

1. INTRODUCTION

23 countries and territories in Latin America and the Caribbean still have partially closed schools, in 7 countries and territories schools are totally closed, and in 6 of them they are totally open. In terms of the number of children and adolescents affected by total and partial schools' closures in the region, this figure has decreased from 124 million to 100 million since the end of April. While data shows a decrease in the number of children and adolescents affected by schools' closure, it is important to note that there is barely information on the quality of blended learning modalities, as well as the impact they have on children's learning and wellbeing.

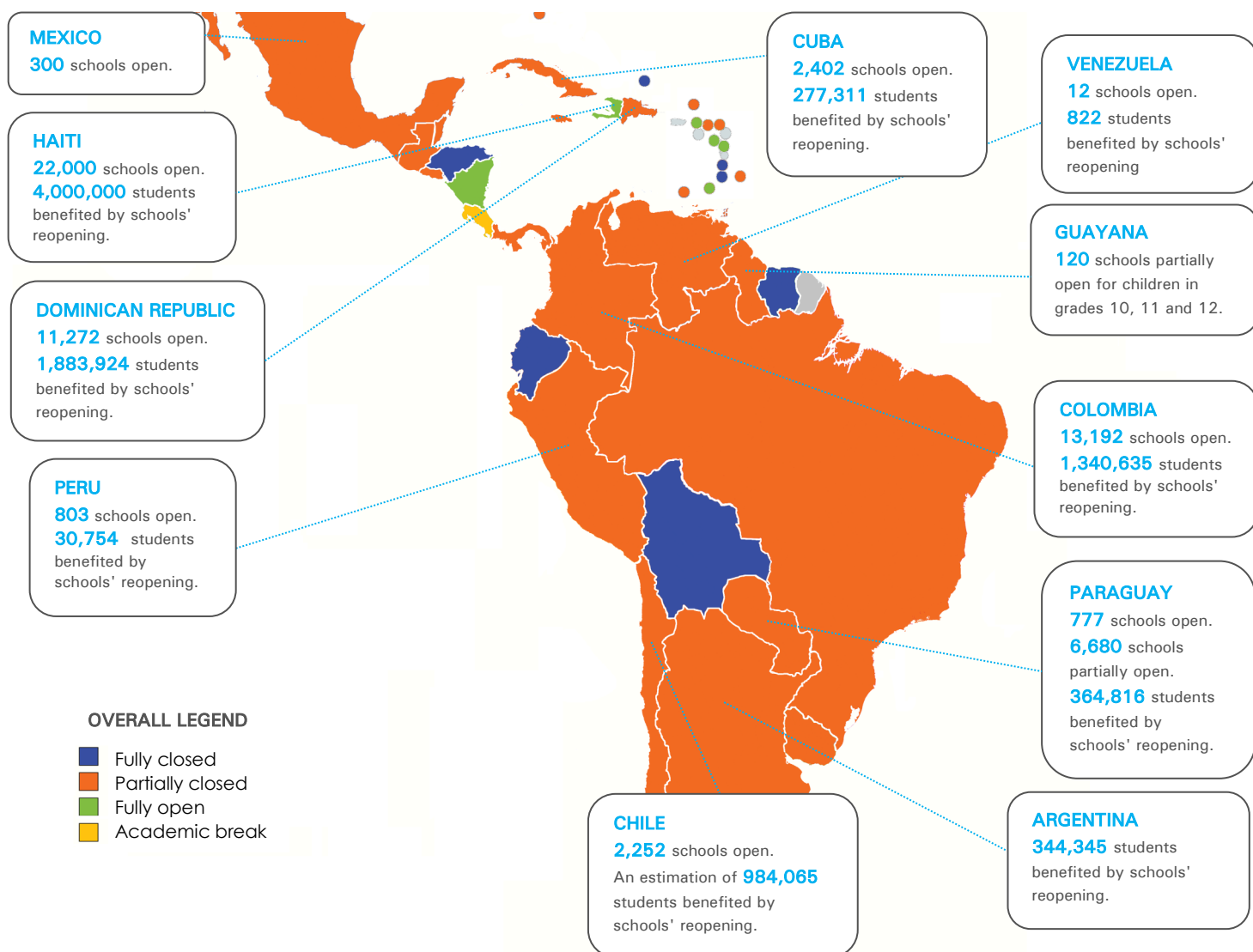
The increase in COVID-19 cases in several countries has made the schools' reopening process in the region very fragile. In Paraguay, for example, the increase in COVID-19 cases has forced schools to close again, while in Mexico some states such as Campeche and Nayarit had to close schools a couple of weeks after the reopening date due to new cases of COVID-19. In other countries, like in Honduras, the schools' reopening has

been postponed until July 5 due to the increases of COVID-19 cases, whereas Costa Rica has opted for extending the academic break until July due to the high level of infection in the country.

This report presents a detailed overview of the evolution of the reopening of schools in the countries and territories of Latin America and the Caribbean since the last report ([Update 24](#)) until June 5, a systematization of the reopening monitoring mechanisms existing in the region, a review of the good practices identified so far, and a monitoring of the existing teacher training courses on reopening. In addition, this update also reviews the progress of UNICEF-supported actions, as well as the progress of perception surveys addressed to children, adolescents and teachers on the current situation of schools. Lastly, this report presents a new map on the vaccination status of teachers in the countries of the region.

For the purpose of this report the following categorization has been considered:


- **Fully closed:** all schools closed for face-to-face education from pre-primary to upper secondary education.
- **Partially closed:** refers to some schools open for face-to-face education from pre-primary to upper secondary education.
- **Fully open:** all schools open for face-to-face education from pre-primary to upper secondary education.

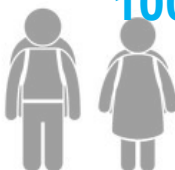



Note for the map: Please note that we have only included information about the countries for which we have received the data on number of schools open and number of children benefited by the reopening of schools. Information received by COs and updated until June 5, 2021.

2. SITUATION OVERVIEW

This section was prepared based on information received by COs and updated until June 5, 2021.

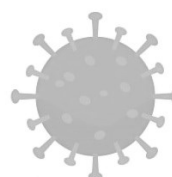
 **7** countries and territories in the region (Bolivia, Ecuador, Honduras, St. Lucia, Suriname, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Turks & Caicos Islands) with schools **fully closed**.

 **100M** children affected by schools' closures. (This include the number of children in countries with schools fully and partially closed).²


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

9,4M children affected in countries where schools are fully closed.
91,2M children affected in countries where schools are partially closed.

