

I. INTRODUCTION

As of September 15, in 8 countries and territories in Latin America & the Caribbean schools are completely closed, in 16 are partially closed, and in 7 schools are completely open. In 6 countries and territories, schools are on academic recess. Still 86 million children and adolescents continue affected by the total and partial closure of schools in the region, with an average of 153 days without classes from the beginning of the pandemic until early September.

The reopening process continues to progress gradually in the region. Many countries and territories have completed the academic recess and started the new academic year 2021-2022, some in face-to-face mode, as is the case of the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat, and others, such as Belize and Trinidad & Tobago, have done so through distance education. Some countries, such as Suriname,

have managed to reopen all their schools for face-to-face classes in recent weeks and others, such as Mexico, have seen an increase in the number of children and adolescents receiving face-to-face classes.

Update 28 presents the latest reopening developments in Latin America and the Caribbean as of early September. The report includes an overview with key information; a timeline of face-to-face classes; reopening maps with information on schools and teacher vaccination prioritization; a country-by-country update on the school reopening process; and the latest developments at the regional level. This update also includes specific information on the current situation of early childhood centers in some countries.

UPDATE HIGHLIGHTS

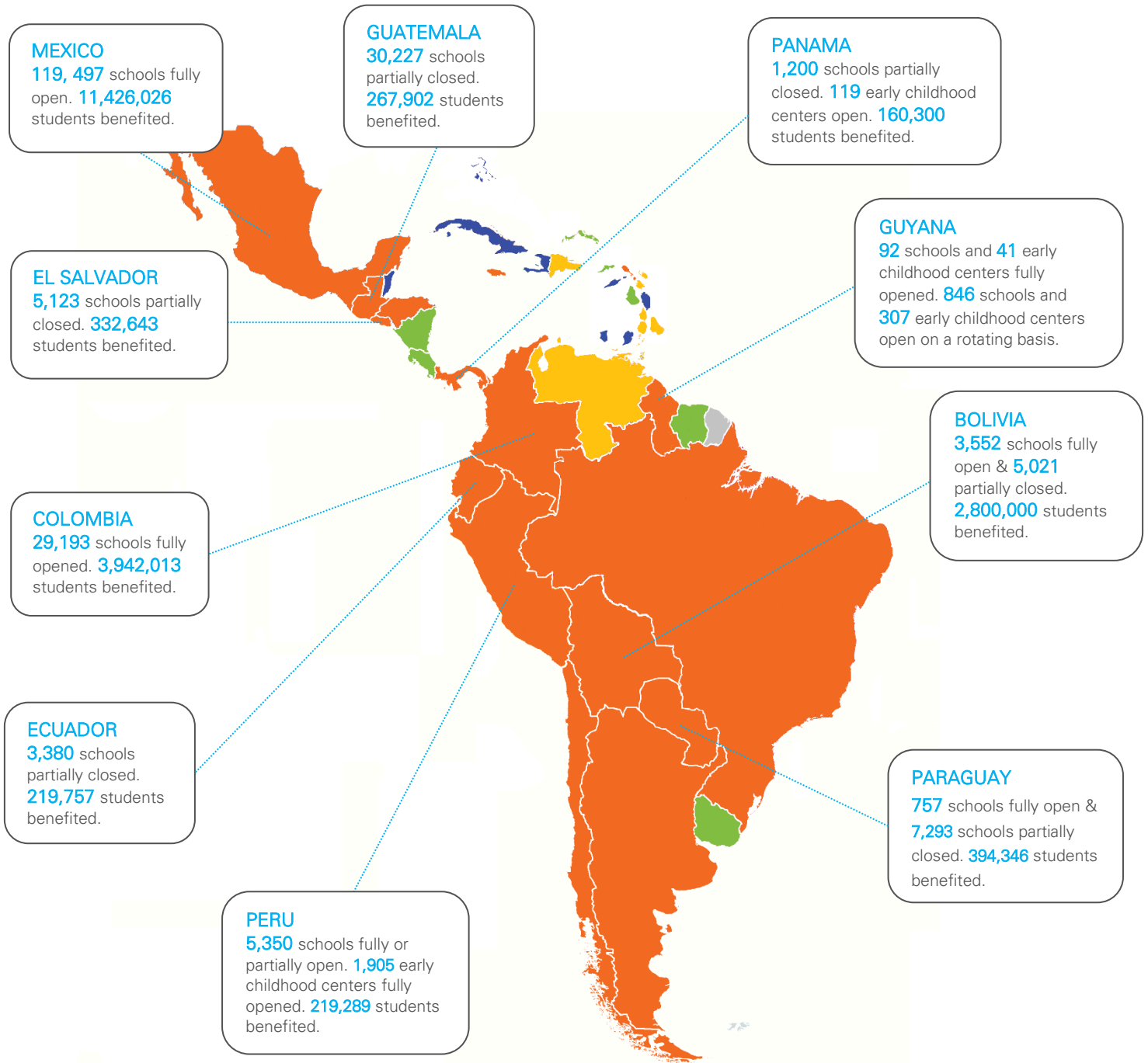
In collaboration with the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), UNICEF has developed the key resource "[Regional Overview in Latin America & the Caribbean on Responses to COVID-19 for Safe Return to Schools](#)", which, thanks to the work of UNICEF's Education and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) teams in Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay and Suriname, provides an overview of the actions that were taken in five countries in the region to ensure safe return to schools in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. The mapping identifies the strengths and weaknesses of selected countries in dealing with the crisis and confirms that infection prevention and control actions and hygiene prevention were key interventions that all countries undertook to address the school-focused health crisis.



II. REOPENING OF SCHOOLS' MAP

This report uses UNESCO's definition of school closures. Schools are considered:

- "Fully closed" when the closures affect most or all of the schoolchildren enrolled at pre-primary, primary, lower and upper secondary levels.
- "Partially closed" refer to situations in which schools are either closed in some of a country's administrative units, for some grade levels, or are operating with limited capacity.
- "Fully open" means that classes are held in-person for all schoolchildren and at all grade levels.



LEGEND

- Fully-closed schools
- Partially-closed schools
- Fully-open schools
- Academic break

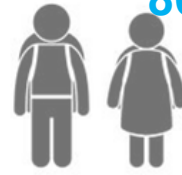
Note for the map: Please note that we have only included information about the countries for which we have received the data on number of schools open and number of children benefited by the reopening of schools. Information received by COs and updated until the first week of September, 2021.

