions that education will continue through different tools such as: internet sites of the Ministry of Education for educational continuity, the educational strip on television "let's learn at home", virtual platforms, radio and printed educational materials. MINED has a Plan for the Return to School "The Joy of Returning to School", which includes preparation stages to guarantee safe conditions for the return of children and adolescents to schools: 1. Diagnosis, sanitation and basic maintenance. 2. Educational management and planning for psychosocial and pedagogical intervention. 3. Psychosocial care (Presence of students on a graduated basis), 4. Continuity of education with a multimodal (multi-platform) education system. It will include presence, semi-presence and non-presence modalities, which implies a transformation and improvement of the current education system. Within the framework of El Salvador's Education

Cluster, activated on 5 June 2020, the different actors involved are providing technical support to the Ministry in the different stages of the Return to School Plan.

## GUATEMALA

Schools will be closed for the year 2020. Authorities have extended the cycle until 15 December in order to make progress in the achievement of reading and maths skills, though neither children nor teachers will attend schools. To this end, the Ministry of Education is continuing with the different modalities of distance education and is currently evaluating the progress of the competencies through the use of relocation and the student portfolio. All the protocols for the safe return to classes have been developed and are being validated with actors in the health sector. There are several shortcomings in the schools that will make it difficult to return to classes, which will be done in a staggered and progressive manner as the schools meet the minimum requirements for the prevention of infection, distance and hygiene. The construction of all the scenarios has been socialised with the delegates of the teachers' union to avoid future complications.

## GUYANA

Due to the rising of COVID -19 cases across Guyana and especially in the hinterland, the MoE has decided to have schools remained closed. However, as of September 14 which marked the beginning of the new academic year, public schools at all levels, are engaged in structured learning utilizing a hybrid approach through multiple media.

## HAITI

All schools in Haiti have reopened since mid-August. However, some public schools (an estimated 5%) are not fully operational because of a teachers' strike, where teachers' unions are requesting better working conditions and salary increase according to MoE. Most schools (around 95%) are working until October 9<sup>th</sup> to complete the 2019-2020 academic year. Students from 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> grades will undergo state exams in mid-October. The new academic year will begin on November 9<sup>th</sup>. The national COVID-19 monitoring system did not register a surge in COVID-19 positive cases since school reopened, despite the fact that many schools do not have the capacity to respect sanitary protocols. Access to water is a

challenge for 60% of schools in Haiti. UNICEF (WASH and education) is working closely with MoE and the national water service provider to increase the number of schools with functioning sanitary infrastructure.

## HONDURAS

There is no official communication yet. However, in meetings with the round table of development workers (MERECE) and others, SEDUC authorities have indicated the possibility that the schools will not reopen this year. On the other hand, SEDUC and USAID disseminated a safe return to school strategy in May. One of the SEDUC-MERECE working groups is the biosecurity working group, led by UNICEF, which is discussing the whole issue of WASH in schools in view of the reopening.

## JAMAICA

This date is still set for oct 5<sup>th</sup> although it is not a fixed date. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information has convened an EiE task force to use data to assess readiness of schools for reopening adhering to COVID 19 protocols.

## MEXICO

To date, all schools in Mexico remain closed. Schools will reopen once the "epidemiological traffic light" is green. At this moment, there are 8 states that are at a yellow light. In two states, it is likely that they will soon go "green": Campeche and Chiapas. According to the Secretary of Education, Esteban Moctezuma it is likely that in those states we will go to the green light in about 15 days and could start their face-to-face classes". In view of this situation, UNICEF Mexico is in the process of accelerating its "Health in Your Hands" actions in Chiapas, to prepare the 44 beneficiary schools for reopening, with hygiene and cleaning supplies and hand-washing stations for the school filters.

## NICARAGUA

Nicaragua did not officially close schools, but student attendance dropped significantly at some point. Most students have returned to school, though it is estimated that a percentage of students will no longer return to complete the school year. The second semester of the school year, which ends at the end of November, is now under way. Efforts are being made to make up for lost time, and it is estimated that the annual holiday could be used to catch up with students who are lagging behind in developing skills at their level.

## PANAMA

The Ministry of Education has been working on the reopening of schools guidelines for the 2021 school year, and has also informed of the possible reopening and [start of the 2021 school year](#) on February. Likewise, the biosafety protocol for the country's educational system (public and private) was approved and published in the [official gazette](#) of the Presidency, and the Ministry of Education is carrying out the processes of socialisation in the territory for its implementation.

Unicef-Panama has been accompanying the technical tables for the construction of the reopening guidelines based on the biosecurity protocol and the recommendations given by the guide and technical note for reopening prepared by UNICEF, as well as the guidelines given by the country's Ministry of Health.

## PARAGUAY

Classes for the 2020 school year are being conducted through virtual and distance education. [According to the latest information](#) (25/09/2020), the Minister of Health considers that there are possibilities of returning to classes at the beginning of 2021. The Aty Guazu tables (large meetings) with different actors still present difficulties in reaching consensus.