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



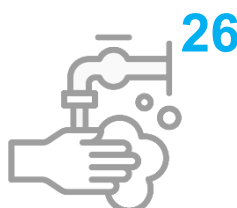
An average of **151** school days without **face-to-face classes** between March 2020 and June 5, 2021.³

 **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**.



1 country in the region (Costa Rica) is on an academic break according to the school calendar from May 24 to July 9.

 **88%** of countries in the LAC region have decided on a **date for school reopening**.¹



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



16 countries and territories in the region have prioritized teachers in the vaccination process.



16 countries and territories in the region have developed training courses on schools' reopening guidelines for teachers.

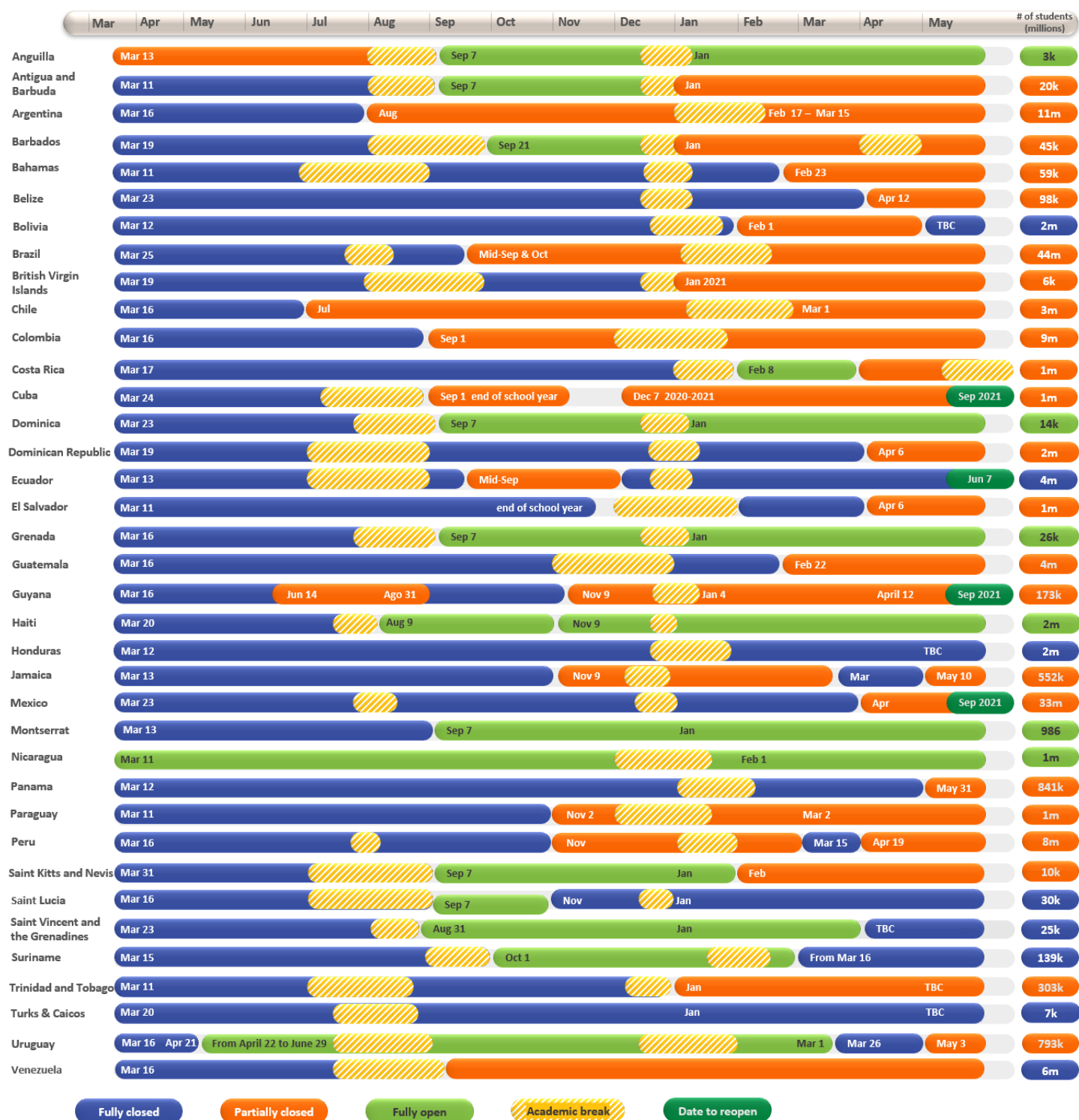
Sources of information

¹ This percentage was calculated by information provided by COs.

² 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 June 5, 2021. In the case of ECA (Countries and territories in the Eastern Caribbean Area) the information used was extracted from data received for [Update 24](#) published in May 6, 2021. The figure of 100 million has been calculated from data on the number of children affected by total or partial schools' closures. In the case of Brazil, the number of children affected by schools' closures has been updated for Update 25, this is why the total number of children affected by schools' closures in the LAC region has also changed. The data used for Brazil refer only to municipal schools. It has been extracted from a study conducted with the National Union of Municipal Education Managers of Brazil.

³ Figure calculated using the schools' closures information from the Timeline (page 3). The Timelines' information has been provided by Unicef COs from March 2020 until June 5, 2021.

3. TIMELINE OF FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES⁴



Note for the timeline: The label for 'Academic break' represents the holiday period in all countries.

Sources of information

⁴ Data reported by UNICEF COs from December 7, 2020 to June 5, 2021. In the case of ECA (Countries and territories in the Eastern Caribbean Area), the information reflected shows data received for [Update 24](#).

4. STATUS OF SCHOOLS' REOPENING⁵

ARGENTINA

The staggered reopening by jurisdiction began on February 17 and ended on March 15. According to the first official information from the Observatory of the Return to Classrooms, the number of schools with partial or total suspension reached 53,901 (89%). This total corresponds to the initial, primary, secondary and higher levels of common education. There is still a partial closure of schools, with a face-to-face modality and a hybrid model of education. According to data from the Observatory, as of May 22, 10,674,722 (93%) students are receiving classes in non-attendance mode, and it is estimated that 344,345 (7%) students are attending on-site.

As part of the Education Argentina CO COVID-19 Response Plan to foster in-person schooling, the Federal Observatory of in-person School Attendance within the Pandemic, supported by the Argentina CO of UNICEF and UNESCO, was created. The observatory aims to provide periodic reports about the modality of schooling in Argentina per province on 3 main subjects: 1) # and % of school and students with no in-person schooling, 2) # and % of teachers and school employees with COVID-19 vaccination, and 3) # and % of in school contagion. This initiative represents a key instrument to inform on a federal and official basis about the local situation and follow up of local authorities decisions to prioritize in-person schooling. Access [here](#) the first Observatory Report.

