

LACRO COVID-19 EDUCATION RESPONSE: UPDATE 24

STATUS OF SCHOOL'S REOPENING

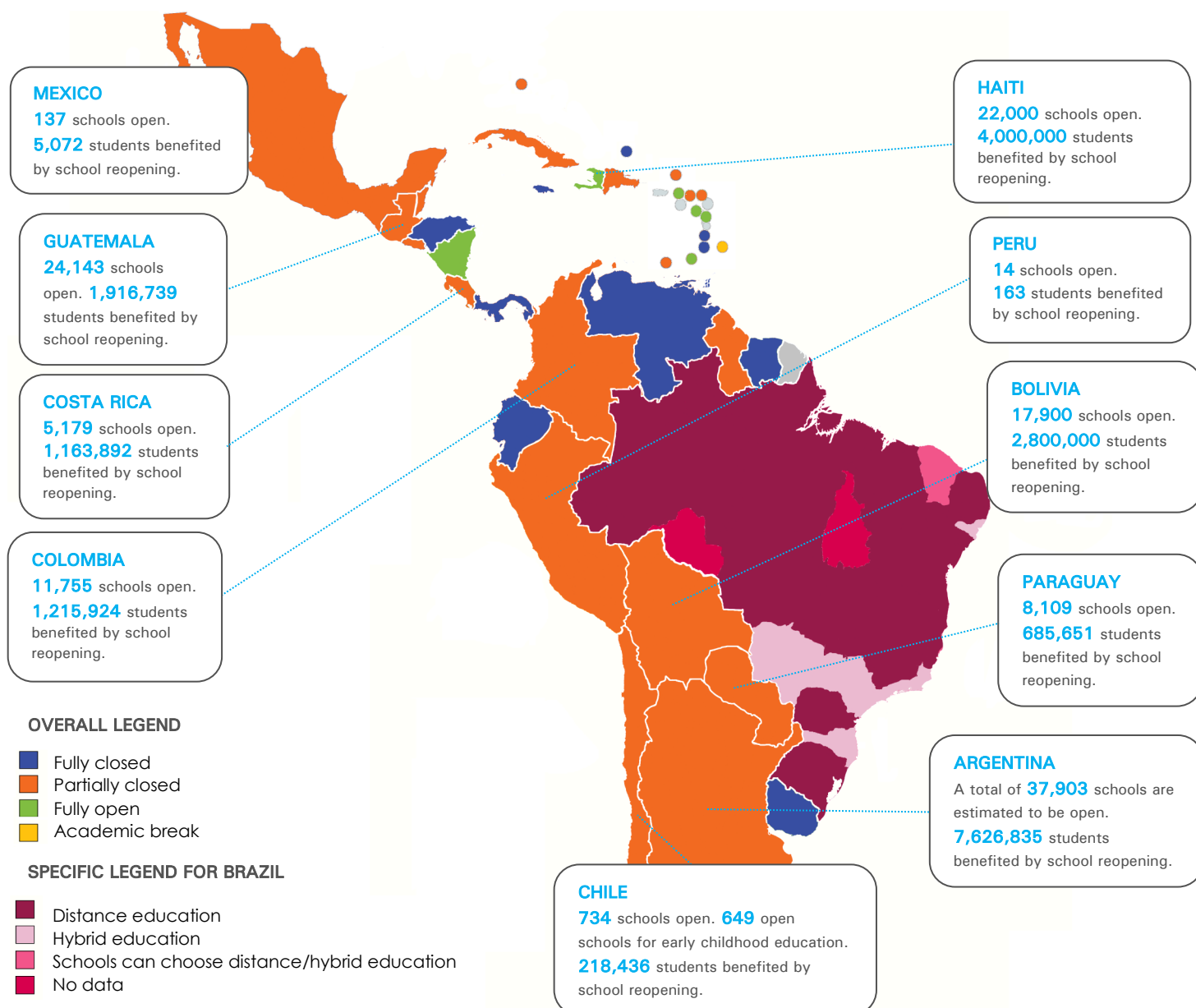
[Released on May 6, 2021]

1. INTRODUCTION

During the month of April, the process of reopening schools in LAC suffered several setbacks due to the increase of COVID-19 cases, countries such as Uruguay decided to postpone the reopening after the Easter break, which had been set for May 3, until further notice. In Ecuador, the authorizations given to the 415 schools to open on a semi-presential basis were suspended due to the increase in COVID-19 cases; in Cuba, due to the epidemiological situation, 7,253 of the 9,655 schools are closed.

This report includes reopening status updates sent by UNICEF country offices until April 30, 2021. As of this date, only 6 countries and territories have their schools

fully open, 10 countries and territories have their schools fully closed, and 20 countries and territories in the region have their schools partially closed. In terms of the number of children and adolescents affected by total and partial closures, there is an increase from 102 million in March to 124 million in April. This update reviews the progress of school's reopening, and the existence of monitoring mechanisms and/or systematization of the process. This report also updates the information on the prioritization of vaccination for teachers and educational personnel, as well as the existence of surveys conducted with children and adolescents on their perception of the current situation of education in their countries and the main activities supported by UNICEF.



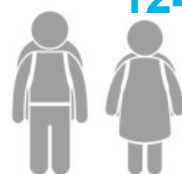
Note for the map: Please note that we have only included information about the countries for which we have received the data on number of schools open and number of children benefited by the reopening of schools. Information received and updated through April 30, 2021.

2. SITUATION OVERVIEW



10

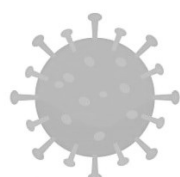
countries and territories in the region (Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Turks & Caicos Islands, Uruguay and Venezuela) with schools **fully closed**.



124M

children affected by schools fully and partially closed. (This include the number of children in countries with schools fully and partially closed).³

15,7M children affected by schools fully closed and **108,9M** children affected by schools partially closed.



An average of **166** school days without **face-to-face classes** between March 2020 and April 2021.¹



6

countries and territories in the region (Anguilla, Dominica, Grenada, Haiti, Montserrat and Nicaragua) have all their schools **fully open**.



20

countries and territories in the region (Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, St Kitts & Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago) have their schools **partially closed**.



26

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



22

countries and territories in the region continue school lessons through **remote learning** via online or television, radio, WhatsApp, printed materials and/or **hybrid models**.