III. SITUATION OVERVIEW

This section was prepared based on information received by COs and updated until early September 2021.



8 country with schools **fully closed** (Anguilla, Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, Grenada, Haiti, Saint Lucia and Trinidad & Tobago).



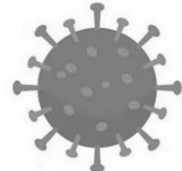
86M children affected by schools' closures.²

6M children affected in countries where schools are fully closed.

80M children affected in countries where schools are partially closed.



7 countries have all their schools **fully open** (Costa Rica, Turks and Caicos Islands, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Suriname, and Uruguay).



An average of **153** school days **without face-to-face classes** between March 2020 and early September, 2021.³



16 countries have their schools **partially closed** (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Saint Kitts & Nevis).



22 countries and territories with learning assessment and/or remedial education programs.



6 countries and territories are on **academic recess** (Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines and Venezuela).



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



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



20 countries and territories have prioritized teachers in the **vaccination process**.



72% of countries and territories have decided on a **date for school reopening**.¹

Sources of information:

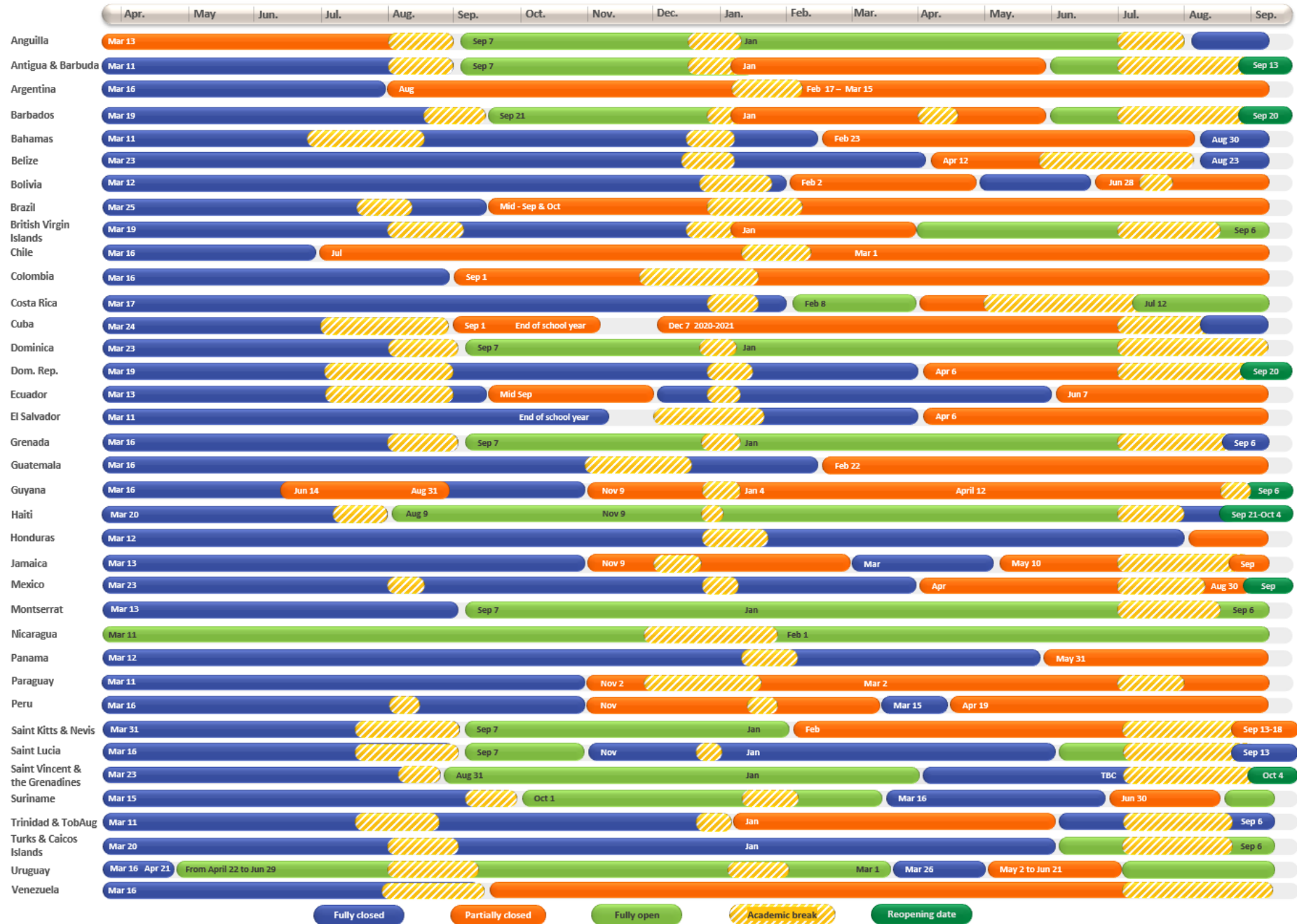
¹ This percentage was calculated by information provided by COs.

² Data extracted from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute of Statistics, '[Welcome to UIS.Stat](#)', and information provided by UNICEF COs until the first week of September, 2021.

The figure of 86 million has been calculated based on the number of children affected by schools that are partially or fully closed. In the case of Brazil, the number of children affected by schools' closures has been calculated using data on the total of students in Brazil and an approximate figure provided by the CO of the number of children that have received distance or hybrid classes.

³ Figure calculated using the schools' closures information from the Timeline (page 4). The information of the timeline has been provided by UNICEF COs from March 2020 until the first week of September, 2021.

IV. REOPENING OF SCHOOLS' TIMELINE⁴



Note: 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, until the first week of September, 2021.

V. 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.

LEGEND

- **54.05%** of countries have prioritized the vaccination
- **43.24%** of countries have not prioritized the vaccination
- **2.70%** of countries with no data available



VI. OVERVIEW OF THE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS BY COUNTRY

ARGENTINA



Schools remain partially closed. According to official information provided by the Observatory of Presential Return to Classrooms, as of August 19, 1,811 schools at the initial, primary, secondary, and higher education levels are partially or totally closed, with 11,430,227 (94%) of students.