BAHAMAS

In the Bahamas, schools remain partially closed with a combination of face-to-face, distance and hybrid learning. The Ministry of Education continues to work with public health authorities and stakeholders for the continuation of face-to-face classes in some schools in the country. The Ministry of Education informed through a press release on May 17 that all public elementary, middle and high schools suspended face-to-face classes from May 25 to June 3, 2021. During this exam period, only students taking exams were allowed to enter the centers' facilities, while students continued learning through the Ministry of Education's virtual platform. However, face-to-face classes continued at the preschool level.

From June 7 to 18, face-to-face classes will resume. In addition, schools classified as low risk for COVID-19 transmission may officially request the Director of Education to continue face-to-face classes. Finally, the Ministry of Education has created an online application for parents who wish to home school their children, accessible on the [Ministry's Official Site](#).

BELIZE

In Belize schools are partially closed. Before schools open, the district education centres (DEC) must verified the schools' readiness. The return to face-to-face instruction, whether in April or May, has been optional for schools. The Ministry of Education has now approved 352 schools to begin face-to-face instruction out of a total of 611. Schools are being given the opportunity to put into action their Learning Continuity Plans and to begin assessing students to tackle academic gaps. These efforts are in preparation for a return to the classroom for all schools for the coming academic year 2021-2022.⁶

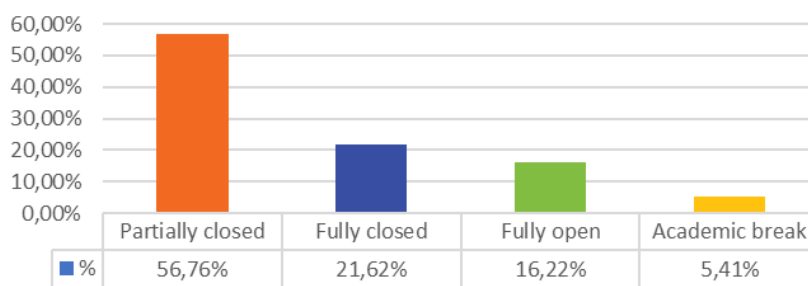
BRAZIL

In Brazil, a partial closure is maintained with face-to-face education, distance education through the web, TV, print media and a hybrid model of education. 25 states announced the reopening of state schools between January and March 2021. To date, 14,852,256 students enrolled in state schools have received distance or hybrid classes. The UN system in Brazil is working on the construction of a seminar to promote the safe reopening of schools, which will take place at the end of June.

BOLIVIA

Schools have been closed since February 1 to the present day, given the third wave of COVID-19 the country is going through. Before the closure, 2,800,000 students benefited from the reopening. Currently, a distance education model is maintained through web platforms, TV, radio and blended learning.

STATUS OF SCHOOLS' REOPENING IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (IN PERCENTAGE)



⁵ The graphs presented were elaborated with information provided by UNICEF COs.

⁶ Press release. Ministry of Education Updates on Phased-in Return to Face-to-Face Instruction. Information consulted in June 2021

CHILE

Schools are partially closed and there is a hybrid education model. There are 2,252 (24%) schools providing onsite classes in primary and secondary education and 1,793 (30%) schools in early education; and 7,198 (76%) of schools providing distance learning in primary and secondary education and 4,153 (70%) in early education. Approximately 984,065 students attend on-site classes, even though this figure depends on student capacity and prioritization.

COLOMBIA

The partial reopening of schools began on September 1, 2020, and currently schools are partially closed with a combination of distance education and hybrid education modalities. To date, 13,192 (23.6%) schools are open out of the total number of schools in the country, benefiting 1,340,635 (13.8%) students out of the total national enrolment.

COSTA RICA

Costa Rica is on a break in the school calendar from May 24 to July 9 given the high level of COVID-19 infection in the country, so all its schools (5,179) remain closed. Combined education is expected to resume on July 12, 2021. Prior to the pause, 1,173,286 students were benefiting from the school reopening, being 49% girls and 51% boys.

CUBA

Cuba maintains a partial school closure, providing face-to-face education, distance education through web platforms, TV and blended learning. There are 7,253 closed schools and 2,402 (25%) open schools. Full reopening is planned for the beginning of September 2021 based on the planned mass vaccination. 277,311 students are attending on-site classes and more than one million are taking distance learning classes.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

According to information provided by the Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic (MINERD), schools reopened on April 6, 2021 in 48 municipalities. There are 11,272 public and private schools open. An estimation of 3,000 schools are totally closed and 8,273 schools are providing semi face-to-face education. There are 999,074 boys and 884,850 girls receiving semi face-to-face education and 417,675 boys and 502,686 girls receiving distance education.

ECA (Countries and territories in the Eastern Caribbean Area)

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. 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 began in the last quarter of 2020, however, since April 21 2021, schools have been fully closed, maintaining a combined or hybrid education model.

That said, on June 3 2021 the National COE authorized the progressive return from Monday June 7 2021 to the facilities of the institutions that have approved the Return Plan to classes with reduced capacity, distancing and the correct biosecurity measures. This is a voluntary, safe and gradual return that will be evaluated every 15 days. So far, 1,301 plans have been approved, of which 1,102 belong to rural schools and 199 to urban schools, and all the establishments that open have the protocols and parental consent.⁷



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⁷ [Ministry of Education of Ecuador](#). Information consulted in June 2021.



EL SALVADOR

Schools in El Salvador are partially open. With a total of 6,000 educational centers in the country (5,164 public and 836 private), only 42 centers (5 public and 37 private) are still closed today. This translates into an average of 601,214 children and adolescents studying through the blended learning modality, and 648,906 using various platforms and methods: Google Classroom, Google Site, Teleclasses, Radio classes, printed self-learning guides, etc.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, and after the preventive closure of educational institutions, the Ministry of Education established an Educational Continuity Plan that is being executed in its different phases with the slogan "[Education goes on](#)". The seventh, eighth and ninth grade modules, as well as the first and second year high school modules can be found on the [Ministry of Education's website](#).

With the return to educational institutions in an optional, semi-presential, multimodal and gradual manner, the MoE presents the plan "[The joy of returning to school](#)" in its executive version. This plan contemplates several stages for the joyful and safe return of students to educational institutions: 1. Diagnosis, cleaning, sanitation and basic maintenance of educational institutions; 2. Educational management and planning for psychosocial and pedagogical intervention; 3. Psychosocial care of students; and 4. Educational continuity.

GUATEMALA

In Guatemala, schools are partially open. This depends mainly on the alert level of the municipality where the schools are located, which may open in green or yellow depending on the capacity of classrooms. Municipalities on orange or red alert must remain closed.