78%

of countries in the LAC region have decided on a **date for school reopening**.⁴

Sources of information

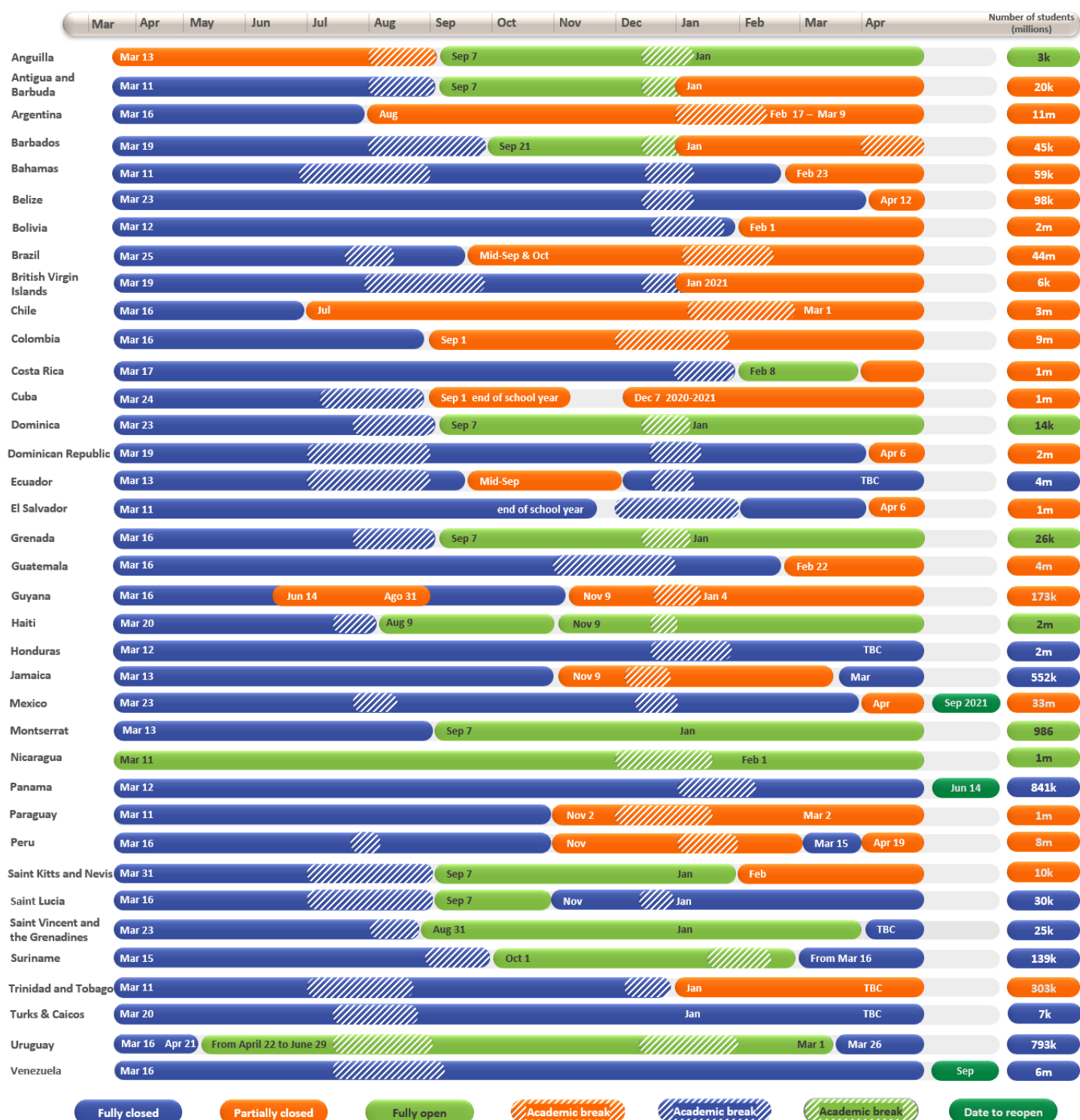
¹ Data from [Covid-19 and school closures: One year of education disruption](#), March 2021 and information provided by Unicef COs. The average figure was calculated considering the closing days of each country, without taking into account weekends and academic breaks.

² [Global Education Cluster, Tracker analysis Advocacy, 14 August 2020](#).

³ Data extracted from United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute of Statistics, 'Welcome to UIS.Stat', <http://data.uis.unesco.org/#>>, and information provided by Unicef Cos until March 31, 2021. The 124M figure was calculated using data on the total enrollment of students attending face-to-face classes in the case of some countries; the figure is an approximation of the number of children affected by fully and partially closed schools.

⁴ This percentage was calculated by information provided by COs.

3. FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES TIMELINE⁵

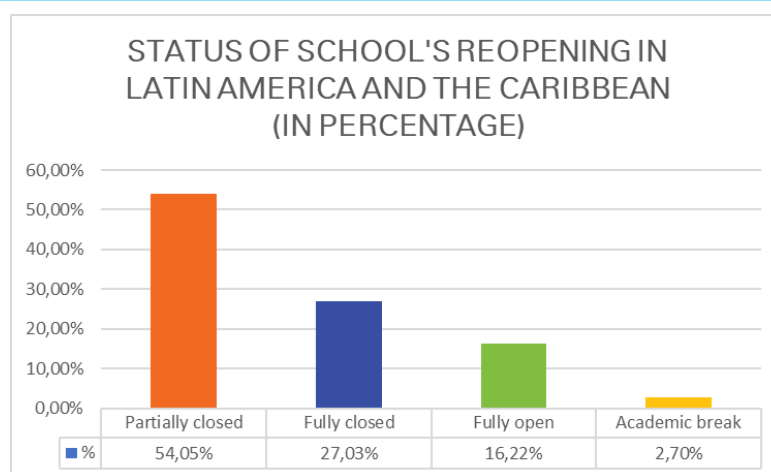


Note for the timeline: Each label called "Academic break" symbolizes the holiday period in countries with partially closed, fully closed and fully open schools.

Sources of information

⁵ Data reported by COs. Information consulted from December 7, 2020 to April 30, 2021.

4. STATUS OF SCHOOL'S REOPENING IN LAC⁶



ARGENTINA

The date of reopening was staggered by jurisdiction starting on February 17 in CABA and Jujuy; March 1 in Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Corrientes, Chaco, Chubut, Entre Ríos, Mendoza, Salta, San Juan, San Luis, Santa Cruz, Tucumán, Tierra del Fuego; March 2 in Formosa; March 3 in Neuquén and Río Negro; March 8 in Catamarca, La Pampa and La Rioja; March 9 in Misiones and March 15 in Santa Fe and Santiago del Estero.

On April 16, President Alberto Fernández, through [decree 241/21](#) ordered the suspension of on-site classes in all educational levels and modalities in the jurisdictions of Buenos Aires and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires from April 19 to April 30, 2021 (for 15 days). Four provinces adhered to the presidential disposition: Catamarca, La Rioja, Formosa, and Santa Cruz. It is estimated on the basis of the Annual Survey (2019) a total of 7,626,835 students attending classes: 1,350,659 correspond to the initial level, 3,545,519 to the primary level and 2,730,657 to the secondary level. A total of 46,386 schools are estimated to be open.

BAHAMAS

On April 19, 2021 the Ministry of Education reported through a press release that some positive cases of COVID-19 have been reported in New Providence schools last week. Accordingly, a 14-day quarantine has been put in place. The Ministry requests parents, teachers, staff and students to follow health protocols, such as social distancing, use of masks and hand washing.

Classes in the Bahamas will continue with a blended model, i.e. distance and face-to-face. The MoE continues to work in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the Department of Environmental Health Services to ensure that all students and staff members, throughout the public education sector, remain healthy and safe.

BELIZE

Approximately 55 schools reopened on April 12, 2021. 61 schools have applied to reopen on April 12 and 161 have applied to reopen on May 10, as all must receive school

readiness verification approval from the Ministry of Education. This is done through district education center (DEC) verification visits to ensure that all schools are prepared for a safe return to school.

The Ministry of Education is working with the authorized centers to implement school transportation and school feeding programs necessary to meet the needs of all students. It is worth mentioning that the return to classes is optional for schools, so they are encouraged to implement their Continuity of Learning Plans and teachers are encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as possible.⁷

BRAZIL

Schools have been closed since March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, while public network schools have planned to resume activities between January and April 2021. Brazil maintains a face-to-face and distance education model (combined model). A total of 63.3% of the municipal education networks planned to start the school year remotely, 26.3% intend to start classes in a hybrid way, 3.8% in a face-to-face way and 6.6% have not yet defined it.