- **UNICEF's support.** Technical assistance to the Committee of the Observatory of the Face-to-face Return to the Classroom, support for the dissemination of evidence, promotion of intersectoral actions to support presential education, as well as the attention and linkage of the most vulnerable students.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Through Resolution CFE No. 4 400/2021, the Federal Council of Education approves the modification of the protocol of attendance in schools in order to intensify it, without giving up health care, and taking into account the improvement in health conditions and the progress of vaccination in the general population.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Creation of the "ACOMPAÑAR: Puentes de Igualdad" Program, whose objective is to promote and facilitate the resumption of school and educational trajectories, encourage, and facilitate the continuation of studies, and promote and facilitate the resumption and completion of secondary school trajectories.

BAHAMAS⁵

With the start of the new academic year 2021-2022, and after several consultations with the Ministry of Health due to the increase of COVID-19 cases recorded in The Bahamas, the Ministry of Education decided that all government schools will start the course virtually on August 30. While it is true that the preferred modality for the Ministry of Education is still face-to-face, its decision follows the motto "Safety First, Education Always". The decision will be reviewed in the following weeks.

The Ministry of Education has urged private schools to follow the same procedure, however, those private schools wishing to offer face-to-face classes will have to obtain written permission from the Ministry.

Regarding vaccination, the Ministry recommends that students over the age of 12 be vaccinated.

- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Ongoing communication with the Ministry of Health to study the evolution of the COVID-19 cases, and to determine when it is safe to reopen schools. In addition, the Ministry has organized a series of webinars (Focus on Education) on the new school year open to the public through its official TV channel and focused on its slogan "Safety First, Education Always".

BELIZE

All schools in the country are currently closed. Secondary, primary, and pre-primary classes began on August 30 through the distance education modality. The tentative date for the reopening of schools is October 4.

- **UNICEF's support.** Capacity building with implementing partners, mainly in psychosocial support. UNICEF supported the Government with training of teachers to implement the "Return to Happiness" program with the children for when they return to school; training of teachers to implement the Early Intervention System in their schools; and training of trainers for teachers in the areas of nutrition, WASH, and menstrual hygiene management. All these resources were included in the Teacher Learning Institute platform, organized by the Ministry of Education.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Capacity building courses for teachers are available on the newly launched Teacher Learning Institute. These courses include topics such as back to school transition, introduction to Moodle, healthy mind, and body, etc.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Partner RESTORE Belize is working on building literacy skills in primary school students to ensure that they will be able to achieve educational outcomes despite the disruption to their education as a result of COVID-19 through the continuation of the Early Identification Intervention System (EiIS).

The objectives include educating teachers on the different literacy remediation strategies and creating a literacy plan that incorporates the strategies. On the other hand, the education minister has communicated plans to change the way assessments are conducted in the education

⁵ Information retrieved from the Bahamas Ministry of Education's [official website](#) and its Facebook official page.

system. It is hoped that there will be more authentic assessment to address the individual needs of children, especially since many have regressed during the pandemic. In addition, there will be no standardized testing, and primary schools now have 4 cycles instead of 3 trimesters to address children's needs.

BOLIVIA

Schools in Bolivia remain partially closed. There are currently 3,552 (22.26%) schools fully open, 7,349 (46.26%) providing distance learning and 5,021 (31.47%) partially closed, which translates to 2,800,000 students benefiting from the reopening. Currently, schools combine different learning modalities: face-to-face education, distance education through web, TV, and radio platforms, education through print media, and blended education.

- **UNICEF's support.** Initiation of the second phase of the COVID-19 emergency response, which aims to reach 130 schools, supporting more than 65,000 primary and secondary students in more than 13 different municipalities in the country.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Provision of 6,400 cell phones to the most vulnerable students and computers in small numbers.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Adaptation of academic content, adaptation of the school calendar and introduction of remedial learning programs.



BRAZIL

Schools are partially closed. There is still no specific information on the number of schools that are open, however, the 27 states of the country have already announced the reopening of schools, using the hybrid or face-to-face education model. In addition, all of the country's capital cities have resumed face-to-face classes at the municipal level.

Learning modalities continue to be diverse, with some schools providing classes through the face-to-face modality, others through web and print media platforms, and others using the hybrid model.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Progress on three main fronts: active search for out-of-school children in schools, psychosocial support and skills strengthening for identification of child rights violations by the school community, and development of health and WASH protocols for schools.

- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Adaptation of the school calendar and academic content, introduction of remedial and accelerated learning programs.



CHILE

Schools are partially closed. Specifically, at the moment there are 6,623 (70%) schools open with voluntary attendance offering voluntary attendance and various modalities of face-to-face learning. At the beginning of September, an education decree was issued requiring all schools in the country to open their doors as of September 1. Although the exact number of students benefiting from the reopening of schools is unknown at this time, it is estimated that most of the enrolled students attend school, while the attendance in the case of preschools is only 25%.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Survey of 17,000 families of students enrolled in preschool education. We continue to participate in the Advisory Council of the Ministry of Education, which is in the process of being redefined, and we continue to make progress with meetings between municipalities that have opened their schools and those that have not yet done so. Lastly, the pilot project of 11 educational playgrounds in kindergartens to promote outdoor education was also initiated.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** A consultative process was carried out with educational communities to generate proposals on how to address learning backwardness, teacher competence, etc.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Application for the second time of the Comprehensive Learning Diagnosis, which was already applied in 2020. In addition, the school calendar has been adapted, learning recovery programs have been introduced and academic content has been adapted.

COLOMBIA



Schools in Colombia are partially closed with 29,193 educational institutions open and 3,942,013 students being benefited.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Three main areas of support are distinguished: (a) education, through pedagogical and normative guidance to boost school reopening plans; (b) communication for development, through community communication to disseminate information and reinforce caring practices; and (c) water, sanitation, and hygiene.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Issuance of a new regulation during June and July authorizing the full reopening of schools throughout the country. It has also worked to promote the implementation of public resources in local governments for the adoption of biosecurity protocols for the safe return of classroom activities in schools.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** The school calendar has been adapted, learning recovery programs have been introduced, academic content has been adapted and learning acceleration programs have been introduced. In addition, the Ministry has promoted the Evaluate to Advance strategy, with the objective of providing assessment tools to teachers throughout the country.