UNICEF Paraguay, have installed a weekly technical table with the World Bank, UNESCO and the MEC to advance technical assistance for planning the preparation of schools for return and is supporting the MEC with the revision of reopening plan, and is working with Red Cross in the development of safe school operations protocols and the process of surveying the water and sanitation situation in schools using the Kobo application is beginning. An initial training session was held for MEC directors with the support of UNICEF Ecuador.

## PERU

Currently, Peru continues with the entire educational system operating in remote mode. Although a regulatory framework for opening schools in rural areas has been put in place, this process has not yet begun. A strategic plan for the safe and timely reopening of schools in Peru has been developed with MoE, and in partnership with WB, UNESCO and IADB, to support policy and budgetary decisions with evidence and recommendations.

## SURINAME

Opening of the new school year is set for October 1<sup>st</sup>. Preparations for opening are ongoing in the area of personal hygiene, technical safety (e.g. things related to facilities that need to be in place) and curriculum adaptations to suit the various learning modalities (related to adaptations to support hybrid models and multiple pathways of learning, scheduling, courses which will be online versus face-to-face, etc.). UNICEF is also supporting a communication campaign around safer reopening of schools based on the School Reopening Protocol of MoE through e.g. posters, animations, short videos aimed at students, teachers and caregivers.

## URUGUAY

Since June 29 all primary and secondary schools have reopened in Uruguay. The Uruguay Country Office issued a [report](#) that describes and acknowledges the key factors in the Uruguay's reopening of its schools that so far has proved to be successful with little to no risk to children.

Thanks to the Plan Ceibal, during the schools' closure 92% of primary students had contact with their teachers and 83% participated in scholar activities. However, at the first quintile only 72% participated in scholar activities. At the secondary level, only 56% of students participated in scholar

activities, as it is shown in a report elaborated by the National Administration of Public Education (ANEP).

## VENEZUELA

Between August and September, the Ministry of Education held a national consultation to assess the possibility of starting the new school year in person, with the participation of public and private sectors

from all over the country. The decision taken, after evaluating the current circumstances of the COVID 19 context and the schools, was to start school activities in distance mode, foreseeing that the conditions for a safe reopening are not in place. The schools began distance learning activities on 16 September for children in initial and primary education. On 1 October, secondary school adolescents will begin.

The Ministry of Education is designing safe reopening of schools protocols, using as a reference the "Framework for the Reopening of Schools" (developed by UNICEF, UNESCO, World Bank, WFP and UNHCR). In the area of school infrastructure, maintenance, cleaning, adaptation and disinfection of educational centres have been initiated for the beginning of the school year, as schools operate various programmes to assist children and adolescents (preparation and distribution of food, pedagogical advice, delivery of school materials, etc.).

## 4. DISTANCE LEARNING STATUS

Since the beginning of the pandemic and the schools' closures, MoEs and UNICEF COs in the region have been supporting the continuity of education through innovative approaches and diverse learning modalities such as distance education platforms, access to online courses or through mass media such as radio and television, as well as printed materials. Now that the reopening of schools has been initiated in some way in most LAC countries, distance learning, combined in some instances with face-to-face classes, continues to be a key component of the education response provided by MoEs in the region.

Here are the last updates in LAC on distance learning:

### ARGENTINA

According to the household survey of the National Learning Continuity Evaluation program developed in June and supported by UNICEF Argentina, 68% most vulnerable children and adolescents in the country were supported by printed booklets, 87% of children and adolescents were supported with TV

contents with school activities and 65% with radio educative contents. In addition, the survey shows that the national program "Seguimos Educando" reaches effectively to most vulnerable children and adolescents. In particular, the printed booklets (conceived particularly for those households with difficulties in accessing connectivity and in more isolated contexts) were used by 28% of all households with students in compulsory education, clearly focusing on the most socioeconomically segments affected: 41% of highly vulnerable households, 44% children with no ICT resources, and 45% households with students who attend public schools. If we considered the use rate among households that received these printed materials, the utilization percentage reaches 85%.

### BELIZE

The Ministry of Education shared a table of estimates of the number and % of Schools, Teachers and Students Using Ministry of Education Home-based Learning Resources during the Period of School Closure (April-June 2020). To date, approximately 6,019 preschool students, 50,159



primary school students and 5,369 secondary school students have accessed distance, home-based learning.

## BOLIVIA

According to the latest cut-off, 516,506 children have benefited from virtual classrooms. UNICEF has signed a small-scale agreement with the Fundación Instituto Radiofónico de Fe y Alegría (IRFA) for the implementation of a radio educational programme that consists of 280 one-hour radio programmes aimed at 6,157 indigenous children at the Primary Level (1st to 6th Grade) in the municipalities of Guarayos (Guaraní indigenous people), San Antonio de Lomerío (Chiquitano) and Charagua (Guaraní). The curricular progress and learning will be monitored by the teacher responsible for the respective Educational Unit, for which 247 teachers were trained.