Classes for the end of the 2020 school year start on February 8 and end at the end of March. The end of the school year in the state public network is supported by CEE/AC Opinion No. 25/2020. In April there will be recess and it will be the enrollment period. In May the 2021 school year will start. The forecast is that it will be in the hybrid system with face-to-face classes starting gradually and with rotation of students, depending on the pandemic situation in the state and the due authorization of the health authorities, according to the last update, on April 19, 2021.⁸

States with distance education: Acre, Amapa, Amazonas, Bahia, Federal District, Espírito Santo, Goiás, Maranhão, Mato Grosso, Minas Gerais, Pará, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Piauí, Paraná State, Rio Grande do Norte, Roraima, Rio Grande do Sul, Sergipe.

States with combined education: Alagoas, Mato Grosso do Sul, Rio de Janeiro, Santa Catarina, São Paulo.

⁶ The graphs presented were elaborated with information provided by Unicef COs.

⁷ [Press release: Ministry of Education Updates on Phased-in Return to Face-to-Face Instruction](#). Information consulted in April 2021.

⁸ [School year and distance learning](#). Updated through April 19, 2021. Information consulted in April 2021.

Schools that can decide whether to have distance/combined education: Ceara.

No information: Rondônia, Tocantins.

BOLIVIA

On February 1, 2021, the reopening of schools began, at the moment there are 17,900 schools open, 65% with distance education, 15% semi face-to-face and 10% with face-to-face education. There are 2,800,000 students benefiting from the reopening. Distance education is carried out through web platforms, TV, radio and print media.

CHILE

The reopening began in March 2021, at the moment there are 734 schools open, 649 initial education establishments with on-site education (9% of the country's total), the rest of the country's educational centers still maintain a distance education. There are 218,436 students enrolled in total of the 1,383 establishments with face-to-face activity, but this is not necessarily the number of students participating in face-to-face education.

COLOMBIA

School reopening processes in Colombia began on September 1, 2020. Currently, 11,755 schools are reported to be partially open, representing 22.2% of the total number of schools in the country, benefiting 1,215,924 students (12.7% of the country's student enrollment). The education model is combined, maintaining face-to-face and distance education through web, TV, radio and print media platforms.

COSTA RICA

On February 8, 2021, the school reopening process began, however, at the moment there is a strong pressure on school closures due to the increase of

COVID-19 cases in the last weeks. There are 5,179 educational centers open with combined education modality, with 1,163,892 students enrolled for the 2021 school year.

CUBA

The reopening process began in September 2020. Cuba is going through a serious phase of transmission of the COVID-19 virus, the situation worsening in general, and with a higher incidence of contagion in ages between (15 and 18), and (10 and 14) years, according to information provided by the Ministry of Health of Cuba (MINSAP).

There are 2,402 open schools and 7,253 closed schools, with 277,311 students currently receiving on-site classes, representing 18% of total student enrollment, and 1,304,724 students in distance learning classes, representing 82.5% of total enrollment. Educational guidance continues through television with reinforcement on MINED and [Cuba Educa](#) platforms. The mass vaccination scheme with two Cuban vaccines, which are completing phase 3 of clinical trials, will begin in early May in Havana.⁹

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

On April 6, schools with COVID-19 positivity equal to or less than 5% in semi face-to-face mode reopened in 40 of 152 municipalities, a total of 915 schools reopened to date, with very low school attendance due to the concern of parents and/or caregivers about COVID-19. Education has a combined modality (distance and face-to-face).

ECA (EASTERN CARIBBEAN AREA COUNTRIES)

Schools reopened in January 2021 as planned. The reopening modality varies between and sometimes within countries. Anguilla, Dominica, Grenada and Montserrat maintain a face-to-face mode of education.



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⁹ [Ministry of Education of Cuba](#). Information consulted in April 2021.

Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, St. Kitts & Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago maintain a blended education model with face-to-face and distance learning; St. Lucia and Turks & Caicos Islands maintain distance learning; Barbados is on academic recess; and St. Vincent & the Grenadines has all schools closed due to the volcanic eruption.

ECUADOR

The reopening process began in the last quarter of 2020, but on April 21 the President declared a state of emergency which paralyzed this process until May 20. Prior to the declaration of the state of exception, there were 415 schools partially open, benefiting 18,288 students and 1,372 teachers. Currently, education is carried out at a distance through web platforms, among others.

EL SALVADOR

The reopening began on April 6, 2021, and all educational centers have been partially opened for the semi-presential attention of the student body, a total of 4,843 schools have been opened. To date, 37 schools are closed due to the appearance of cases of COVID-19 and following the established protocol, a preventive closure has been implemented for 14 days, at the end of which blended learning activities will resume.

The average flow of students during the weeks of April ranges between 172,692 and 248,591 per day in the schools. Given the multimodal attention, a significant number of students remain at home, with remote education accompaniment and in some cases with virtual education.

GUATEMALA

On February 22, 2021, the reopening of schools began, and to date there are 24,143 schools open, benefiting 1,916,739 students.

GUYANA

On January 4, 2021 the reopening of schools began and April 12, 2021 after Easter week schools were reopened for grades 10, 11 and 12 only, with 120 secondary schools partially open for these grades only. The number of students benefiting from the reopening is not available, but the percentage of children returning after the Easter vacations (about 70% in urban and coastal areas, and less than 50% in the interior) has been reduced due to the increase in COVID-19 positive cases. The modality of education is face-to-face and distance learning, i.e. they have a hybrid model of education.

Given the number of COVID-19 infections and the vaccination process, schools will remain closed except for the classrooms that have already opened, the MOE will inform about the plans for June, likewise, the minister encouraged the technicians to get vaccinated.¹⁰



¹⁰ Ministry of Education of Guyana. Information consulted in April 2021.



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HAITI

The reopening of schools began in August 2020 and to date all schools in Haiti (22,000) are open, benefiting 4,000,000 students. A face-to-face education model is being maintained.

HONDURAS

Some schools have partially reopened unofficially. The Secretary of Education (SEDUC) has designed a reopening pilot for 55 schools, however the authorization of the National Risk Management System (SINAGER) has not yet been obtained. For the moment the official start of classes is still at a distance through web platforms and other means of communication.

JAMAICA

There are no open schools at present, all are in the distance education modality through the web, TV, radio or print media. The measures are in effect until May 4, after which an update on face-to-face schooling will be given.

MEXICO

In the State of Campeche, 137 rural schools reopened in April 2021 benefiting 278 teachers and 5,072 students. September 2021 is the tentative reopening date for the rest of the country. Mexico maintains a blended education with face-to-face classes in Campeche and distance learning (online) for the rest of the country.

NICARAGUA

The school year began on February 1, 2021; schools were closed for year-end vacations in December and January 2020. At present, the 9,150 kindergarten, primary and secondary schools that make up the basic education system in Nicaragua are open, with 1,800,000 students benefiting from on-site education.

PANAMA

Schools in Panama continue to be closed, although some Early Childhood Centers have reopened on February 1. Education is maintained at a distance through web platforms, TV, radio and print media. May 31, 2021 was set as the tentative date for school reopening.

PARAGUAY

On March 2, 2021, classes began in public schools with 8,109 public, private and subsidized private sector institutions open, representing 81% of the total with confirmed enrollment. This reopening has benefited 685,651 enrolled students, considering the aforementioned sectors. Education is face-to-face and distance through web platforms, TV, radio and print media.

PERU

The reopening process began on April 19, 2021, and it is planned to continue opening new schools every week if they meet the required conditions. There are no schools open in their entirety; as of April 21, there are 14 rural schools open with semi-presential attendance that comply with biosafety protocols, benefiting 163 students. There are another 380 schools open in other

areas, but they have yet to be formalized. The education model is combined, with distance education through web platforms, TV, radio and face-to-face education.