COSTA RICA

All schools in the country are open offering a blended learning modality since July 12 and benefiting 1,187,749 students. In addition, 1,266 early childhood centres belonging to the National Child Care and Development Network, which serve children through state support, are fully open.

- **UNICEF 's support.** The Ministry of Education was supported in the registration of the Learning Passport initiative, school and early childhood education kits were delivered for migrant populations and psychosocial support is being provided to students through the "Here I am" telephone line, as well as in the strengthening of the strategy for educational exclusion in the context of the pandemic.

- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Monitoring of the "Return" strategy and continued with the educational levelling plan by providing webinars.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Process scheduled for November with the FARO tests. In the meantime, the Ministry is moving forward with an academic levelling plan that seeks clarity on the essential, core and basic learning for the development of students. Finally, so far, the school curriculum has been adapted and remedial learning programs have been introduced.

CUBA

Schools are totally closed. The more than 10,000 educational centres in the country are closed due to the epidemiological situation. As for early childhood centres, 286 (26%) children's circles are currently open, and about 25 of them are being used as isolation centres for children sick with COVID-19.

On September 6, the home-based academic year began with the distance education model. Classes are expected to be taught from home until the end of the vaccination campaign with paediatric ages. The reincorporation of students to the face-to-face course will be progressive and as the vaccination campaign ends.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Continuation with the design and implementation of the Alert Homes/Safe Homes campaign for the prevention of COVID-19 in paediatric ages and learning at home, and for awareness and preparation for a safe and informed school reopening.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** At this time teachers have been reinstated in schools for course preparation once epidemiological conditions permit. The Ministry has designed the strategy for the reopening and development of the 2020-2021 school year and the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** The evaluation process is contemplated within the strategy designed for the continuity and completion of the 2020-2021 course.



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Schools are closed for the academic break. On September 20, public schools will fully reopen, while private schools have already reopened with full attendance of the 655,371 students that make up the private sector.

- **UNICEF 's support.** UNICEF together with the Ministry of Education has trained 92% of counsellors, psychologists and 70,000 teachers, who received support for their own emotional recovery. Teachers have guides and orientations to implement the Return to Happiness program nationwide. This program will be implemented during the first two weeks of the school year.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** The Ministry has made improvements to educational centres in order to improve water facilities.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** The Ministry's educational level directorates are organizing the school reinforcement phase, in which each teacher must carry out a diagnostic evaluation. The introduction of remedial learning programs and the hiring of new teachers are other initiatives implemented.



ECA (Eastern Caribbean Area)

Several territories and countries in the Eastern Caribbean Area have recently started the new academic year. Some of them have done so with distance learning, such as Anguilla and Trinidad & Tobago, while others have fully reopened their schools, such as Montserrat and the British Virgin Islands. While several territories, such as Barbados, Dominica, and St. Vincent & the Grenadines, are still in school recess.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Support for the development of digital content. In addition, planning for education recovery programs is underway. Funded by the European Union and in collaboration with Living Water Community, the Pan American Development Foundation, the University of the West Indies, UNICEF ECA is also supporting the development of an online English as a Second Language course for Venezuelan children who have migrated to Trinidad & Tobago that uses a content integrated learning approach⁶.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** With the support of the government of Trinidad & Tobago, the country has officially become the first country in the

Eastern Caribbean to join Generation Unlimited (GenU), the new global partnership working to ensure that all young people are in education, training, or employment by 2030⁷.

ECUADOR



Schools are partially closed. Of the 15,786 schools offering regular education, 3,890 educational centres have approved their plans to use their facilities, and 3,380 have currently returned to on-site classes, benefiting 219,757 students and 24,575 teachers.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Promotion of advocacy through webinars with the educational community and the generation of evidence in favour of the gradual reopening. It is also implementing a community education model, where one of the main axes is the reopening of rural schools.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Efforts focused on increasing the number of schools that have approved their return plans, as well as the number of students returning to school. It has also modified the approval process for educational continuity plans to accelerate the process of returning to school.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** In August, the Ministry of Education started the National Plan "Learning on Time", whose objective is to reduce the backwardness and educational gaps existing in students through technical pedagogical support oriented to the levelling and recovery of learning. This initiative includes the adaptation of academic content and the introduction of learning acceleration programs.

EL SALVADOR

Schools are partially closed, with a total of 332,643 students benefiting from the reopening. The learning modalities are various, combining distance education through web platforms, TV, radio and print media, with the blended learning model, which combines face-to-face education with the distance model.

- **UNICEF's support.** Within the framework of Reimagine Education, UNICEF supports the Ministry of Education in the purchase of laptops for teachers and students, also considering assistive devices for children and adolescents with disabilities, and,

⁶ Information extracted from the official UNICEF website. For more information, click [here](#).

⁷ Information extracted from the official UNICEF website. For more information, click [here](#).

within the framework of the GIGA initiative, supports the government to increase connectivity in schools. In addition, technical support is being provided for the virtualization of educational materials for flexible education modalities and job skills, as well as the generation of audio visual educational content to strengthen the multimodal education system and flexible education modalities for the most vulnerable populations, incorporating psycho-pedagogical attention. With respect to teacher training, we are supporting processes to strengthen socioemotional education and to strengthen the technical staff of school counselling centres to provide psychological care to students who require it.

- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** The number of infections among the school population remains low, partly due to the implementation of biosecurity protocols and the opening of vaccination for children over 12 years of age, in force since August.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** The results of the diagnostic tests administered in June and July 2021 are now available, and the school calendar has been adapted, learning recovery programs have been introduced and academic content has been adapted.

GUATEMALA



Schools are partially closed, with a total of 267,902 students benefiting from the reopening through the hybrid education model, which combines face-to-face education with distance learning.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Support for the protocol for the return to face-to-face classes, which consists of a call to parents to change the status of the epidemiological surveillance board from yellow to green.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Work on self-learning guides, prevention and vaccination messages, school feeding for households and self-assessment learning mechanisms.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Preparation of self-assessment guides and creation of student portfolios. Learning assessment initiatives include adapting the school calendar, adapting academic content, and hiring new teachers.