## BRAZIL

According to the findings from National Household Survey from Brazilian Institute of Statistics (PNAD COVID-19, IBGE, August 2020), in August, 16.6% of students attending school did not have any activities available (nor were they on vacation). This is equivalent to 7.5 million students: 4 million in elementary school, 1.8 million in high school and 1.7 million in higher education. Among black students (blacks and browns), 20.3% had no activity available (nor were they on vacation); while that was true for 11.4% of white students. The rate of black students who had no activity is 80% higher than the rate of white students. Among students with a household income of less than ½ minimum wage, 21.5% did not receive any activity (nor were they on vacation); among those with a household income of more than 4 minimum wages, they were 7.9%. 72.5% of white students received activities for 5 days or more, while the same happened to 66.1% of black students. 65.2% of students with a household income of up to ½ minimum wage received activities for 5 days or more; among students with a household income of 4 or more minimum wages, they were 87.8%.

## CHILE

Aprendo en Línea, Aprendo TV, Aprendo en Casa and Radio Enseña among others have incorporated curricular content and socio-emotional support to reach students of all educational levels with and without internet access. Although there are no official figures yet on access to the above-mentioned resources, the estimate obtained through the SIMCE (System for Measuring the Quality of Education) student questionnaire indicates that 87% of children and adolescents would have the possibility of using a device for

remote training. There is a gap between the lowest quintile with 77% and the highest quintile with 97%.

## COLOMBIA

52,6% of children live in households without internet access, 80,97% do not have access to a desk computer and 77,5% do not have a laptop (ENCV, 2018). In the same line, based on official statistics, nearly 96% of the municipalities in Colombia do not have the technological resources to develop adequate virtual education programs. Based on that, UNICEF Colombia has been working on educational strategies for reaching out to more than 15,000 children and adolescents with printed and digital resources, audiobooks, and games.

## COSTA RICA

According to the characterization of the Ministry of Public Education (MEP), it is estimated that 350,357 (34%) students have access to equipment and connectivity; 300,431 (29%) students have limited access to equipment and connectivity; 143,482 (14%) students have limited equipment without any connectivity; and 231,889 (23%) students have no equipment nor connectivity. The MEP is coordinating with FONATEL (National Telecommunications Fund) to expand telecommunications coverage in a progressive programme that reaches students.

## CUBA

394,258 children and adolescents continue to receive distance education through teleclasses for all levels of education, including guidance to families with children in early childhood and special education. In connection with the regular programme of Every Child Learns component, countless actions have been developed for the socio-emotional support of children and their families with emphasis on those with intellectual disabilities and autism.

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Remote learning starts on 2 November with the work from families with the booklets, the support of teachers from schools and radio and TV programming. 7 video stories were produced with sign language translation and, according to the Ministry of Education, 1000 children with hearing disabilities are beneficiaries and that they will be used in the next school year. UNICEF agreed on a memorandum of understanding with the MoE to support the educational plan "Learning at Home" with a proposal for accessible education through the design of booklets with a plan of monthly activities for 4 months aimed at families and students from pre-primary to first cycle secondary

school (children from 5 to 14 years old). Currently, 4 booklets for month 1 and orientation guides have been designed for educational centers and teachers, which will reach 1.5 million students and their teachers.

## ECA

In the Eastern Caribbean region, there is a mixture of face-to-face and online instruction. A key challenge of the blended approach is that many children still have difficulty accessing the online components of their schedule. There are also concerns around the availability of safe childcare when children are learning from at home and parents have to go to work. Some island States such as Trinidad and the Turks and Caicos Islands have re-opened to fully online instruction, but this decision will be reviewed and amended based on the evidence and guidance provided by the National COVID-19 monitoring units.

## ECUADOR

UNICEF contributes at the national level and in priority territories with pedagogical accompaniment and levelling, learning tools such as tele-education and radio education, psychosocial support and support sessions for key personnel in the education system, improvement of WASH conditions, delivery of pedagogical and technological inputs and equipment in territories with high indices of poverty, insecurity, human mobility, indigenous peoples and Afro-Ecuadorians

For the children in conditions of human mobility and in more acute conditions of vulnerability in the host communities identified outside the school system, accompaniment and follow-up have been carried out, including training and information on the various processes for accessing the education system (1590 girls and 1487 boys). The cases with the greatest need for support have received aid to eliminate economic barriers in accessing the education system: during the quarantine period these barriers have been identified in school KITs, school supplies, connections and tablets. The total number of people who have benefited from this support has been 707: 335 girls and 372 boys.

## EL SALVADOR

According to figures consolidated until August this year, 1,623,408 booklets were printed with the learning guides for all educational levels and distributed to approximately 300,000 students. Through the MINED Microsite, a total of 152 guides are published weekly and approximately 1,368 educational materials have been published, including educational guidelines for families, learning guides and self-learning.