In addition to these schools, spaces called TAMBOS are being used, which are community service centers in isolated rural areas with Internet connection. The TAMBOS are being used so that children from nearby areas can attend to follow the **Aprendo en Casa** programs. As of April 3, there are 103 TAMBOS in 13 departments of the country that have allowed 1,079 students to access blended learning.¹¹

SURINAME

The reopening of schools began on October 1, 2020, however, as of Monday, March 16, all educational centers will remain closed due to COVID-19, according to provisions of the Minister of Education. The minister indicates that all school tests and exams are postponed until after the Easter vacations (March 16 to April 14).¹²

The government launched on April 26 a free Internet data service in collaboration with the national telecommunications company. Students can activate the service on a cell phone and access 30 different education-related websites that the telecommunications company has added to the zero-fee data free environment.¹³

URUGUAY

On January 31, 2021 the schools opened with full presentiality, but given the cases by COVID-19 the schools closed on March 26, 2021, maintaining virtual education on a mandatory basis. In an official statement submitted by the Ministry of Education, the National Administration of Public Education and the Institute of the Child and Adolescent of Uruguay, in consultation with the Ministry of Public Health and as provided by Articles 3 and 4 of Decree No. 90/2021, dated March 23, 2021, communicate that the suspension of presentiality, at all levels, of public and private educational centers throughout the country, including Child and Family Care Centers (CAIF), youth centers and children's clubs, as well as private early childhood centers, is extended until Friday, April 9, 2021.¹⁴

Given the continuity of the increase, the measure that was expected to last until April was finally extended until May 3. Plan Ceibal provides a laptop to all children from 6 to 15 years old, with free access to Ceibal's web platforms.¹⁵

VENEZUELA

It is estimated that 80% of the schools are partially open in distance education mode and providing face-to-face attention in: school meals for the most vulnerable children (as part of the School Feeding program); pedagogical attention for families and students who require it and voluntary face-to-face evaluations. This situation occurred between the end of March and the beginning of April of the 2019-2020 school year.



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¹¹ I learn at home: [96 Tambos disseminate educational program in remote areas of the country](#). Information consulted in April 2021.

¹² [All schools closed from Monday due to coronavirus](#) – Suriname. Information consulted in April 2021.

¹³ Telesur: [websites you can visit with Free Data](#). Information consulted in April 2021.

¹⁴ Ministry of Education of Uruguay: [Press release on the suspension of attendance](#). Information consulted in April 2021.

¹⁵ Uruguay: [Gradual return to classes to begin in May; Council of Ministers to define timetable](#). Information consulted in April 2021.



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In September 2020, with the start of the new 2020-2021 school year, the initiative of face-to-face attention at school for students with greater learning needs was promoted through the strategy of Pedagogical Attention Points during flexible weeks. In January 2021, the implementation of voluntary face-to-face evaluations in schools begins.

At the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year (throughout the 1st, 2nd and 3rd pedagogical moment), attempts have been made to return to the face-to-face education modality in schools in a safe, voluntary and

flexible manner. But the behavior of COVID-19 and the new strain (P.1 Brazilian Coronavirus Variant) has not allowed it. Currently, schools are preparing to complete the school year in distance mode and continue to strengthen their preparation for an eventual return to face-to-face education in September of the new school year 2021-2022.

5. MONITORING MECHANISMS OF SCHOOL REOPENING¹⁶

ARGENTINA

The purpose of the Observatory for the Return to the Classroom (currently under development) is to monitor, produce and systematize information for a better development of the actions foreseen in the regulatory frameworks and jurisdictional plans. It operates within the orbit of the Federal Education Council.

BELIZE

District education officers are monitoring schools that have reopened and the Ministry of Education is preparing an assessment to collect data on areas affecting students and schools after reopening. The focus will be on school feeding, psychosocial support and education recovery issues.

BRAZIL

Given the high level of decentralization, monitoring the reopening of schools is a difficult task. At the state level: the National Council of State Education Administrators (CONSED), which is mapping the legislation submitted by the governors on this issue. At the municipal level, there is no follow-up mechanism.

BOLIVIA

There is no systematic monitoring system, but there are periodic reports.

CHILE

The Ministry of Education sends a weekly survey to educational establishments to know their situation. On the other hand, UNICEF, together with kindergarten education institutions and the University of Chile (CIAE) carries out the monitoring of the 2020 reopening in early education.

COLOMBIA

Reopening of schools at the local and/or regional level. The Ministry of National Education periodically monitors local governments and socializes progress with organizations in the education sector.



COSTA RICA

This is done through the SABER platform (Basic Administration System of Education and its Resources), which is a technological solution that automates and centralizes the information of the student population, helping to maintain the traceability of the student's file.

CUBA

Monitoring is carried out through provincial and municipal directorates and is carried out based on the decisions of the temporary emergency response group led by the country's president.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

National, regional and district teams train and accompany the schools, monitoring to verify the reopening.

ECA (EASTERN CARIBBEAN AREA COUNTRIES)

The Ministries of Education responsible for schools work with the relevant agencies to ensure that schools are open and that biosecurity protocols are followed. Education officials liaise with schools.

ECUADOR

The Ministry of Education implements a monitoring system to have periodic information at the school level on the progress of their educational continuity plans, to know which schools are in the progressive return stage, the number of students benefited, and a monitoring of COVID-19 cases.

EL SALVADOR

The mechanism consists of the registry that each departmental education directorate keeps on the schools in its department, data that is transferred weekly to those responsible for the situation room for consolidation.

Upon reopening the schools, the Ministry of Education (MINED) will carry out a sampling to verify compliance with the return plans. After 4 months, a census will be carried out to know which schools are functioning and which are not.

GUATEMALA

Monitoring is carried out through the General Directorate for Monitoring Educational Quality (DIGEMOCA).

GUYANA

There are protocols for school reopening with supervisory teams, which evaluate the readiness of educational units for reopening.

JAMAICA

The Ministry of Health approves compliance with the protocols and the Ministry of Education performs continuous monitoring.

MEXICO

Only Campeche began the process of reopening schools. Among the requirements for reopening are the following: 1) the epidemiological traffic light is green 2) all teachers must be vaccinated. This makes reopening complicated due to delays in vaccination.

PANAMA

In Panama, the Directorate of Evaluation and Statistics applies telephone surveys and the digital enrollment register.

PARAGUAY

The monitoring mechanism is established in the Protocol and guide for safe return to school 2021. It is carried out through the educational committees for risk management by institution, region and department.

PERU

A 3-stage system has been defined: The Ministry of Health defines the areas where there are epidemiological conditions; based on that, the schools in those areas that achieve biosecurity conditions and endorsement from families. The Ministry of Education, MINEDU collects the reopening data sent by the directors.

SURINAME

In Suriname, checklists have been established as part of the school reopening protocol. The inspection department supervises/monitors that schools adhere to the guidelines.