GUYANA



On September 6, nursery and primary schools opened using different learning models. An estimated 92 of the 938 scheduled schools reopened fully, while others reopened on a rotational basis. Early childhood and primary schools are open, while secondary schools are expected to reopen in October. Secondary schools are closed until October as the Ministry of Education gives space for secondary school children (ages 12 to 17) to access the Pfizer vaccines.

As for early childhood centres (nursery schools), the Ministry of Education, with clearance from the Ministry of Health, reopened all 348 nursery schools (ages 3 years 6 months to 5 years 6 months) for face-to-face classes. Forty-one of these schools offer daily classes while the remaining 307 will open using a rotational model. It is expected to conduct perception surveys of children and teachers on the current situation of the schools later.

- **UNICEF 's support.** UNICEF, together with the Ministry of Education and members of the Local Education Group is monitoring the reopening of schools and its learning programs. With funds from the Global Partnership for Education, UNICEF as the Grant and Coordinating Agency, is monitoring the installation of hygiene centres, and other COVID-19 protocols, as well as the back-to-school program, including the sustainable approach to gender as psychosocial support for students. The Teacher training in the use of ICTs to deliver content, the assessment and monitoring of learning, the development of diagnostic assessment tools, and the access to learning reinforcement programs for students preparing for national assessments.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health assessed the readiness for schools reopening.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Academic content has been adapted as an initiative to address learning loss and learning assessments are in progress.

HAITI

All 22,000 schools are completely closed. Schools had been on academic recess since mid-June; however, the decision has been made to close schools and delay the new school year due to the earthquake and insecurity. The new academic year is expected to start on September 21 and October 4 in the areas affected by the earthquake.

- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Several measures were taken to address learning loss such as the adaptation of the school calendar and academic content and the introduction of learning recovery programs.

HONDURAS

Schools are partially closed. There are schools operating partially, by days, groups, or hours. The Ministry of Education authorized the partial reopening on August 16 of 147 private schools. As of August 26, reopening can be requested in 154 municipalities with low risk of contagion. 164 public schools have been given the green light to formally request their reopening. Combined education is offered.

On September 6, the safe learning spaces project with school safety plans and gender focus was inaugurated in Intibucá, as part of the actions for a safe return to school.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Advocacy for the reopening, support to the platform of the Ministry of Education, purchase of devices, internet for teachers, printed material, psycho-emotional support, teacher training and materials in/of primary health care, rehabilitation of schools, provision of ASH, teacher training in menstrual hygiene management (MHM).
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Teacher training in primary health care.



JAMAICA

Schools were reopened the first week of September 2021. It is expected that 770,000 primary and secondary students and approximately 120,000 early childhood students will benefit from the reopening, either in online or face-to-face mode.



- **UNICEF 's support.** Support for national summer classes by printing 60,000 primary and secondary school kits and uploading them online to the Ministry's platforms. Training 350 teachers in the Return to Happiness approach, and 20 trainers in the Blackboard blended learning platform, with the goal of reaching 6,000 teachers by the end of 2021.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Efforts focused on nationwide summer classes and vaccine coordination for children 12 years of age and older.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Analysis of data from diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. Results will be shared in September, which will inform future plans. Implemented initiatives to adapt the school calendar and introduce remedial learning programs.

MEXICO

Schools partially reopened on August 30. The on-site return to school in the states of Baja California Sur and Sinaloa was postponed due to Hurricane Nora.

According to data from the Ministry of Education, 119,497 schools are back to school with the support of 970,617 teachers in 30 states and 11,426,026 students returned to school in basic education. The return to school is voluntary.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Progress in the implementation of "Health in your Hands" with the installation of 240 hand-washing stations in 145 schools, and training on the use of the educational package for school communities in seven schools. UNICEF, together with the Federico Gómez Children's Hospital, provided training to the medical staff of the childcare centres with recommendations for the reopening of services for infants under 3 years of age. UNICEF also carried out advocacy work for the safe return of children in four areas: monitoring of the return of children, communication, strengthening of protocols for safe return, recovery of learning and enrolment. Finally, support was also provided for learning recovery processes to carry out a formative diagnosis, and the adaptation of the "Learning Passport" to recover the learning of high school students, among others.

- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Beginning of face-to-face classes with the start of the new school year. This is a great step forward since Mexico was one of the countries where schools have been totally closed for the longest period of time. The strategy for the return to the classroom was updated and tools were prepared to carry out formative learning diagnostics.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** The Undersecretariat of Basic Education developed a diagnostic tool to be applied by teachers on a voluntary basis. Some states, such as Chiapas, are developing their own diagnostics. The introduction of learning recovery programs and adaptation of academic content are other initiatives implemented.



NICARAGUA

The school year began on February 1, 2021, after the inter-annual vacation. All 9,125 schools and children's centres are fully open offering face-to-face and hybrid education. All 1,800,000 students are currently benefiting from the opening. A perception survey is being prepared for children and teachers on the current situation of the schools.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Socio-emotional support has been provided to children and adolescents.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** The Ministry of Education took measures such as the implementation of biosecurity protocols to make schools a safe place for children.



- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Academic content has been adapted as an initiative to address learning loss.

PANAMA

As of September 1, schools are partially closed. Of 4,587 schools, 1,200 offer semi face-to-face education and tutoring, and 119 early childhood centres out of 1,450 are open, benefiting 160,300 students. Education is provided through web platforms, TV, radio, print media and blended learning.

Two [polls](#) have been conducted on U-Report, where interviewees share their educational experience during the pandemic.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Continued to advocate at the highest level to accelerate reopening. Released the results of the [Third Household Survey](#) on access to and quality of distance education, and the results of two [polls](#) and a U-Report [video](#) on the impact of the pandemic on education and mental health. Finally, the campaign "[My school gets a 5 for safety](#)" was launched.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** The Ministry of Education called on all teachers, supervisory, managerial, and administrative personnel to return to schools as of August 18.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Adaptation of academic content, introduction of remedial and accelerated learning programs and the hiring of new teachers to address learning loss.