Regarding teleclasses, the educational strip "let's learn at home" has an audience of 1.6 million. It contributes to educational continuity through the production of teleclasses to 1.1 million students, of which 51% are girls. Accelerated Basic Education was mainly provided at children and adolescents in situations of over-age, desertion, social risk, social internment and other conditions of vulnerability, more specifically to 1,741 children and adolescents during the COVID-19 emergency.

## GUATEMALA

Various forms of distance education continue to be offered: daily television programming; daily radio programming in Spanish and indigenous languages; television programmes with sign language for people with disabilities; printed material for all levels in Spanish and indigenous languages and for students with visual impairment; text messages for mobile phones; inserts in mass print media; and mental health and psychosocial support materials for teachers, parents and students in print and online, among others.

Regarding the number of the site visits, from 24 April to 20 September 2020 there were 2,082,310 visits to the learning site; 128,151 visits to libraries and virtual resources; 112,362 visits to the TV programming site–videos; 13,477 visits to the digital magazine for teachers' site; 81,842 visits to self-study guides; and 9,460 registered in Mineduc Digital.

## GUYANA

All levels -nursery, primary and secondary- are covered via radio, television, online classes or with print material. Actual figures are not available at this time as structured programme began 2 weeks ago.

## HAITI

A small minority of privileged private schools did experience distance learning modalities to pursue with 2019-2020 curriculum. These schools have started the new academic year in mid-August. Some used technology (google classroom, WhatsApp) and others kept contact with students through distribution of printed materials.

Majority of schools did not use any distance learning modalities as most of the population do not have access to technology nor energy. Schools were not equipped for distance learning; they did not have a response plan nor available resources to ensure continuity of learning during confinement period.

UNICEF is launching a study on effects of COVID-19 on education system which will provide specific data on impact on children, including the most vulnerable.

## HONDURAS

SEDUC has concentrated its efforts on the Educatrachos platform and TV classes, giving less support to other distance modalities, which have existed since before COVID-19, but have not been promoted at this time, such as education by radio (the IDB is supporting this), SAT (Tutorial Learning System) (UNICEF is going to support the printing of materials for this modality), etc. There are no disaggregated figures. In addition, SEDUC is printing materials for those children who do not have access to the internet, television or radio; UNICEF is supporting with texts in 4 indigenous languages and will partially support the printing of Workbooks 2 in Spanish for 6 subjects for more than 21,000 students (SEDUC has already printed the TC1).

## JAMAICA

As of Sept., 14 some schools have reopened online or via the provision of learning packets while waiting for information as to the potential Oct 5th beginning of what for most schools would be a hybrid modality following detailed guidelines disseminated system wide. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information has said that some 400 schools of 1000 (primary and secondary schools) have space to open face to face as normal with masks etc. in compliance with COVID 19 protocols and some early childhood schools have indicated capacity to operate on shift formats but as Jamaica is now in the stage of community spread the government has not taken the decision to reopen schools face to face in any format at this point. It should be noted that some private schools, however, at all levels, are open and functioning in compliance with COVID-19 protocols whether face to face or entirely online.

## MEXICO

During this second phase of "Aprende en Casa", the emphasis is mainly on educational television programming and the distribution of textbooks. UNICEF is directly supporting the development of scripts for television broadcasting. Despite the efforts made in favour of distance education, the results of ENCOVID Childhood 19 (a survey with a sample of households) show that there are still many challenges in learning from home and also some risks of widening gaps between children in higher and lower income households. In July, 89.1% of those interviewed reported that children took distance learning during the quarantine (school year 2019-2020). However, there are differences depending on the socio-economic level of the households: 84.8% in the lower income strata, 90.7% in the middle strata and 95.1% in the higher income strata were able to participate in Aprende en Casa I. There are also important differences

between households due to the lack of means to access distance education: only 39.5% report having a fixed Internet connection, 34.0% have at least one computer and 49.1% have two or more cellular phones, with lower percentages for households of lower socioeconomic levels.

## NICARAGUA

MINED has already implemented distance education modalities for more than 5 years in order to guarantee educational opportunities for the most vulnerable groups, such as children and adolescents in rural areas and working children. These modalities, which UNICEF has supported this year with greater emphasis, are Primary (2,500 students) and Secondary (55,000 students) Distance Education in the Countryside, and Multigrade.

## PANAMA

At the moment we do not have the official data from the government, however, we are maintaining the efforts to have strategies by educational institution to identify the cases of children and adolescents that have not been contacted or have not returned in the scheme of distance education. Once we have official figures, we will be happy to share them.

## PARAGUAY

According to news from the Ministry of Education, 90% of teachers and students access virtual platforms. The MoE programmes supported by UNICEF (audio programmes) are estimated to reach 26,000 students in indigenous education and 51,000 students in preschool through second grade. Teacher training courses in technological skills, Maestr@s Conectad@s, are indirectly reaching 55,000 students. According to the last relay, 9,400 children and adolescents have had access to STEAM and mathematics materials to promote reading and continuity of learning. These materials are now available on the MEC's virtual platform.