URUGUAY

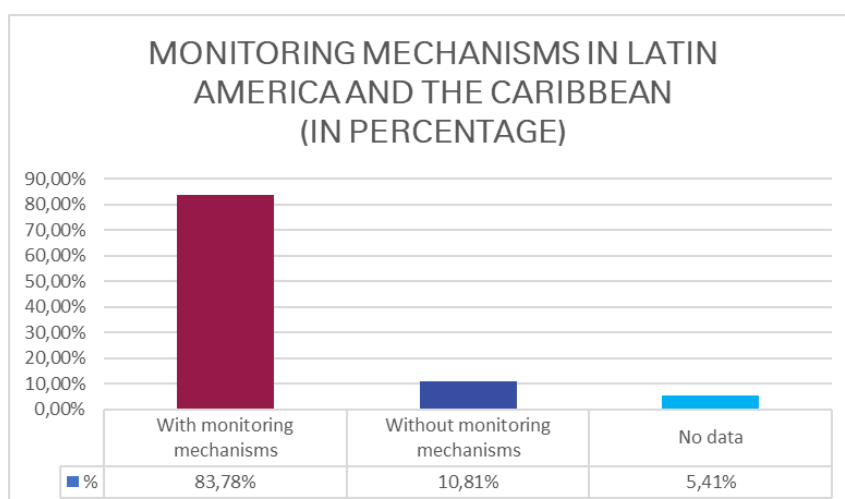
Plan Ceibal and ANEP monitor students' access to the platforms in real time to identify those who do not connect. In March 2021 Plan Ceibal published the report

[Use of educational platforms](#), which details the use of the different platforms by both students and teachers.

VENEZUELA

The National System of Educational Supervision of the Ministry of Education has an organizational structure of 3,722 educational circuits (each one groups between 5 and 12 schools) to which a supervisor is assigned to follow up and monitor the processes at all levels and modalities of the schools. In the contingency of the COVID-19 pandemic, these supervisors monitor the development of the distance education modality from the national plan "Every family a school" and promote the pedagogical guidelines issued by the governing body regarding the preparation of schools to receive students and representatives in weeks of flexibilization for pedagogical attention. This process is coordinated by the National Direction of Supervision and Evaluation of the educational system, which manages all the follow-up and monitoring information. At this moment they are functioning as situational rooms from where information is monitored and generated. Through email and WhatsApp groups.

At the moment, **Haiti**, **Honduras** and **Nicaragua** do not have monitoring mechanisms for the reopening of schools.



¹⁶ The graphs presented were elaborated with information provided by Unicef COs.

ARGENTINA

UNICEF provides technical assistance to the committee of the Observatory for the return to the classroom within the Ministry of Education, advocacy in networks and public media, alliances with different governmental and non-governmental actors and promotion of inter-ministerial articulation.

BELIZE

UNICEF holds technical meetings with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health; finalizes ongoing back-to-school work plans, with promotional campaigns on the reopening of schools (e.g., educational videos and newspapers for the month of May), and vaccination campaigns targeting priority groups, including teachers.

BRAZIL

UNICEF Brazil is reinforcing existing strategies: Busca Ativa Escolar, Educação que Protege and others. On the other hand, UNICEF together with CENPEC Educação published on April 29th the press release ["School Exclusion Scenario in Brazil: A Warning on the Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Education"](#).

UNICEF Brazil invested heavily in recommendations, new methodologies, training and support materials to ensure a safe return to schools. In an effort to coordinate actions, the Education team established a working group with a broad structure.

BOLIVIA

UNICEF Bolivia is providing support in the final design of the school reopening booklet for all educational units in the country.

CHILE

UNICEF supports the monitoring of the reopening process of early education, a working group with civil society in education, a guide for the use of playgrounds as educational spaces, and the improvement of playgrounds in kindergartens for use as outdoor educational spaces.

In addition, the ["Chile se recupera y aprende"](#) Plan is being implemented, which has three main axes:

- Recovery and leveling of learning
- Socio-emotional well-being
- School retention and reinsertion

COLOMBIA

UNICEF Colombia provides pedagogical advice on plans to reopen schools, develop water and sanitation strategies, distribute hygiene kits and implement communication strategies to reduce rumors and promote COVID-19 care practices.

COSTA RICA

UNICEF supports the strategies "Aprendo en casa" and "Regresar", through autonomous learning guides (17.5% children), distribution of educational and early childhood kits (4,863 children), delivery of critical hygiene supplies (20% children). UNICEF is also supporting a technical diagnosis for schools with water problems.



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CUBA

UNICEF Cuba has contributed to strengthening the continuity of distance education with support materials, development of support groups for children with intellectual disabilities and autism, creation of psychological support groups for children affected by COVID-19, distribution of supplies to implement biosecurity protocols in schools (hygiene implements, thermometers).

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

UNICEF supports MINERD in the adaptation to the COVID-19 response of the Psycho-affective Recovery Program "Return to Joy", which is implemented in the schools of the 40 municipalities with semi-presential school reopening.

UNICEF together with the Ministry of Education (MINERD) have developed 8 [books](#) that describe the plan of activities for the month of November for children from pre-primary to third grade of secondary school. According to UNICEF, the books are the academic support of the educational series "Aprendemos en casa" (We learn at home), which contains four books with a monthly plan of activities that revolves around a topic of interest. For pre-primary and primary school they are: "Plan a Magical Journey" and for secondary school: "Glimpses of the World: Environment and Health".

Support from UNICEF DR in the educational response:

I. Psycho-affective recovery in school reopening: UNICEF supports the MINERD in the adaptation to the COVID-19 response of the Psycho-affective Recovery Program Return to Joy, implemented in the schools of the 40 municipalities with semi-presential school reopening. UNICEF trained 30 trainers from the headquarters and these have multiplied in a training cascade to reach the schools, prioritizing those that are starting to reopen.

II. Support to distance and semi face-to-face education with the elaboration of books that reach more than 2 million students per round of production: To date UNICEF has made 4 rounds, 16 educational booklets for the continuity of education at home for children and adolescents. The MINERD has requested 2 more rounds of booklets to conclude the school year in July, also introducing 13 teachers' guides to provide guidance on semi or face-to-face education and in the application of books 5 and 6.

In rounds 1 to 4, UNICEF developed 4 books: 1. pre-primary - first grade, 2. second - third grade, 3. second cycle of primary school, 4. first cycle of secondary school.

In rounds 5 and 6 we will develop 8 books from pre-primary to 3rd grade of secondary school.

III. Early Warning: UNICEF has contracted a company to support MINERD in the design of an early warning module in its school information and management system.



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ECA (EASTERN CARIBBEAN AREA COUNTRIES)

UNICEF is in constant coordination with countries to keep them updated on policy guidance on safe school reopening and school defense, as well as to support the development of COVID-19 response plans.

UNICEF supports the procurement of hygiene and sanitation supplies and the dissemination of key messages in schools for the safety of students and teachers.

CO also supported the procurement of a limited number of devices for students from the most vulnerable sectors, and the training of teachers for the development of online classes and the preparation of digital content.

ECUADOR

UNICEF has generated evidence on the urgency of progressive return, carrying out advocacy actions with central government authorities, and with actors that make up the educational community. In parallel, it supported the design of a strategy to promote progressive return and the implementation of local experiences.

EL SALVADOR

In addition to what was previously reported, within the framework of the reopening of schools, UNICEF El Salvador donated 5,000,000 children's masks to the Ministry of Education and supported the Government of Korea in the delivery of 100,000 masks for adults.

GUATEMALA

UNICEF supported the development of self-learning guides, teacher training strategies, psychosocial support materials, the refurbishment of some schools, and the installation of toilets and hand-washing facilities.

GUYANA

UNICEF provided personal protective equipment (PPE) and supported water, sanitation and hygiene and gender-sensitive psychosocial capacity building initiatives for school welfare officers and classroom teachers.

HAITI

UNICEF Haiti supported the rehabilitation of hand-washing facilities in schools, the transfer of cash to vulnerable families, and the distribution of 125,000 school kits.

HONDURAS

UNICEF supported strategies to increase online coverage, the distribution of printed material, the purchase of school kits and devices, as well as the accompaniment of students.