PARAGUAY

The school year resumed on August 2 after the winter vacation, with a partial closure of schools. 757 schools are in face-to-face mode, 2,264 in distance mode and 7,293 in mixed mode. According to data from the Ministry of Education, 394,346 students were reported in face-to-face classes and 1,139,857 in distance learning. According to data from U-Report's [Return to Class 2021](#) survey, 38% of 63 adolescents surveyed want to return to face-to-face classes, 41% to hybrid classes and 21% to virtual classes.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Support to 1,023 schools in the implementation of safe return protocols and training to 6,400 teachers, reaching 230,000 students. UNICEF, together with strategic partners, develops school support days in the communities, assisting 700 students. In addition, a study is being conducted on the behaviour and levels of COVID-19 infection in a group of schools and awareness-raising activities are being carried out for the educational community on the importance of vaccination in indigenous communities. Also, WASH improvements are planned for more than 40 schools.

- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Continuity of hybrid classes and adjustments to the return protocol. Families may decide the learning modality, while teachers must return in person as of August 30. Classes are maintained for 30 minutes and the rehabilitation of the extended day for schools with this modality has begun.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Learning evaluations were stipulated by the teaching staff, in charge of reviewing and analyzing the pedagogical results of the first stage and planning actions for the academic progress of the second stage in each school. The academic content and the increase in teaching hours were adapted as part of these initiatives.



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PERU

As of August 23, out of a total of 111,640 in all modalities and levels, 5,350 schools are in the semi face-to-face or face-to-face modality and 68,127 schools have been enabled for the semi face-to-face modality. Out of a total of 53,909 early childhood centers, 1,905 centers are face-to-face and 31,932 have been enabled for this modality. The reopening of schools benefits 219,289 children and adolescents.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Support to provide radio schools in rural areas, technical assistance to the Ministry of Education in the reopening process, technical assistance to the regional governments of 3 regions, support to the design of flexible modalities in North Lima, support to the Ministry of Health for prioritizing teachers in the vaccination process.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** The Ministry declared an emergency in the education sector and prepared an emergency education plan prioritizing the prompt reopening of schools, among other components.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** The declaration of emergency in the education sector prioritizes in axis 1 the recovery of learning; learning recovery programs were implemented; and the school calendar and academic contents were adapted. New measures are expected to be implemented as of September.



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SURINAME

All 574 schools are fully open, benefiting 140,426 students: 68,877 boys and 71,549 girls. The reopening modalities available are face-to-face education, distance education through web platforms, TV, printed material, and blended learning.

- **UNICEF 's support.** Support to produce didactic content in digital format for TV and web (video lessons). The launch is scheduled for September.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** Support for the reopening of schools. Adaptation of progression and exam standards and administration of exams. Launched formative assessment model for progression in non-exam grades.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Introduced a reform in October to improve the transition between elementary and junior high school. This adds 2 school years of transition to elementary school, allowing students more guidance and preparation time to choose a direction in junior high school. The introduction of accelerated learning programs, adaptation of the school calendar and academic content were implemented to address learning loss.

URUGUAY

All schools are open. The reopening process began on May 3 with rural schools and ended on July 19 with the opening of the 2nd and 3rd years of lower secondary education and the 2nd and 3rd years of upper secondary education, so all children and adolescents in the country are benefiting from the reopening of schools.

Preliminary results of a survey conducted by UNICEF and UN Women show that more than half of the children and adolescents (ages 6 to 17) surveyed agree with the resumption of face-to-face classes. In addition, the vast majority claim to learn more with face-to-face classes and the need to socialize with other students and their teachers.

- **Support from UNICEF & the Ministry of Education.** In partnership with the Ministry of Education, efforts concentrated on the pilot project "Return Face-to-Face Classes Plan" in four secondary schools. It provides socio-educational support to adolescents at risk of disengagement and works in partnership with children and adolescents out of school in highly vulnerable educational centers.

VENEZUELA

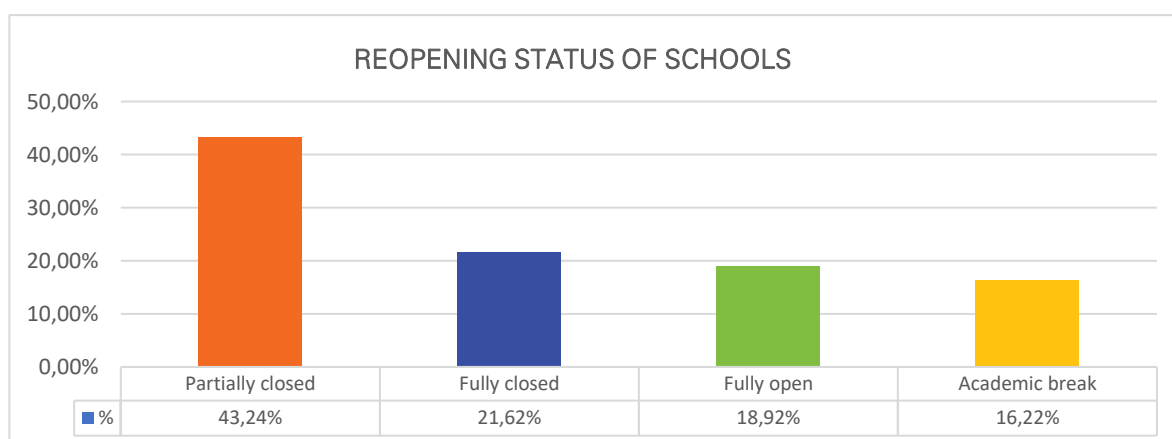
All schools are closed for the academic recess. Schools are expected to reopen in October, when the new school year begins. Regarding the teacher vaccination process, all teachers are expected to be vaccinated by the beginning of the school year.