## PERU

The Aprende en Casa strategy, the Peruvian state's multi-channel distance education scheme, has been active since April 2020. Currently, according to MoE analysis, the distribution of access shows that TV (47.9%) is the main channel, followed by web (29.1%) and radio (13.5%). It is estimated that at national level around 9% of the population is in areas with high difficulties in accessing these channels. In rural areas this figure is around 25%.

## SURINAME

Education will be taking a hybrid approach applying various modalities, including 2-3 days face-to-face learning, distance learning through, TV, Radio, the UNICEF learning Passport platform (Web based and



mobile app), and printed learning packages for those who can't be reached through internet. Figures of reach will become available after opening on October 1st. The target is to reach 144,000 students through 574 schools on primary and secondary level receiving education by 10,500 teachers.

## URUGUAY

Thanks to the Plan Ceibal, during the schools' closure 92% of primary students had contact with their teachers and 83% participated in scholar activities. However, at the first quintile only 72% participated in scholar activities. At the secondary level, only 56% of students participated in scholar activities, as it is shown in a report elaborated by the National Administration of Public Education (ANEP).

## VENEZUELA

Within the framework of the National Pedagogical Plan "Every Family, One School" of the Ministry of Education, from September 16th onwards, distance learning programming will be developed, with the weekly publication of didactic guides for each grade through the national press and digital media, as well as the daily TV programming of teleclasses aimed at the initial, primary and secondary education levels, transversalizing strategies to attend to children with

special educational needs. There is no official report on children who have been attended remotely and how many were left without educational care at the end of the last school year in June. However, the Movimiento de Educación Popular e Integral Fe y Alegría, which serves 98,000 students from vulnerable sectors of the country in subsidised schools, reported 81% of children who were served by distance education during the months from March to June.

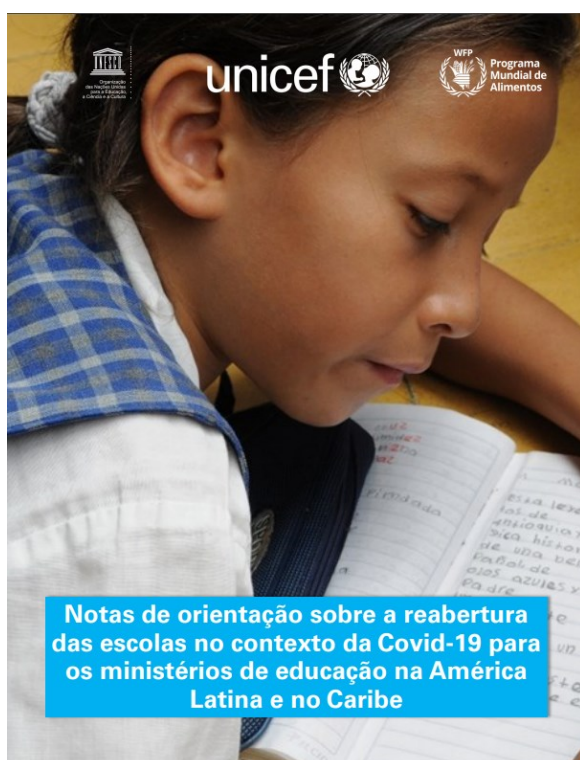
## 5. REGIONAL ACTIONS

### EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES (EiE)

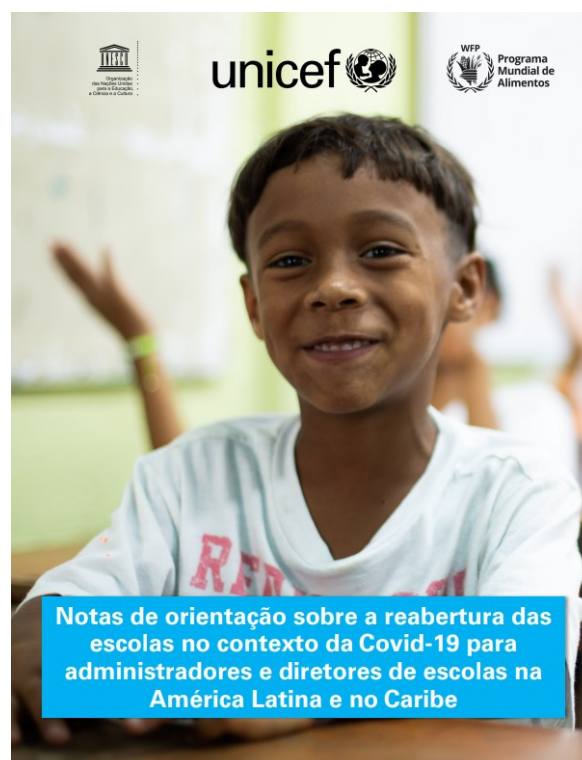
The EiE team has worked on the Portuguese version of the Guidance notes on reopening of schools in the context of COVID-19 developed by UNICEF, in collaboration with UNESCO and WFP and based on the global framework for school reopening. As their Spanish and English versions, both Portuguese guidance notes include checklists

addressed for Ministries of Education authorities and school management (administrators and principals) for the different phases of reopening. The Portuguese versions of these guidance notes are now available in the [online repository of resources for the COVID-19 education response](#) located on UNICEF LACRO's website.