The Ministry of Education supported public schools at the pre-primary and primary levels with the purchase of masks and cleaning supplies. In addition, the MOE, together with USAID Guatemala, Magia Blanca and Funsepa distributed 17,000 disinfection kits in priority educational centres in the country, which represents 50% of the total number of schools in the country, so that schools have what they need for a gradual and progressive return to classes through the hybrid model. In this scheme, students return to classes in small bubbles or groups, some days a week for face-to-face classes (as long as the school is in a yellow or green municipality) and the rest of the days they work with educational material from home.

No school in the country serves all students every day on a regular basis as was the norm before the pandemic.

GUYANA

The reopening process began on January 4, 2021, closing schools for 2 weeks during Easter. Currently there are 120 schools partially open for students in grades 10, 11 and 12 that already reopened on April 12, 2021. Full reopening is scheduled for September 2021. According to reports, there is a higher concentration of students (70%) in urban and coastal schools in Guyana. Hinterland recorded low student participation in the new school term with less than 50%.

HAITI

The school reopening began on August 10, 2020, and at the moment, all 22,000 schools are fully open, benefiting 4,000,000 students, 49% being girls and 51% being boys.

HONDURAS

The National Risk Management System (SINAGER) has decreed that there will be no school reopening until July 5, given the high rate of COVID-19 infection, however, some schools maintain semi-presential education without formal authorization. Education in Honduras is distance learning through web platforms, TV and print media.

JAMAICA

All schools are closed for face-to-face education, except for schools opening on May 10, 2021, for the exit exam grades (grades 6, 11, 12 and 13). An estimated 90,000 students are benefiting from the reopening, while the rest have classes through web platforms, TV, radio, print media or blended learning models.⁸

MEXICO

On May 30, schools reopened in the state of Chiapas, maintaining a partial reopening. The decision to reopen is made at the state level, based on traffic lights and vaccination progress, among other factors. It is estimated that there are 300 schools open in the state of Chiapas, however, some states such as Campeche and Nayarit closed schools a couple of weeks after the reopening date due to new cases of COVID-19. At the moment, distance education is maintained through TV, radio, print media and a hybrid education model.

The Secretary of Public Education has informed that close to half a million students from different school levels returned to the classrooms in seven states of the country since last May, and this figure will continue to increase as of June 7.⁹

NICARAGUA

The school year in Nicaragua began on February 1, 2021, with all 9,150 schools of the educational system open, maintaining the face-to-face and the blended education modality. An estimated 1,800,000 students were enrolled this school year.

PANAMA

Since May 31, on-site education has begun in 78 schools, mainly in rural areas and the interior of the country, benefiting 8,700 students. At present, 4,519 schools are closed; however, more schools are expected to be opened gradually. The education modality is distance education through web platforms, TV, radio, print media. In addition, 600 schools provide face-to-face tutoring.

PARAGUAY

The partial reopening began on March 2, 2021, and currently there are 777 educational institutions in face-to-face mode, 6,680 institutions in hybrid or combined mode and 1,500 institutions in virtual mode.



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⁸ [Over 500 schools reopen for face-to-face classes](#). Information received by UNICEF COs.

⁹ [Information extracted from the Mexican Government's website](#).

In addition, 364,816 students representing 24% of the total enrollment attend face-to-face classes, while 1,143,010 (76%) of the students have enrolled in the distance learning modality through various media such as web platforms, TV, radio and print media.

The increase in COVID-19 cases has forced schools to close again.¹⁰

PERU

The partial reopening began on April 19, 2021, and at the moment there are 803 schools providing semi face-to-face education in 3 of the 26 departments of the country, benefiting 30,754 students out of the 8 million in total in the country. The reopening modality is distance education through web platforms, TV, radio, as well as combined or hybrid education.

SURINAME

The reopening began on October 1, 2020, however, to date all schools remain completely closed. Education continues with a distance education model through web platforms, TV, and printed materials.

URUGUAY

This school year all schools reopened on March 1, 2021, then closed on March 26 and gradually reopened on May 3, 2021, on a partial basis. There are about 315,000 students out of 800,000 attending fully open schools, the rest of the schools are closed. In both cases, attendance to school activities either face-to-face or virtual is mandatory.

Open schools are rural schools, early childhood schools (kindergartens and pre-schools), schools attended by students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (A.P.R.E.N.D.E.R. schools) and grades 1 to 3 of elementary school in the interior of the country (except Montevideo). The reopening modality is maintained in face-to-face, distance and blended education.

VENEZUELA

In Venezuela there are 12 schools of the Yekuana and Sanema indigenous peoples located in the Alto Ventuari sector, Manapiare municipality, Amazonas state, which are fully open and offering on-site classes to children and adolescents. It is estimated that a total of 822 students are receiving face-to-face classes.

Eighty percent of the schools offer distance education and provide on-site school meals for the most vulnerable children and adolescents as part of the School Feeding Program, as well as pedagogical guidance (including voluntary on-site evaluations) for families and students who require it. The face-to-face attention of these schools is governed by a system of flexible weeks in which students and their families voluntarily attend the schools to receive the aforementioned services.



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¹⁰ MEC-DGPE. RUE 2021. Base cut 18-5-2021.

5. MAPPING OF THE PRIORITIZATION OF TEACHERS' VACCINATION

The below map provides a mapping of the prioritization of teachers' vaccination in the Latin American and the Caribbean region since April 2021.

OVERALL LEGEND

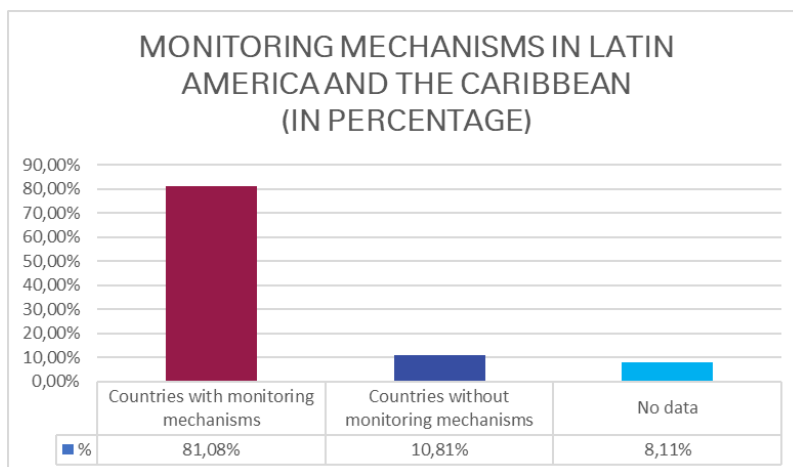
- Countries with prioritization of teachers' vaccination
- Countries without prioritization of teachers' vaccination
- No data



6. MONITORING MECHANISMS FOR THE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

Most of the countries and territories in the region, 81% of them, have their own monitoring mechanisms for the school reopening process. This process is normally led

and/or supervised directly by the Ministry of Education of each country, through ministerial platforms and processes.¹¹



7. UNICEF'S COUNTRY SUPPORT

ARGENTINA

UNICEF Argentina provides technical assistance to the Committee of the Observatory of the in-person 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. In addition, together with UNESCO, we have designed a study that will be mapping good school organization practices to assure in person schooling, looking at most vulnerable contexts: rural and urban vulnerable setting, schools with children with disabilities and indigenous modalities at the three compulsory educational levels. The study will start in June and aims to gather good practices around the country and disseminate them to inspire and acknowledge key aspects that worked at local levels.