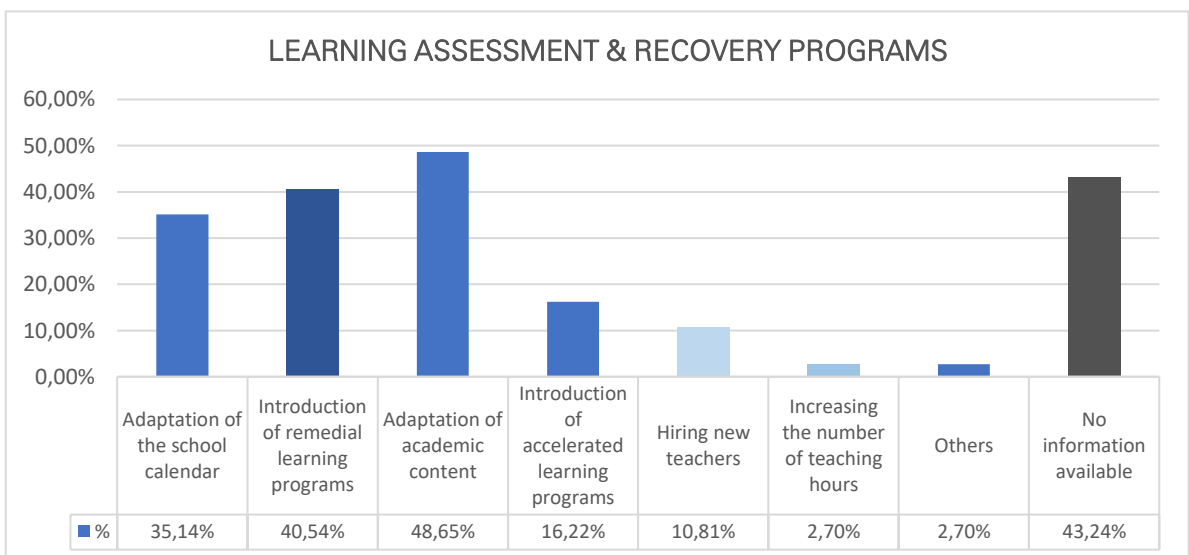
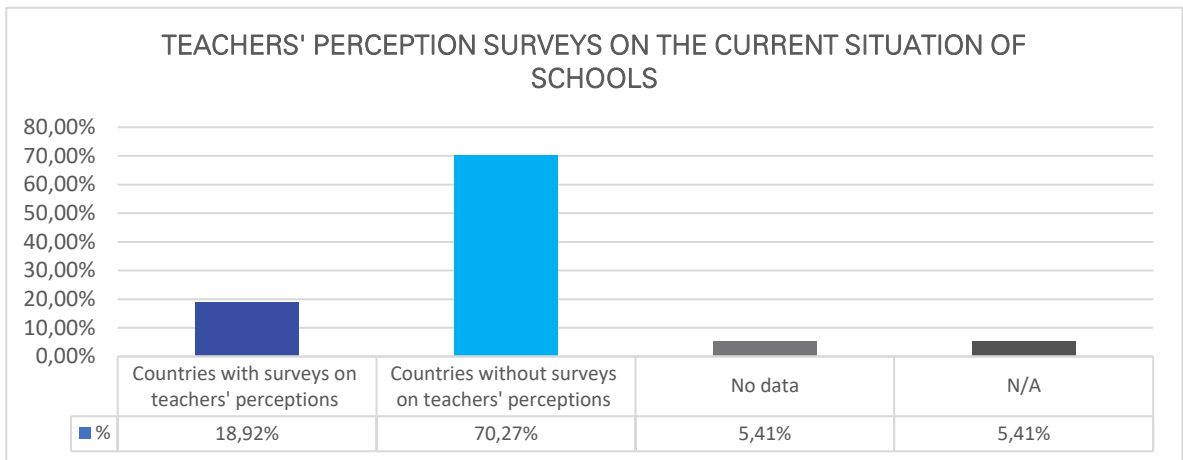
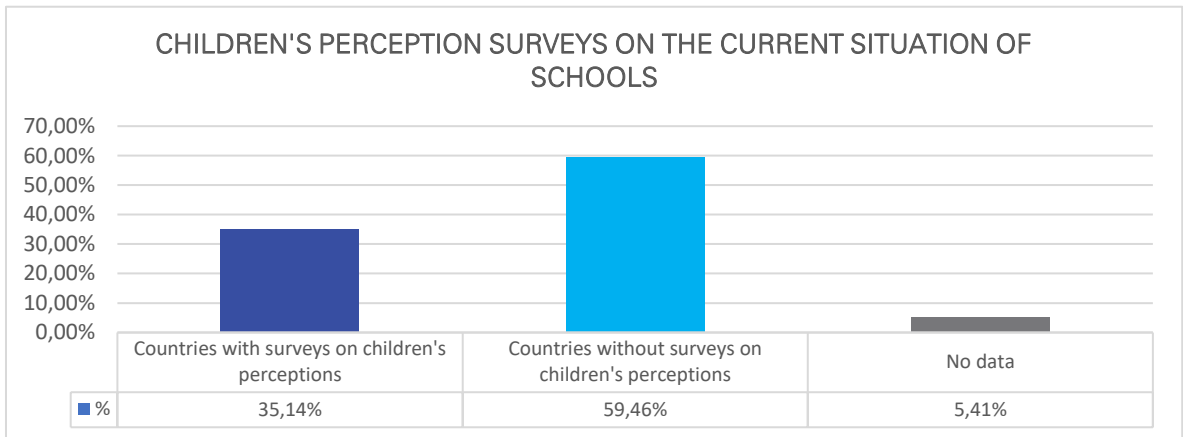
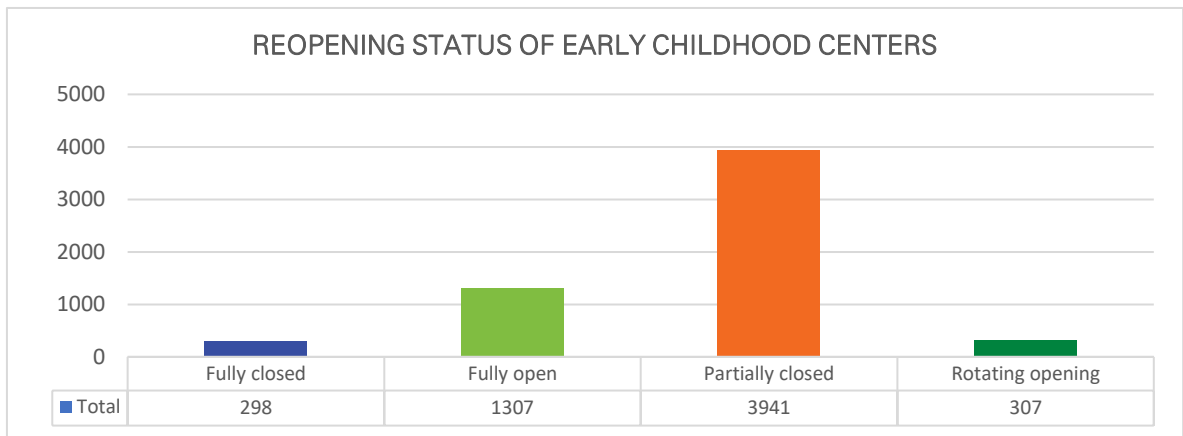
- **UNICEF 's support.** A workshop on Results-Based Management was held with secondary education technical personnel, preparations for the distance course on safe return to class were completed, the life skills program was adapted to the secondary education curriculum, and the training of secondary education teachers is in the preparation phase. In addition, UNICEF is supporting the revision of the back-to-school plan, which includes ASH, communication for development and communication actions.
- **Support from the Ministry of Education.** The Ministry has formed high-level and inter-ministerial roundtables to address the repair and conditioning of schools, the provision of educational materials, and the adaptation of training programs to the global guidelines for a safe return to school.
- **Progress on learning assessment & recovery programs.** Several initiatives were taken: adaptation of academic content, introduction of learning acceleration programs and the hiring of new teachers. The learning projects of the accelerated education program for over-aged adolescents are in the development stage. The National Reading Plan will be launched to enhance learning in language and communication. Finally, the Ministry of Education will implement evaluations at the beginning of the school year to adapt learning projects.