#### For Ministries of Education



#### For school administrators and principals



## For Ministries of Education

**LISTA DE VERIFICAÇÃO: COMO PARTE DA REABERTURA DAS ESCOLAS**

País: \_\_\_\_\_

**DADOS DE CONTATO**

Nome: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Telefone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Informação Geral** Selecione "Sim" ou "Não" no quadrinho correspondente. Se desejar incluir informações adicionais, use o campo Observações.

**1. POLÍTICAS, PROTOCOLOS, COORDENAÇÃO, COMUNICAÇÃO, FINANCIAMENTO E MONITORAMENTO**

PROTOCOLOS E MEDIDAS			
1.1. Que tipo de protocolos e medidas se aplicam para garantir que todas as crianças retomem seu percurso de aprendizagem?	Sim	Não	Observações
Protocolo de tomada de decisão para a reabertura e possível novo fechamento das escolas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Preparação do pessoal escolar, pais e estudantes sobre as medidas a serem tomadas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Orientações claras para implementar modalidades mistas de educação a distância, se as escolas voltarem a fechar.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
CONSULTA, COMUNICAÇÃO, COORDENAÇÃO E PARCERIAS			
1.2. Quais são as questões relativas à comunicação e coordenação de parcerias para promover o diálogo local e a participação ativa?	Sim	Não	Observações
Mecanismos de consulta, comunicação e coordenação que promovam o diálogo e a participação de todos os membros da comunidade educacional.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Atividades de conscientização e educação sobre a prevenção da Covid-19.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Informações claras sobre as medidas e protocolos implementados para garantir a segurança e a proteção.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reuniões regulares de informação, linha telefônica exclusiva para perguntas e respostas etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
MONITORAMENTO			
1.3. Quais são os objetivos dos mecanismos, instrumentos e ferramentas de monitoramento para estudantes, professores e funcionários da escola?	Sim	Não	Observações
Monitoramento da frequência de estudantes e funcionários.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Monitoramento do estado de saúde física e mental dos estudantes e dos funcionários da escola.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Acompanhamento do desenvolvimento da aprendizagem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Identificação de alunos em risco de abandonar a escola.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Checklist [Before reopening schools](#)

Checklist [As part of the reopening process](#)

Jointly with the Regional Education Group for the Latin America and the Caribbean region (led by UNICEF & Save the Children), UNESCO has launched a weekly series of knowledge and information exchange called **"Leaving no one behind in times of the COVID-19 pandemic"** focused on the four pillars of SDG-Education 2030: equity, inclusion, quality and lifelong learning. The objective of this initiative is to support the ministries of Education and the different educational actors for the development, management and dissemination of relevant evidence that informs the immediate response as well as the medium and long-term actions. To date, 26 sessions have been implemented, with a total of **90,000 attendants** during these six months. You can check [here](#) for more information.

Check out [here](#) the last webinar (#20) on the launch of the tool "Reinforce equality", guide for girls' return to school.

Furthermore, the Regional Education Group, with UNICEF's support, has developed a [website for the Group](#) in OCHA's Humanitarian Response site that aims at making visible the extensive work of the Group. The site offers a key insight of the Group

## For school administrators and principals

## 2. APRENDIZAGEM

APRENDIZAGEM			
2.1. Existem estratégias implementadas durante a reabertura que assegurem que as crianças mantenham sua trajetória de aprendizagem?	Sim	Não	Observações
Contam com materiais impressos para alcançar estudantes sem conectividade?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Identificam as necessidades de ajuda (alimentação, textos, transporte etc.) aos alunos, especialmente aqueles com maior risco de abandono escolar?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Estabelecem um sistema de monitoramento e acompanhamento dos estudantes, especialmente daqueles com maior risco de abandono escolar?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Definem horários e atividades de nivelamento para os estudantes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Oferecem aulas de reforço e atividades de aprendizagem extracurricular?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## 3. PROTEÇÃO E BEM-ESTAR