BELIZE

UNICEF Belize continues to support the Ministry of Education with the provision of critical hygiene supplies, and resources for school plans based on the provision of psychosocial support and remedial interventions for the most vulnerable students.

BRAZIL

UNICEF has constantly updated the website with the latest recommendations and new materials to support decision-making by education networks. UN Brazil is organising a national seminar on the topic at the end of June.

A case study ([Education COVID-19 Case Study: Brazil - Preparing for an integrated school reopening to address children's comprehensive needs](#)) was conducted and presented two weeks ago at the UNICEF's global webinar *Integrated Approaches to Reopening Schools*.

BOLIVIA

UNICEF has supported training processes in protocols for the safe return to school, the psycho-affective component of the return to school, radio and virtual education, and virtual mass teacher training in comprehensive sexuality education.

CHILE

UNICEF Chile is currently supporting the design of a survey for families with children in pre-school education; support with a guide for using playgrounds as educational spaces; implementation of 11 pilot educational playgrounds; publication of a guide for socio-emotional support in school contexts; and participation in the Advisory Council of the Chilean Ministry of Education (MINEDUC).

COLOMBIA

UNICEF has collaborated in the implementation of WASH strategies for school reopening, pedagogical and policy support to local government school reopening plans, strategies for prevention and protection from risks of violence and abuse, educational support programmes for teachers and students in vulnerable communities.

COSTA RICA

As part of the Regresar strategy, UNICEF has supported the "Golden Rules" campaign. A technical team is coordinating a diagnosis of centres with water problems. A work plan has been defined within the framework of GIGA-GenU to reduce the digital divide.

CUBA

UNICEF has provided complementary capacity-building support to teachers (with a focus on early childhood and vocational schools) and socio-emotional support to

¹¹ The graphs presented were elaborated with information provided by UNICEF COs.

families of children with autism and intellectual disabilities.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

UNICEF developed the Return to Joy programme, a psycho-affective recovery programme in all schools that have started semi-presential education.

ECA (Countries and territories of the Eastern Caribbean Area)

Hygiene, sanitation, and personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies were supported to ensure compliance with biosecurity protocols in schools.

ECUADOR

UNICEF Ecuador has developed advocacy processes for the reopening of the education system. The communication campaign "Education is the Way" is being implemented. Meetings have been held with the Ministry of Education to support the reopening processes in 50 educational units.

EL SALVADOR

In the framework of Reimagine Education, UNICEF supports the Ministry of Education (MINED) in the purchase of computers and laptops for students, including children and adolescents with disabilities. Furthermore, in the framework of GIGA, the government of El Salvador is being supported to increase connectivity in schools.

GUATEMALA

UNICEF has provided technical assistance for the development of EiE educational materials in both Spanish and Mayan languages. UNICEF also provided technical assistance to a higher education institution so that, together with the Directorate of Curriculum, they could develop the curricular adaptation that will govern the 2021 and 2022 school years. In addition, the back-to-school protocols for teachers can be found on the Ministry of Education's website.

UNICEF also collaborated with the Ministry of Education to develop biosecurity protocols for education supervisors, teachers and school principals and printed a copy for each teacher serving in a primary school.

Lastly UNICEF collaborated in the development of protocols for the out-of-school education sub-system and community-based comprehensive education centres for children, which were printed and distributed and can be found on the Ministry's website. In addition, all teachers received a copy of the psychosocial support guide for the care of post-confinement children and adolescents. A school feeding protocol was also developed, which UNICEF helped to print and distribute. To date, 4 food deliveries have been made, corresponding to 20 school days each.

GUYANA

UNICEF tracks progress on production/distribution of home-based learning packages to hinterland children.

HAITI

UNICEF supports the distribution of school supplies to 120,000 students; targeting the most vulnerable for the cash transfer programme.

HONDURAS

UNICEF has advocated for the reopening of blended learning, support for printing and distribution of printed materials, rehabilitation of schools damaged by the storms, strengthening the platform of the Secretariat of Education SEDUC.

JAMAICA

Advocacy around support for students sitting high stakes exams and psychosocial support via training in *Return to Happiness* psychosocial support methodology for social workers, guidance counsellors and their students.

MEXICO

UNICEF supports the continuation of the "[Health in Your Hands](#)" programme and the implementation of the free telephone service for educational support.

NICARAGUA

UNICEF Nicaragua has carried out actions to ensure socio-emotional support for children returning to school, with the production of reference material for teachers, and the delivery of play kits. It has also trained teachers in Education in Emergencies, which includes training in COVID-19 protocols, and in socio-emotional support.

PANAMA

UNICEF, together with 20 organisations, is leading the campaign for the reopening of schools and thanks to the campaign a great alliance has been formed. In addition, UNICEF has advised the National Government in the elaboration of the Presidential Decree for the return to schools.

PARAGUAY

UNICEF Paraguay has developed advocacy and communication actions with graphic pieces to promote the return and continuity of learning. It also continues to train principals and teachers in safe school operations, indirectly reaching more than 100,000 students.

PERU

UNICEF continues to promote the reopening of schools, including the conduction of 3 webinars together with UNESCO on the reopening of schools and disability; reopening and biosecurity; and reopening and mental health. It is also organising meetings with 2 sub-national governments to promote local strategies and developing materials for children, adolescents and parents.



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SURINAME

UNICEF is supporting the WASH in schools' system strengthening (3-star approach), distance learning through the digital learning content production scale-up project, and the decentralisation of student care teams to other districts to strength psychosocial support.

URUGUAY

UNICEF supported the development of two systematisations on the return to school and innovative teaching experiences during the pandemic, conducted a

survey on children's education through a panel study carried out a year ago and supported the programme to support the continuity of education for adolescents in vulnerable situations.