JAMAICA

UNICEF Jamaica supported advocacy for the reopening of schools through information sharing, the installation of WASH stations (19 primary schools targeting 20,000 students), support for a media campaign including safe travel to schools, and a virtual instructional course for school leaders.

MEXICO

UNICEF Mexico supported the government in the development of educational TV programs, the distribution of hygiene supplies and hand-washing stations in schools, the provision of low-tech materials (paper, printers) for schools without internet, as well as the establishment of a call center to answer questions on educational issues.

NICARAGUA

UNICEF supports the Education System to equip itself with technology to better respond to emergency situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and provides tools for teacher training in socio-emotional support for students.

PANAMA

UNICEF advises on the back to school plan, has supported the formation of a national alliance for the reopening of schools, has donated bars of soap to ensure hand washing in schools, and continues to advise MEDUCA on the implementation of the Back to School Decree.

PARAGUAY

UNICEF Paraguay provides technical assistance in the development, training and support in the implementation of protocols and guidelines, as well as technical assistance in the strategic communication of the return.

PERU

A coalition for coordination has been created to coordinate contributions from organizations, companies and international cooperation. Likewise, assistance is provided to remote education with "Aprendo en Casa" (I Learn at Home) of the Ministry of Education (MINEDU). UNICEF supports safe reopening protocols and a communication campaign for school reopening.

SURINAME

UNICEF conducts WASH actions in schools, supports distance learning through: content development, learning passport, data management, psychosocial support, teacher capacity building, communication and strategic planning/transition planning.

URUGUAY

In March, UNICEF, together with other UN system agencies and ANEP, carried out the campaign to reopen schools "[Cada Día Cuenta](#)", and is currently finalizing two reports, and has developed a socio-educational accompaniment program for adolescents at risk of dropping out with the National Public Education Administration (ANEP).

VENEZUELA

UNICEF continues to provide support and technical advice to the Ministry of Education to promote and guide the reopening of schools.

Meetings have been held at the MPPE in order to advocate the importance of face-to-face and professional care for children in early education, as well as capacity building for families with preschool-age children. Unicef continues to provide technical assistance to the Vice Ministry of Early and Primary Education in two fundamental areas: the development of the accelerated education program for the care of over-age children; and the organization of a seminar to reflect on early education in the context of protection and prevention, as well as to identify good practices to guide the care of children in this context and the short-term on-site care at school.

Similarly, with the Vice Ministry of Education, in coordination with the Education Cluster and with the support of UNICEF LACRO, the launching of the teacher training program for the safe reopening of schools is being organized (based on the adaptation of the UNICEF MENA training package), under the modality of webinars, forum-chat courses that favor the training of technical and teaching teams of the Ministry of Education, UNICEF implementing partners, as well as the organizations of the Education Cluster. This training process, which will start from the central level to the circuit level, is expected to reach all schools and generate school protocols adapted to each context.



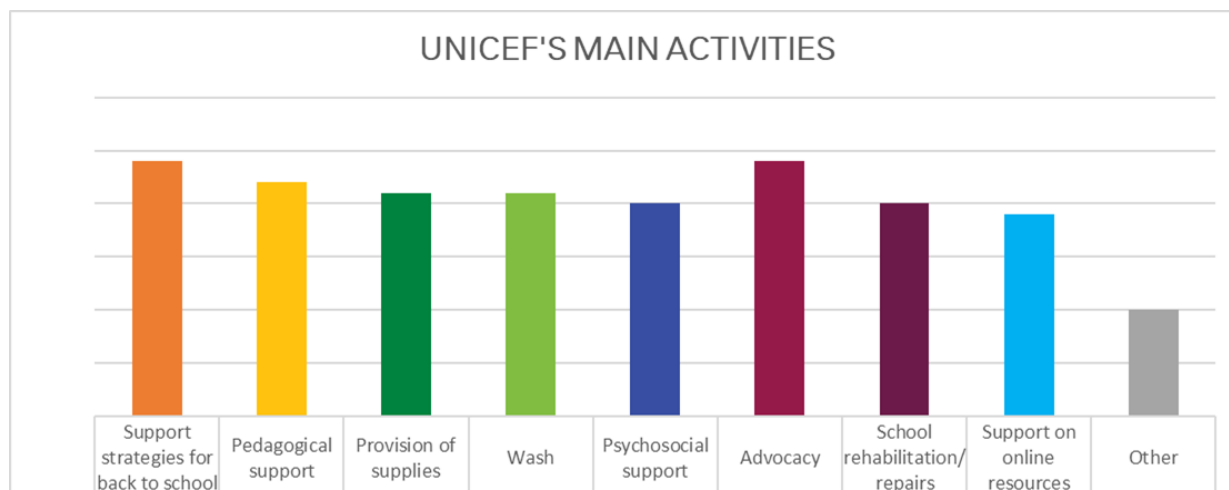
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UNICEF, through its implementing partners, distributes didactic guides with learning contents and activities to more than 144,000 children, with emphasis on reading, writing and mathematics. Psycho-educational and recreational support guides with activities to do at home are also distributed. Through Fe y Alegría's radio station with national reach, an educational program called "La escuela en la radio" (School on the radio) is broadcast daily with school educational content. More than 3,500 teachers have been trained in distance learning strategies, promotion of life skills, psycho-educational strategies, as well as distance education for children with disabilities.

UNICEF Venezuela continues to distribute school kits to schools throughout the country, as well as communication material for the prevention of COVID-19 and separator stickers for school floors. Actions are being prioritized with those responsible for the field to assist indigenous populations in this context. From the WASH area, water and sanitation repairs have been carried out in more than 180 prioritized schools nationwide.

Finally, UNICEF Venezuela continues to support the MPPE with technical assistance in the development of an accelerated education program for over-aged students and has initiated the development of a National Friendly Plan to strengthen reading and writing to be implemented in the coming months.



¹⁷ The graphs presented were elaborated with information provided by Unicef COs.

7. SISTEMATIZATION / GOOD PRACTICES ON SCHOOL REOPENING¹⁸

ARGENTINA

UNESCO and UNICEF will carry out a project between May and October that aims to systematize good educational practices in the reorganization of face-to-face classes in the 24 jurisdictions of the country and in the different educational levels and modalities.

CHILE

UNICEF Chile supported the publication of two technical notes for early education "[Learning from the experiences of the reopening of kindergarten establishments in the context of the pandemic](#)", which talks about the face-to-face activities carried out by some kindergartens, which allowed preparing the educational environment and evaluating the health protocols to prevent contagion.

There is also the report "[Balance at the beginning of the school year](#)" prepared by the Ministry of Education, published on April 8, 2021, which focuses on 4 main points: I. II. Report on the results of the epidemiological surveillance process, III. Vaccination of education workers, and IV. Support for remote education.

COLOMBIA

Currently, experiences of good practices in the reopening of schools are being collected in various parts of the country.

COSTA RICA

There is a systematization on "[Aprendo en casa](#)". So far, there has not been any systematization of the "Regresar" strategy.

CUBA

UNICEF Cuba prepared the document [Education in times of COVID-19: The Cuban experience](#), which includes the measures taken by the Cuban Education System for educational continuity at home and the process of school reopening before COVID-19. The document summarizes the alternatives implemented from March to December 2020.

ECUADOR

The systematization of good reopening practices is a process that is in its initial stage and there is still no documentation available.

PARAGUAY

The development of a systematization of the reopening is currently part of the work plan and this activity is in the process of being contracted.

PERU

The Ministry of Education made a brief systematization of the reopening, in which 836 schools participated in November and December 2020, the survey was conducted through telephone interviews with 6 school principals from 6 departments of the country.