PROTEÇÃO E BEM-ESTAR			
3.1. Existem mecanismos de proteção e bem-estar dirigidos às crianças, professores e outros funcionários?	Sim	Não	Observações
Contam com mecanismos de autocuidado para funcionários, professores e estudantes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Existem estratégias inovadoras de gestão do estresse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Oferecem orientações às famílias sobre estratégias de autocuidado?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Consideram um plano contínuo de apoio psicossocial e atenção a cuidadores durante os meses seguintes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mantêm um contato constante com pais e responsáveis que facilite a comunicação relevante sobre a Covid-19?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dispõem de um sistema de encaminhamento atualizado e em funcionamento?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
As famílias, estudantes e professores sabem como ter acesso aos serviços de proteção à criança e ao adolescente?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sabem quais são as autoridades e serviços de proteção à infância disponíveis na localidade/distrito?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Criam mecanismos de comunicação/denúncia amigáveis e acessíveis aos estudantes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## 4. COMO ALCANÇAR TODAS AS CRIANÇAS E ADOLESCENTES, COM FOCO NOS MAIS VULNERÁVEIS

ALCANÇANDO OS MAIS VULNERÁVEIS			
4.1. Existem protocolos para alcançar todas as crianças e adolescentes, com foco nos mais vulneráveis?	Sim	Não	Observações
As instalações de lavagem de mãos têm atualmente sabão e água? (Água e sabão, somente água, somente sabão, nem água nem sabão.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nem água nem sabão
Qual é a principal fonte de água para consumo da escola? (Água encanada, poço ou manancial)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Não há fonte de água

Checklist [Before reopening schools](#)

Checklist [As part of the reopening process](#)

Checklist [With schools reopened](#)

composition, online resources and documents, as well as relevant information on the Group's events and meetings.

Lastly, the EiE team has also supported the content and translation of the **Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction & Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES)'s newsletter** for the month of July. You can access the Spanish versión [here](#), the English version [here](#) and the French version [here](#).

## DISABILITIES

For inclusion of indigenous children in our education responses, after the [Regional Call to Action](#) we have started a regional consultancy. The purpose of the consultancy is to carry out an in-depth analysis of the challenges and gaps aggravated by the pandemic, which allows establishing clear strategic goals for advocacy, as well as the identification and systematization of inclusive practices that strengthen the IBE and allow the constitution of new and better links between the actors involved.

This analysis will also allow to support effectively, in a more organized way, with creative and sustainable solutions, the initiatives of the governments.



Also, as a result of the call for action we have received funds to reactivate the production and reproduction of culturally sensible learning materials in regional indigenous languages to create an updated repository to be access by any user. At the same time, and together with the regional Task team of EIB we have begun the activation of the exchange-network amongst ministries of education of the nine countries involved (Peru, Colombia, Paraguay, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador).

“A House with Many Windows” imitative continues, now with “inclusive dance performers”. On Saturday, 26 September, Argentina have implemented a workshop with children with and without disabilities and their families.

We have produced an [uplifting video](#) “made viral” by deaf communities via WhatsApp but also viewed more than 24 thousand times in our regional Facebook page, shared over 1,100 times. This was a video to celebrate the international sign language day, with key messages on inclusion made by 10 children from different countries in their sign languages.

## SECONDARY AGE EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Within the framework of the current agreement between LACRO and CECC/SICA, the Regional Office is supporting the development and implementation of the COVID-19-related Education Contingency Plan for the SICA region. The Contingency Plan is based on 4 main areas of work:

- a. Permanent updating and exchange of information, good practices and lessons learned among the Ministries of Education of the region;
- b. Strengthen resources of the Ministries of Education on distance education in order to supplement face-to-face schooling;
- c. Share initiatives, strategies and recommendations regarding the return to school, which includes the reopening and safe school operations;
- d. Jointly explore possible partnerships with international organizations.

The Plan was presented and discussed during the Ministerial Meeting with the SICA countries’ Ministers of Education, which took place on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and in which LACRO also participated.

Together with America Solidaria and Social Lab, LACRO continues to support adolescents in the region in the development of transferable skills through the “Plan12 - Learn to transform” initiative.

In order to strengthen the activities of PLAN12 and continue promoting the development of transferable skills, an online learning platform is being developed where adolescents can access available content without restrictions of time or place, allowing them the opportunity not only to continue learning autonomously but also to put into practice what they have learned and develop their own projects.

## EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)



LACRO initiated a second mapping exercise of the ECD/ECE response building on first mapping carried on in April 2020 and strengthening it to facilitate information and experience sharing among COs. This mapping will be complementary to the EIE mapping carried on recently and will be built on a similar methodology to avoid duplication.

The ECD team also finalized the operational tools to detect and prevent VAC in COVID-19 time through phone calls with the objective of promoting the loving and sensitive nurturing of young children, while encouraging the self-care of significant caregivers in early childhood. These operational tools are meant to be used by workers who interact with mothers, fathers and caregivers of children under 5 years of age through the services and programs offered by the health, nutrition, education, child protection and social protection sectors, among others. Tools are being finalized (design and translation) and will be shared widely in the coming weeks.

## 6. GLOBAL RESOURCES

Check out also in UNICEF LACRO's website the [Supplement to the Framework for Reopening Schools: Emerging lessons from country experiences in managing the process of reopening schools](#), jointly developed by UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, WFP and UNHCR, which includes key emerging lessons for the reopening of schools process following the four main dimensions of the Framework (safe operations, focus on learning, wellbeing & protection, and reaching the most marginalized). You can access its Spanish version [here](#).