VENEZUELA

UNICEF participated in advocating for and organizing a workshop on early childhood education to reflect on early childhood education and supported the launch of the safe return to school training programme.

7. SYSTEMATIZATION OF GOOD PRACTICES ON SCHOOLS' REOPENING

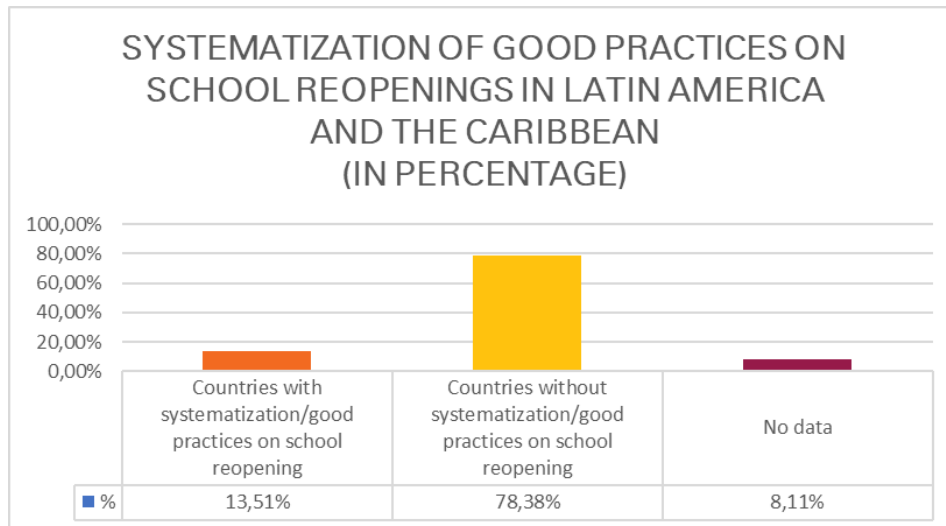
Several countries in the region have carried out systematisations of good practices for a safe reopening of schools given the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of Argentina, a study was carried out on good educational practices for the reorganization of the return to classes in times of COVID-19 within June-November 2021. In Cuba, a systematization of the first reopening was carried out; however, the epidemiological situation in the country forced the closure of 75% of the schools and a study on scenarios for the reopening in September 2021 ("Education in times of COVID-19 MINED-UNICEF") is currently being conducted.

The UNICEF Jamaica National Office uses the UNICEF, UNESCO, WFP, World Bank and UNHCR [Global Guidelines for school reopening](#), which were adapted by the Ministry of National Education. In Paraguay, a consultancy is being initiated to systematize the reopening of schools, nevertheless, no information is

available at this time. On the other hand, two documents on systematization are being prepared in Uruguay and a [Report on monitoring the return to face-to-face classes in Uruguayan schools](#) was launched and published in September 2020.

In 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 the publication "[Educación lugarizada desde lo común](#)". UNICEF has participated in seminars to present experiences generated within the framework of the pedagogical plan for prevention and protection "Every Family a School", and a second publication is currently being prepared. In January 2021, UNICEF carried out a quick and small effort to systematize significant experiences promoted by UNICEF's partners and allies in times of COVID-19.

To date, 5 countries and territories in the region have confirmed that have developed systematization of good practices on school reopening.¹²



8. SURVEYS OF CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION OF THE CURRENT SITUATION IN SCHOOLS

15 countries in the region have reported progress in developing surveys of children's and adolescents' perceptions of the current situation of schools in Latin American and Caribbean countries. The status of such surveys varies depending on the country in question.

Argentina has confirmed having conducted three waves of the COVID-19 Rapid Survey in 2020, with two more waves planned for May and October 2021. Similarly, Ecuador has already conducted four waves of the survey on the perception of the situation of children and adolescents, targeting children and adolescents aged 10-19. The last survey was conducted in March, and a new one is expected to be conducted at the end of June. Bolivia, on its end, launched the U-Report "[Educational continuity during quarantine](#)", which includes two surveys, the first focused on the technologies to which U-reporters had access, and the second one focused on educational continuity during quarantine.

Several countries are in the process of conducting the surveys or publishing the results.

In Costa Rica, for example, a household telephone survey is being conducted about children and adolescents during the COVID-19 emergency. In Cuba, a general questionnaire has been designed with UNICEF's support that includes the impact of education, but the results have not yet been published. Similarly, in Haiti, the results of the perception survey are also yet to be published.

In Paraguay, the adolescent perception survey is currently being conducted through a U-Report, while in Peru, an online survey on the reopening of schools is being conducted with parents and caregivers. Similarly, in Brazil, the first survey is now being launched, so

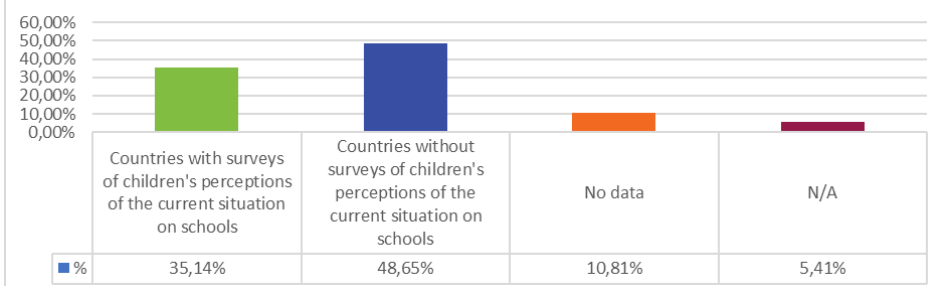
results are not yet available. In addition, a student survey will be launched in the coming days through a U-Report.

Uruguay has already conducted a [Survey on Children, Gender and Time Use in the Framework of the Health Emergency in Uruguay](#). Results were published in May 2020; however, a new edition of this survey (panel study) is being developed with a greater focus on education. In the same way, Panama has conducted a telephone household survey on [Changes in the Situation of Families with Children and Adolescents during COVID-19](#), while Jamaica has published a document in which students were surveyed on the situation of education, including a [U-Report](#) survey. Venezuela, on its end, has conducted an informal exploratory survey of a group of 65 adolescents from the Capital District, Miranda, Zulia, Tachira and Bolivar.

It is also worth noting the case of Chile, where an initiative has been promoted between the Children's Ombudsman's Office (*Defensoría de la Niñez* in Spanish) and the Ministry of Education, which seeks to consider the voices and opinions of children and adolescents in the back-to-school plan through the creation of participatory spaces. The [My Voice, My School Plan](#) seeks to incorporate the voices of students of different ages so that the back-to-school process is a participatory and inclusive process.