URUGUAY

Uruguay worked on two reports that go in parallel with the "Every Day Counts" campaign, one of them is the **Survey on good teaching practices in the context of the pandemic**, which developed the opportunities of distance education through the intensive use of educational platforms, community radio, among others. This document is in the design stage.



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The second report is the [Follow-up of the return to face-to-face classes in educational centers in Uruguay](#), which narrates the school situation in Uruguay and the strategy for the return to face-to-face classes between March and June 2020. The document "Monitoring of the return to on-site classes in schools in Uruguay July-December 2020" will soon be available, where information on changes in health protocols, outbreaks in schools and pedagogical changes will be updated.

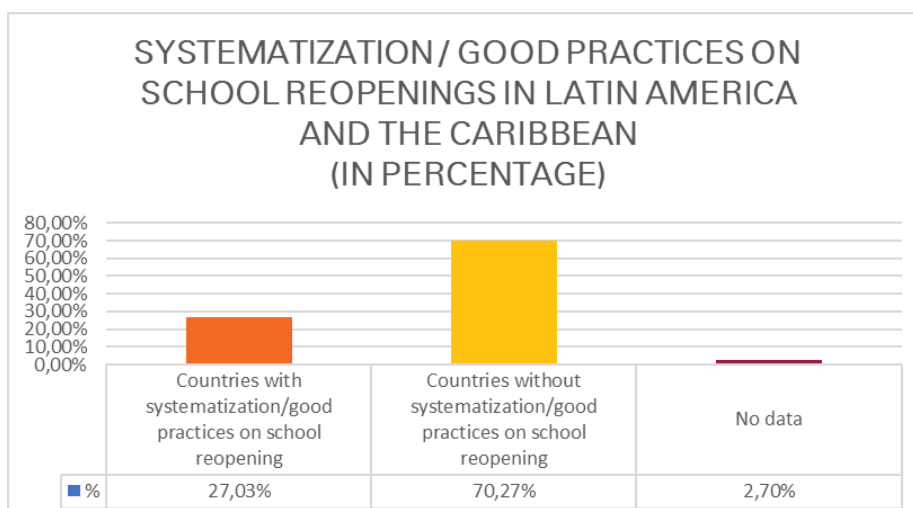
VENEZUELA

The Ministry of Education, in coordination with the Education Cluster and the Unesco Office in Quito, systematized local experiences of non-presential education in Venezuela in a publication entitled "[Educación lugarizada desde lo común](#)". UNICEF has

participated in seminars to present experiences generated within the framework of the "Every Family a School" pedagogical plan for prevention and protection. A second publication is being prepared.

In January 2021, Unicef, through a consultancy, carried out a small effort to systematize significant experiences promoted by UNICEF partners and allies in Times of COVID-19.

In **Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Dominican Republic, ECA, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama** and **Suriname** there is still no systematization on school reopening.



¹⁸ The graphs presented were elaborated with information provided by Unicef COs.

8. CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION OF THE SCHOOL'S SITUATION¹⁹

ARGENTINA

Three waves of the COVID-19 Rapid Survey were conducted during 2020. In 2021, two waves are planned between May and October.

Survey of population perception and attitudes. [The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on families with children and adolescents](#) - April 2020 (first wave).

Population Perceptions and Attitudes Survey. The [impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on families with children and adolescents](#) - August 2020 (second round).

Survey of Population Perceptions and Attitudes. [The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on families with children and adolescents](#) - November 2020 (third round).

Education sectoral reports:

a. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on families with children and adolescents. Education sectoral report (first round).

b. Survey of population perceptions and attitudes. Impact of the pandemic on the education of children and adolescents during 2020 (second round).

BOLIVIA

U-Report Bolivia launched the study: [Educational continuity during quarantine](#), which was divided into two surveys. The first bulletin reflects the results of the first survey focused on the technologies U-reporters had access to and whether they continued classes or not. The study has a second part: Educational continuity during quarantine (II) which contains updated results.

COSTA RICA

UNICEF Costa Rica is developing a telephone survey on the situation of families with regard to COVID-19, which includes consultations on education.

CUBA

The National Statistics Office, with support from UNICEF, adapted the regional questionnaire on the impact of COVID-19 and has just approved its implementation with a sample of 2,535 households in 15 municipalities of Havana. The post-COVID-19 telephone survey in Havana's 2020 households focuses on several areas: general household situation, food situation, socioeconomic, educational and health situation.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

A survey of families and a survey on the socioeconomic effects of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable families were conducted in conjunction with UNDP and other agencies.

ECA (EASTERN CARIBBEAN AREA COUNTRIES)

A study was conducted in Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, examining whether, during the return to school after national closures, students complied with protocols for safe return to school. It shares the views of teachers, parents and students.

The sub-regional report will be shared. Country reports are also available.

ECUADOR

Since the beginning of the health emergency, UNICEF has been conducting a set of [periodic surveys](#) targeting the educational community: children, households, teachers and staff of student counseling departments. These surveys explore the following dimensions: socio-economic situation, access and means of learning, learning process, interaction between the actors of the educational community, openness to return, hygiene and sanitation habits, subjective well-being and expectations.

JAMAICA

A survey has been developed as part of a larger study on the impact of COVID-19 on children, this survey will be completed in May 2021.

MEXICO

A survey was conducted in 71 schools belonging to 25 municipalities in the state of Chiapas, where 56 school principals were interviewed in November 2020. The results were presented in the report "Data derived from school activity during the pandemic". The data show a general overview of the educational centers, the movement in school enrollment, educational continuity strategies, periodic school visits, among other relevant data.

NICARAGUA

In conjunction with the Global Movement for Children (MMI), the survey on Affecting Children due to Political Crisis was prepared in April and July 2020, which includes educational results. The results of the survey conducted in July show relevant data on the way in which students continue their studies given the pandemic; the participation of children in the MMI teleclasses as part of school reinforcement; the limitations for online education; the valuation of home education; among others.

PARAGUAY

A first consultation is being elaborated using U-Report.

PERU

UNICEF Peru has made a first social listening report of the first 2 days of a campaign called #Regresemos to promote the safe and gradual reopening of schools. A survey on parents' perceptions on the reopening of schools is being scheduled.

VENEZUELA

Unicef Venezuela has been promoting, in coordination with partners, consultants and other sections, several exploratory actions to know the perception of children about their educational situation. In this sense, we highlight two of them that have shown us ways to reach children in an educational, fun and friendly way, as well as the means or resources to do so.