Under UNICEF LACRO's website you will also find the [Considerations for school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19](#). Annex to Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19, developed by UNICEF, UNESCO and WHO. The document includes considerations on in decisions on school operations, a comprehensive list of measures to prevent COVID-19 in educational settings and research information on COVID-19 in children and in schools. You can access its Spanish version [here](#).

**Suplemento para el Marco de reapertura de las escuelas:  
Lecciones emergentes de las experiencias  
de los países en la gestión de los  
procesos para la reapertura de las  
escuelas**

Los sistemas educativos de todo el mundo siguen lidiando con las complejas decisiones de cuándo y cómo reabrir las escuelas para el aprendizaje presencial tras los cierres generalizados debidos a la pandemia de la COVID-19. <sup>1</sup> Muchos países cerraron las escuelas junto con la puesta en marcha de otras restricciones generalizadas como respuesta inmediata a la creciente propagación de la COVID-19. Pero, el cierre de las escuelas tiene claros efectos negativos en la salud infantil, la educación y el desarrollo, los ingresos familiares y la economía en general.

### Consideraciones para las medidas de salud pública relativas a las escuelas en el contexto de la COVID-19

Anexo a las consideraciones relativas a los ajustes de las medidas de salud pública y sociales en el contexto de la COVID-19

14 de septiembre de 2020



#### Introducción

Para prevenir la propagación del virus SARS-CoV-2 que causa la COVID-19, los países de todo el mundo están adoptando medidas sociales y de salud pública (PHSM, por sus siglas en inglés) amplias, como el cierre de las escuelas.<sup>1</sup> Este Anexo examina las consideraciones para el funcionamiento de las escuelas, incluyendo aperturas, cierres y reaperturas, y las medidas necesarias para minimizar el riesgo de los estudiantes y el personal a la COVID-19. Este anexo se aplica a **los entornos educativos para niños y niñas menores de 18 años** y describe los principios generales y las recomendaciones clave que pueden adaptarse no solo a las escuelas sino a contextos específicos relacionados con la escuela, como las actividades extracurriculares.

El presente Anexo **sustituye** a un documento publicado por la Organización Mundial de la Salud el 10 de mayo de 2020 titulado *Consideraciones para las medidas de salud pública relativas a las escuelas en el contexto de la COVID-19*.<sup>2</sup> Este documento se elaboró con el aporte del Grupo Asesor Técnico (TAG, por sus siglas en inglés) de Expertos en Instituciones Educativas y la COVID-19, y de los expertos de OMS, UNICEF y UNESCO, que examinaron conjuntamente las últimas evidencias para elaborar esta guía provisional, la cual considera la equidad, las consecuencias en materia de recursos y la viabilidad. Los principales cambios introducidos en este documento son un enfoque basado en el riesgo para el funcionamiento de las escuelas en el contexto de la COVID-19, fundamentado en el nivel e intensidad de la transmisión a niveles administrativos inferiores al nivel nacional, consideraciones apropiadas de acuerdo a la edad, tanto para el distanciamiento físico como para el uso de mascarillas en el entorno escolar y en general, medidas a múltiples niveles para prevenir la introducción y propagación del SARS-CoV-2 en el entorno educativo.

El presente anexo tiene por objeto ayudar a los responsables de la formulación de las políticas y a los educadores a tomar decisiones sobre el funcionamiento de las escuelas con la mayor seguridad posible durante la pandemia de la COVID-19. En la vanguardia de todas las consideraciones y decisiones debe estar la continuidad de la educación de los niños y niñas para su bienestar general, su salud y su seguridad. No obstante, todas las decisiones tendrán repercusiones en los niños, niñas, padres, madres o cuidadores, docentes y otros funcionarios y, en general, en sus comunidades y sociedades.

Los lectores también pueden remitirse a las directrices publicadas por la OMS sobre la adaptación de las medidas sociales y de salud pública a medida que la epidemiología de la COVID-19 evoluciona, al tiempo que se maneja el riesgo de resurgimiento de los casos.<sup>3</sup>

#### Principios generales

Los principios que subyacen a las consideraciones sobre las medidas de salud pública relacionadas con la escuela para prevenir y minimizar la transmisión del SARS-CoV-2 en los centros escolares son los siguientes:

- Garantizar la continuidad segura, adecuada y apropiada del aprendizaje y el desarrollo educativo y social de los niños y niñas.
- Reducir al mínimo el riesgo de transmisión del SARS-CoV-2 dentro de las escuelas y entornos asociados a la misma entre los niños, niñas, docentes y otro personal escolar.

## 7. NATIONAL PROTOCOLS

At the national level, several Ministries of Education in the region have developed protocols and guidelines for the reopening of schools in LAC countries. You can access the list of MoEs protocols [here](#).