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VII. THE SCHOOLS' REOPENING PROCESS IN FIGURES





EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES (EiE)

- **Meeting of the Coordination Mechanisms of the education sector.** On September 10, the first meeting of the Coordination Mechanisms of the education sector in the region was held. A total of 8 mechanisms participated and presented their strategies, progress, and main challenges. The main objective of these meetings is, on the one hand, to learn about their structure, work, and mission, and, on the other hand, to improve communication among the different mechanisms so that they can share lessons learned and experiences. To this end, the Regional Group plans to organize three more meetings in the coming months, two in 2021, and another in early 2022. The next event will take place on Friday, October 29. Click [here](#) to access the Regional Group page for more information about the Group.



- **Launch of online school reopening board in Latin America & the Caribbean.** This month will see the official launch of the [online and interactive school reopening platform](#) with key information on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education systems in the region, developed jointly by the members of the Regional Education Group. On the other hand, one of the main sources of information for this board is precisely this UNICEF regional report on the response to COVID-19 in Latin America & the Caribbean, which feeds monthly updates to the board. It is updated monthly and can be accessed on the Regional Group's [webpage](#), in the Key Resources section.



- **Update of distance education platforms in the region.** The Online Educational Platforms and Resources section of the Online Repository of the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America & the Caribbean has recently been updated with the latest learning resources available online in the countries of the region. The page is available in [Spanish](#) and [English](#). The repository also has the latest resources on learning continuity and school reopening, both regionally and globally. The repository is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

INCLUSION

- **Continuation of a regional study on bullying:** the team is in the process of finishing a rapid assessment about the experience of bullying as sensed by children with disabilities in the region. The study is part of a global assessment lead by UNIC in collaboration with the Special Reporter on the Rights of Persons with Disability, in preparation of a General Observation that will include testimonies and evidence. It will be launched at the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) during its 86th session, September 2021.
- **Task Team assistance to country offices:** In Panama, the Task Team is supporting the development of a roadmap for inclusive education, as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Five technical groups have been created involving local experts and the UNICEF Disability Advisors technical assistance in the areas of disability data, standards, good practices, teacher training and partnerships. Similar initiatives in Nicaragua, Colombia and Venezuela also seek to mainstream inclusive approaches and provide training to COs teams and their counterparts.
- **Part of the solution in Haiti:** the unfolding events in Haiti focused all efforts on identifying disability expertise on the ground to provide support to making humanitarian response in Haiti inclusive of children and adolescents with disabilities and their families. In collaboration with RIADIS and Grupo Social ONCE, the team contacted members of disabled people organizations and agencies to identify available resources and promote engaging those with disability experience to back up assistance.
- **Update on the Regional Accessible Digital Textbooks (ADT) Project:** This month, all four countries involved in the project have established clear workplans and started the recruitment of implementing partners and coordinators. The project was launched in Jamaica, presented to the Ministry of Education in Nicaragua and the task teams were

reactivated in Uruguay and Paraguay. The coordination at regional level started collaborating with *Innocenti* and the Education Section at Headquarters to align with the global strategy on Inclusive Education and Accessible Digital Learning. For more information check the previous [update](#).

SECONDARY EDUCATION & LEARNING

- Currently a strategic framework on alternative education is being developed to provide national and sub-national governments, as well as education providers a tool to facilitate the strengthening of alternative education in their countries. It contributes to the objective of offering out-of-school adolescents with educational opportunities to re-engage in their education and therefore, develop the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in the Latin American and the Caribbean region.

The framework aims to respond to the complex problems of poverty, violence and migration accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the associated structural situations as they take on new forms and manifestations, whilst providing a vision for strengthening community, citizenship, and cross-sectoral work to address these problems. Thus, the framework offers governments and suppliers with a basis for developing new programs, when there is a gap, or enriching existing ones to improve education opportunities for all adolescents, including migrants, returned migrants, and the violence-affected population.

- On August 31, a regional webinar was held with France Education International (FEI), a public operator of the French Ministry of Education, with which UNICEF have a Long-Term Agreement (LTA) signed until January 2022 to support Country Offices on incorporating and implementing life skills and citizenship education into education life systems, as well as in non-formal and informal settings. This is especially important for the process of reimagining education and skills in the context of the pandemic. The recording and presentation of the webinar could be accessed through the following links:

- The [recording of the webinar](#)
- The [presentation of the webinar](#)
- The [LTA document](#)

ECD (EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT)

The ECD LACRO team disseminated the report **Early Childhood Development Interventions related to COVID-19 in LAC** (accessible [here](#)), which provides an overview of Early Childhood Development interventions implemented by UNICEF in LAC during 2020. The mapping and analysis identify good practices and gaps in order to support COs efforts to continue advancing the early childhood agenda in the context of the current or future crises. The report is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), along with a [full Database](#) with all the interventions to facilitate the search according to different filters (country, age range, Nurturing Care Framework category, sector, among others), as well as introductory videos in both languages (available [here](#)) explaining how to use the database.



For additional information or any queries please contact:

Ruth Custode, rcustode@unicef.org; Tania González Veiga, tgonzalez@unicef.org; María José Melo, mmelo@unicef.org.