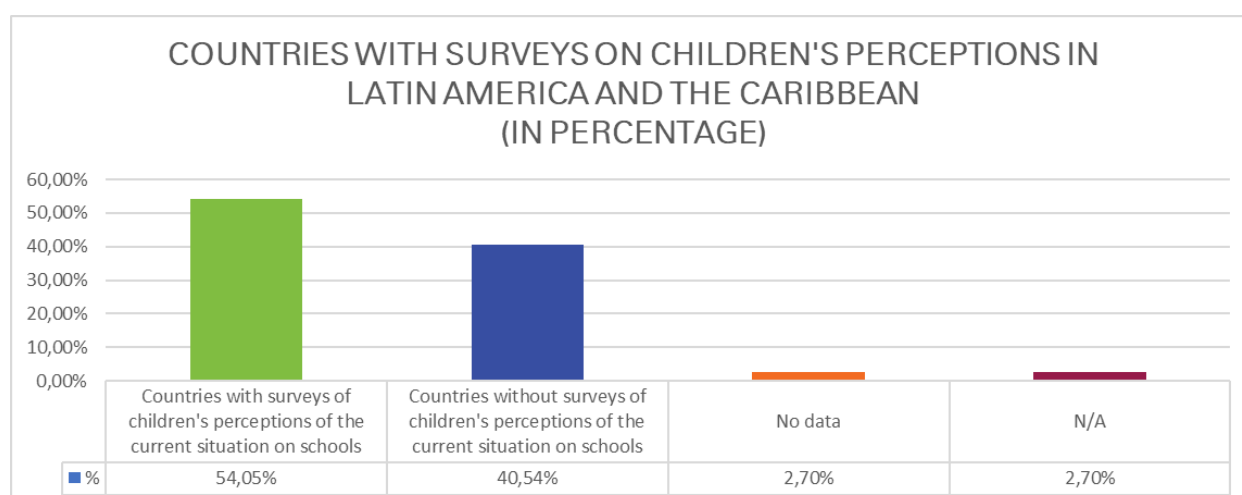
In May 2020, under the Risk Communication and Community Engagement strategy, adolescents are identified as one of the main audiences. The objective of this strategy was to raise awareness among the population about the importance of respecting to the maximum the measures for the prevention of COVID-19 infection and community participation, including adolescents as part of UNICEF's target audience. The second objective is to listen to adolescents and engage them to be educators and agents of change through their participation in several of the activities, ensuring a process of youth empowerment through networking and feedback from their peers and communities. In this sense, it was decided to start by doing a "rapid research" through an informal exploratory survey to a group of 65 adolescents, under the support and guidance of the Education area, the surveys were distributed as follows: Capital District: 13, Miranda: 8, Zulia: 24, Táchira: 13, Bolívar: 7.

Similarly, between the months of November and December 2020, UNICEF Venezuela carried out, in coordination with El Pitazo (media), a nationwide contest called "The school that is my home", which had the purpose of motivating children and adolescents from 10 to 16 years of age to share their experiences in relation

to distance learning in times of pandemic. Through three formats (stories, poems and comics), children were encouraged to participate by answering three questions: How do I feel learning from home? How do I imagine going back to school? What can I do to make this reunion with school the way I imagine it to be? As a result, 302 works were submitted by children and adolescents from 18 states of Venezuela.

- [Web with the works of the contest](#)
- [Call for entries](#)
- [Video](#) of the award event which presents the testimony of some of the winning children.

Belize, Brazil, Chile, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana and Uruguay have not yet developed surveys on children's perception of the current situation of schools. Uruguay does not have perception surveys but has the [learning assessment report](#) carried out by the National Institute for Educational Assessment in September 2020.

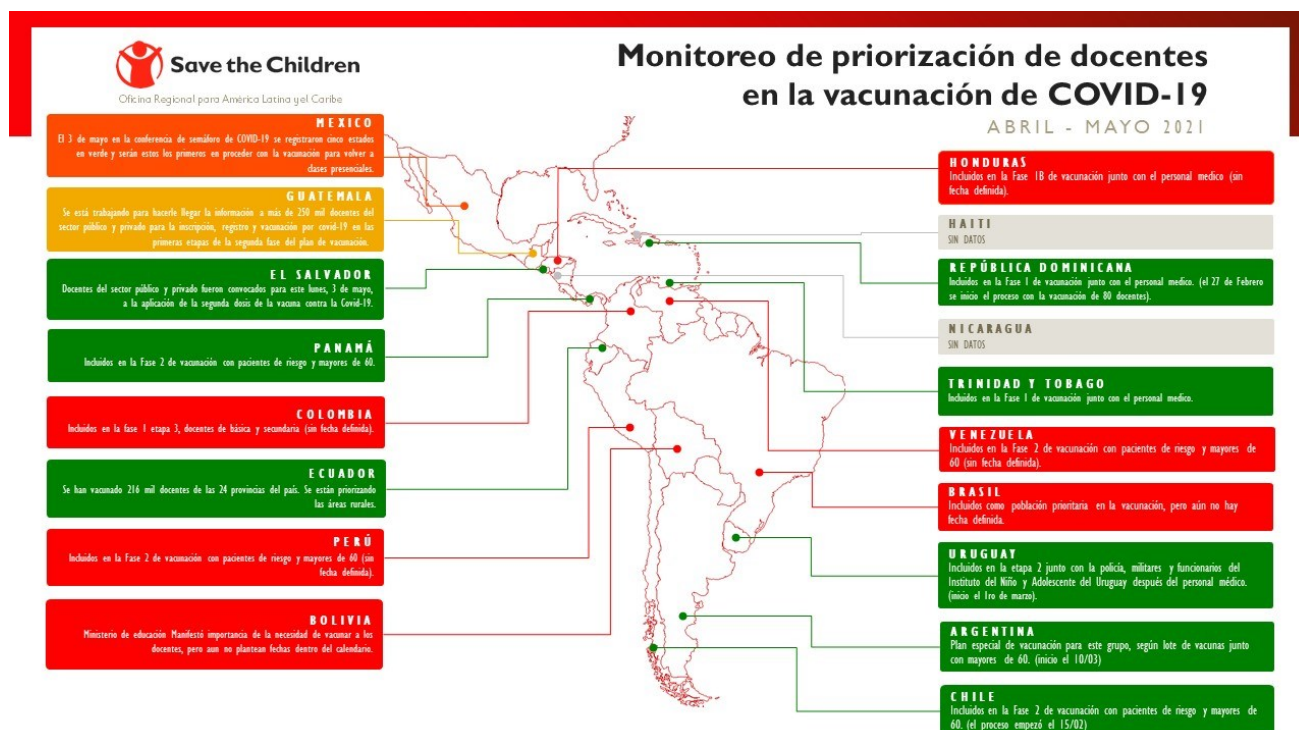


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9. MAPPING OF THE PRIORITIZATION OF TEACHER VACCINATION

The below map developed by Save the Children Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean displays a mapping of the prioritization of teacher vaccination in the region as of April - May 2021.

In the case of Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Honduras, Venezuela and Brazil, the vaccination date has not been set and there is a delay in the acquisition and distribution of vaccines.



10. UNICEF REGIONAL SUPPORT

EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES (EiE)

QR codes: The LACRO EiE team has developed a series of QR codes for high speed access to all the documents related to school reopening. These QR codes can be accessed with any smartphone and are available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Guidance Notes on reopening schools in the context of COVID-19 for schools administrators and principals in Latin America and the Caribbean

This guide contains a series of guidelines to support school administrators/directors to take the necessary steps before and during the reopening of schools.

PDF HERE

SMS based service: [This project](#) is developed to support the most vulnerable communities in Latin America and the Caribbean, to reach refugee and migrant children with microlearning through text messaging (SMS). This was achieved by adapting an existing guide called ["Aprendiendo en mi Viaje"](#), developed by PLAN International with UNICEF support, with an existing

intermediate math and reading curriculum to a calendar of short-form SMS text messages for to a short SMS text messaging schedule so that it can reach the phones of migrant/refugee families.

ECD: The LACRO ECD team prepared a technical note called "The reopening and continuity of child care and early learning services is a priority in the region ». The note synthetically presents the latest available evidence (including from the region) regarding the opening of early childhood services. It also ends with an urgent call to governments and public and private service providers in the region I) to take the necessary measures to lead to the safe reopening of early childhood centres and preschools, ii) to improve access to Internet and cell phone services that provide remote learning opportunities, as well as strengthening the implementation of programs and strategies that ensure continuity of learning (when the reopening of ECD/ECE centres is not possible) for children, especially those in situations of greater vulnerability, with special educational needs or living in isolated or rural areas.

The note is currently available in Spanish (soon to be translated in English) and is available [here](#).

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