¹² The graphs presented were elaborated with information provided by UNICEF COs.

COUNTRIES WITH SURVEYS ON CHILDREN'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE CURRENT SCHOOL SITUATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (IN PERCENTAGES)¹³

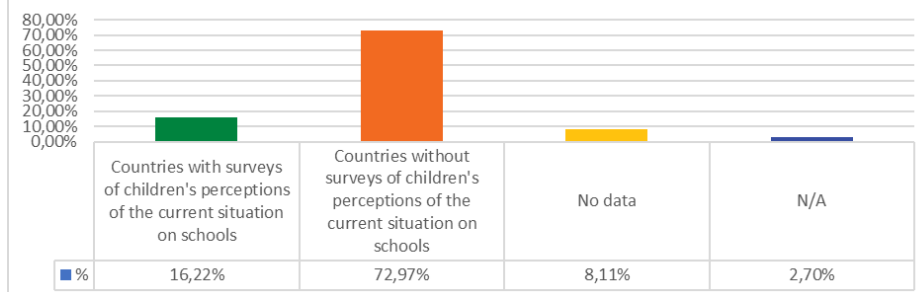


9. PERCEPTION SURVEYS ADDRESSED TO TEACHERS ON SCHOOLS' CURRENT SITUATION

To know the perception of teachers on the current situation in educational units given the current pandemic, countries and territories in the region have developed perception surveys to follow up on the situation. In Argentina, teacher perception surveys have been developed in schools under UNICEF programs; while in Brazil, the results of the first teacher perception survey are yet to be released. On its end, Chile published the results of the survey of pre-school teachers in the document [Reopening of Kindergartens in Chile During the First Year of the Pandemic](#).

Ecuador is also part of the countries that have developed teacher perception surveys; Uruguay has a [survey](#) aimed at teachers, developed under the coordination of the Sectoral Directorate of Educational Planning (DSPE), published on July 15, 2020, and Guyana will begin the elaboration of a survey in two months in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. To date, there are 6 countries in the region that have confirmed having developed surveys of teachers' perceptions of the school situation. To date, there are 6 countries in the region that have confirmed having developed surveys on teachers' perception of the school situation.¹⁴

COUNTRIES WITH SURVEYS ON TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CURRENT SCHOOL SITUATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (IN PERCENTAGES)



10. TRAINING COURSES ON SCHOOLS' REOPENING GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS

As part of the measures carried out by educational institutions for the reopening of schools, 16 countries out of the total of 37 countries and territories in the LAC region have reported to have developed or to be developing training courses on school reopening guidelines for teachers.

In Costa Rica, a [course](#) has been developed in conjunction with the Professional Development Institute and the MoE to support teachers' professional growth, while Brazil has developed two teacher training courses - "Move around the school in times of pandemic" and

"Education that prevents violence in crisis and emergencies".

The [Safe Return to School](#) Workshop developed in Bolivia provides psycho-affective back-to-school training for teachers from 100 educational units involved in the emergency response to COVID-19. During the process, which included 8 sessions, alternative methodologies such as mindfulness and meditation were used. Likewise, UNICEF Colombia also supported the design of pedagogical guidelines for the reopening of schools in Colombia.

¹³ The graphs presented were elaborated with information provided by UNICEF COs.

¹⁴ The graphs presented were elaborated with information provided by UNICEF COs.

In Cuba, the Ministry of Education (MINED) has maintained contact with teachers through methodological guidelines on how to support distance education. Based on the study of the new scenarios, MINED will carry out training for the reopening of schools in the country. On its end, the Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic (MINERD) together with the UNICEF National Office and USAID, has developed a teacher orientation guide for distance and blended learning as part of Plan 5 (Growing up with Health) covering [pre-primary](#), [primary](#), [second](#), [third](#), [fourth](#), [fifth](#) and [sixth](#) grades. The guide was published in May and is available in Spanish on UNICEF's Dominican Republic website.

In the case of Ecuador, the guidelines for school reopening are included in the [Plan for Educational Continuity, School Permanence and Progressive Use of Educational Facilities](#), which has three fundamental axes: to provide continuity in the educational service, to guarantee the permanence of children and young people in the educational system, and to provide guidelines for the progressive use of educational facilities.

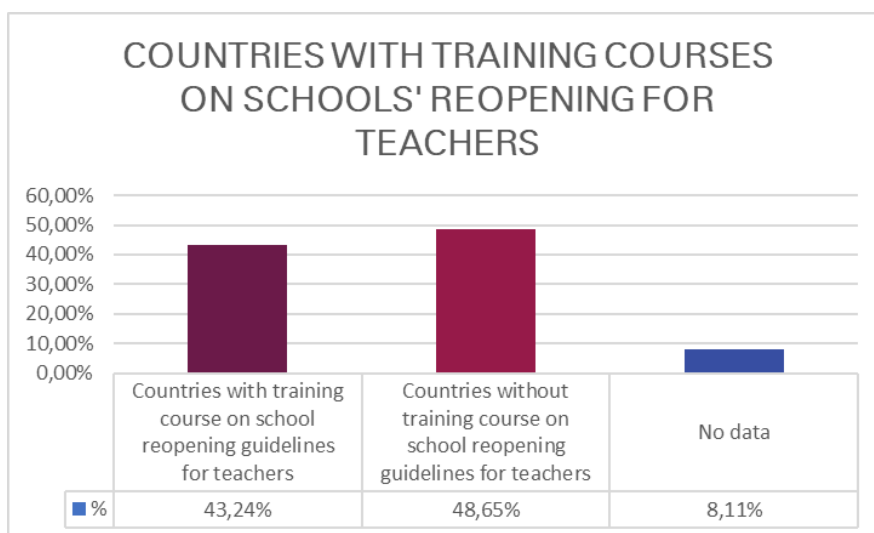
In El Salvador, teacher training is reflected in the plan "The joy of going back to school", which includes three webinars with tutorials on back-to-school guidance. [Tutorial 1 addresses general guidelines for educational institutions](#), [Tutorial 2 deals with cleaning and disinfection skills](#), and [Tutorial 3 focuses on distancing and personal biosecurity](#).

UNICEF Jamaica, together with the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information of Jamaica, has supported the development of an online teacher training for the reopening of schools (Virtual Instructional Leadership VIL), while in Guyana the Ministry of Education is the body in charge of leading and supervising this activity. Mexico, as part of the "Health in your Hands Programme", has focused on training teachers on school filters and changes in water, sanitation, and hygiene habits, especially handwashing.

On 21 April, UNICEF Panama supported the webinar on education entitled "Return to the Classroom, an Unpostponable Decision", organized by AmCham Panama, which addressed the conditions under which schools should reopen in the country. The event touched on issues such as the safe, gradual, flexible, and voluntary opening of schools, as well as support for blended learning.

Although there is no actual training course for teachers in Peru, the Peruvian Ministry of Education (MINEDU), with the support of the National Office, has developed a set of guidelines for managers of comprehensive schools. The guidance includes a [mapping of each step of the school reopening route](#), as well as [guidance on the implementation plan](#) for carrying out the reopening. Uruguay, on its end, under the umbrella of [Plan Ceibal](#), offers a wide range of resources, activities, and tools for teachers to optimise their courses and make the most of the new circumstances.

Lastly, UNICEF Country Offices in Venezuela and Paraguay have also reported the existence of teacher training tools in both countries.¹⁵



¹⁵ The graphs presented were elaborated with information provided by UNICEF COs.

12. UNICEF'S REGIONAL SUPPORT

EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES (EiE)

- The Education in Emergencies (EiE) Team has supported the development of several products and initiatives during the month of May:
- [Reflections on the recognition of prior learning of refugee and migrant children and adolescents](#): Developed under the framework of the regional response to the Venezuelan crisis and with the support of Education Cannot Wait, this document provides an overview of the migration situation in the region, offering reflections on the general situation of migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean, the legal bases that favour the recognition of prior learning and the barriers to access to local education systems for migrants in order to offer recommendations for the implementation of the recognition of prior learning in host countries.
- "Ensuring the right to education for refugees and migrants from Venezuela": In the framework of the International Donors' Conference in Solidarity with Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela organised by the Government of Canada within the Regional Platform for Inter-Agency Coordination for Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants (R4V), the Regional Education Group (REWG) for Latin America and the Caribbean facilitated the side event "Ensuring the right to education for refugees and migrants from Venezuela". This event was held to highlight the importance of education for the integration of refugee and migrant children, adolescents, and youth, and to identify current needs to guarantee the right to education in the context of the displacement crisis in the region. The event was attended by high-level panellists such as ministers of education, ambassadors, resident coordinators, United Nations, and civil society, as well as young Venezuelan migrants. Access the event in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).
- On Friday 28 May, the EiE team, together with other members of the Regional Education Group for Latin America and the Caribbean, participated in the Venezuela Education Cluster Workshop to present the framework for action of the cluster's Working Groups. The Working Groups include Distance Education; Youth and Employment; Psycho-educational Support; Teacher Training; Out-of-School Children and Adolescents; Indigenous Peoples and Interculturality; Gender; Special Educational Needs; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools. Participants also included leaders from other education clusters in the region and representatives from Save the Children's regional office, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and OCHA Venezuela.

INCLUSION

- A regional consultancy has compiled a large catalog of educational materials organized with several criteria: by countries, by towns/languages (cross-border, from each country), by format (physical, digital, interactive, for radio, television), by educational levels (initial, primary, and secondary), by sociolinguistic scenarios

(materials to strengthen the indigenous mother tongue and revitalize languages in danger of disappearance). The resources will be uploaded in SharePoint. The catalog will become a regional interactive atlas/repository where all these IBE materials can be accessed.

- In our [website](#), we have presented the publication on the current situation of IBE in times of COVID-19. The document was validated and co-presented by the FILAC (Fondo para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de América Latina y el Caribe in Spanish).
- For the *Accessible Digital Textbook (ADT) Initiative* we received a grant of £1,352,400 (equivalent to \$1,740,540) over three years (2021–2024) from the the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF. The project involves the RO, and 4 COs: Paraguay, Uruguay, Jamaica, and Nicaragua. It will address the need to eliminate barriers and seek innovative tools for effectively include all types of learners in the education system. We have learned from the experiences undertaken by [Paraguay](#), [Uruguay](#), and [Nicaragua](#), that ADTs could be powerful and positive tools to engage all learners through different experiences. They are not only "equalizers" of access to content but could also become engaging tools to learn more in different ways.
- Weekly meetings with Task Team of regional experts were held to organized joint webinars "to be part of the solution" with Inclusion International, Special Olympics, RIADIS and META.
- In our website we presented a [publication](#) for disabilities' inclusion. This guide is aimed at national and subnational managers and technical personnel in the education, health, and social protection sectors, and in early childhood care and development institutions, programmes, and services. The guide was validated by frontline workers and key DPOs (Disabilities People Organizations) from Colombia, Peru, and Argentina.
- Funds to support Colombia CO Inclusive Training Course for frontline workers of social protection program were transferred. We are working closely with the CO to scale their successful pilot.
- We are providing technical assistance to the Uruguay CO. Uruguay is now devising a single disability scale to be used by all institutions that provide social protection or other supports to people with disabilities in the country, including children and adolescents. This is an important project for people with disabilities because there are currently 8 different scales in use in the country. This is an interagency (UN+DPOs+Government).

SECONDARY EDUCATION AND LEARNING

- An UN-to-UN agreement was signed with OREALC/ UNESCO Santiago aimed at contributing to the development of a regional report presenting an overview of the situation of Latin American and the

Caribbean region based on the results of the third round of the joint survey (UNICEF, UNESCO, OECD, and World Bank) on national education responses to schools' closures due to COVID-19. Moreover, UNICEF and UNESCO LACRO will join efforts to contribute in strengthening the regional and subregional monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to achieve the SD4/E2030 agenda considering the particular contexts and progress of countries in the Latin American region, as well as to collaborate in the dissemination of the findings of the ERCE 2019 study based on data collection, analysis and the generation of knowledge on socioemotional skills to promote the well-being and comprehensive development of children and adolescents in Latin America.

EARLY CHILDHOOD (ECD)

- The LACRO ECD team launched an online course for Care for Child Development (CCD). CCD is an evidence-based approach developed by UNICEF and WHO that has been adapted to the Latin America and Caribbean region to strengthen existing services to better support and accompany families in their caregiving role and to promote multi-sectoral interventions. CCD is integrated in existing programmes and services in diverse sectors such as health care, nutrition, education, child protection, social development, and support services for persons with disabilities. Staff are trained in skills that facilitate quality interaction with caregivers and offer guidance regarding sensible and responsive care, learning

through play and communication. As the measures taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the organisation of face-to-face training, the basic online course allows continuing support of the capacity building effort to expand the implementation of the approach in the region. Currently, the course is available in Spanish and will soon be available in English too. The course is available on [Agora](#).

- The LACRO ECD team also prepared a technical note called "The reopening and continuity of child care and early learning services is a priority in the region", which is now available in [Spanish](#), [English](#), [French](#) and [Portuguese](#). 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 iii) strengthen 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.



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