# LACRO COVID-19 EDUCATION RESPONSE: UPDATE 35
## ANNUAL SUMMARY:ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES & NEXT

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## I. INTRODUCTION

As of December 2022, 33 countries in the region have fully reopened schools, 2 countries (Bahamas and Haiti) keep schools partially closed and 2 countries (Bolivia and Guatemala) are in academic break. In the case of Haiti, 27% of schools remain closed[1].

According to data provided by the Country Offices, at the end of December, 137 million children and adolescents are benefiting from the return to school. However, despite the progress made, more than 1 million children and adolescents have not returned to their schools, and of those who have returned, it is still very difficult to obtain data on permanence and learning.

In relation to the vaccination process, 31 countries and territories in the region have reported having prioritized the vaccination of students, and only 20 of them have provided information on the application of the first and/or second dose. Likewise, most countries and territories have information on the vaccination of teachers in the region.

This report (Update 35) for year-end 2022 provides an overview of the reopening process in each of the countries, its main advances, challenges and next steps, as well as relevant information on learning diagnostics and/or strategies implemented as part of the reopening processes.

During 2023, it is expected to have new updates focused on the implementation of the key actions proposed by the "Framework for the Recovery and Acceleration of Learning" (RAPID):

- Make the effort to reach all children and keep them in school.
- Apply assessment of learning levels on a regular basis.
- Prioritize the teaching of the fundamentals.
- Intensify teaching effectiveness, including through accelerated learning.
- Develop health and psychosocial well-being.

[1] Information extracted from the official website of the Haitian Ministry of Education on Facebook. Published on December 28, 2022.

## II. REOPENING OF SCHOOL'S MAP

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

- **"Fully closed"** when the closures affect most or all 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.




**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 late December 2022.

## III. PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS BENEFITED BY FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES

BAHAMAS: 95%
(56,983 children)

GUYANA: 85%
(144,327 children)

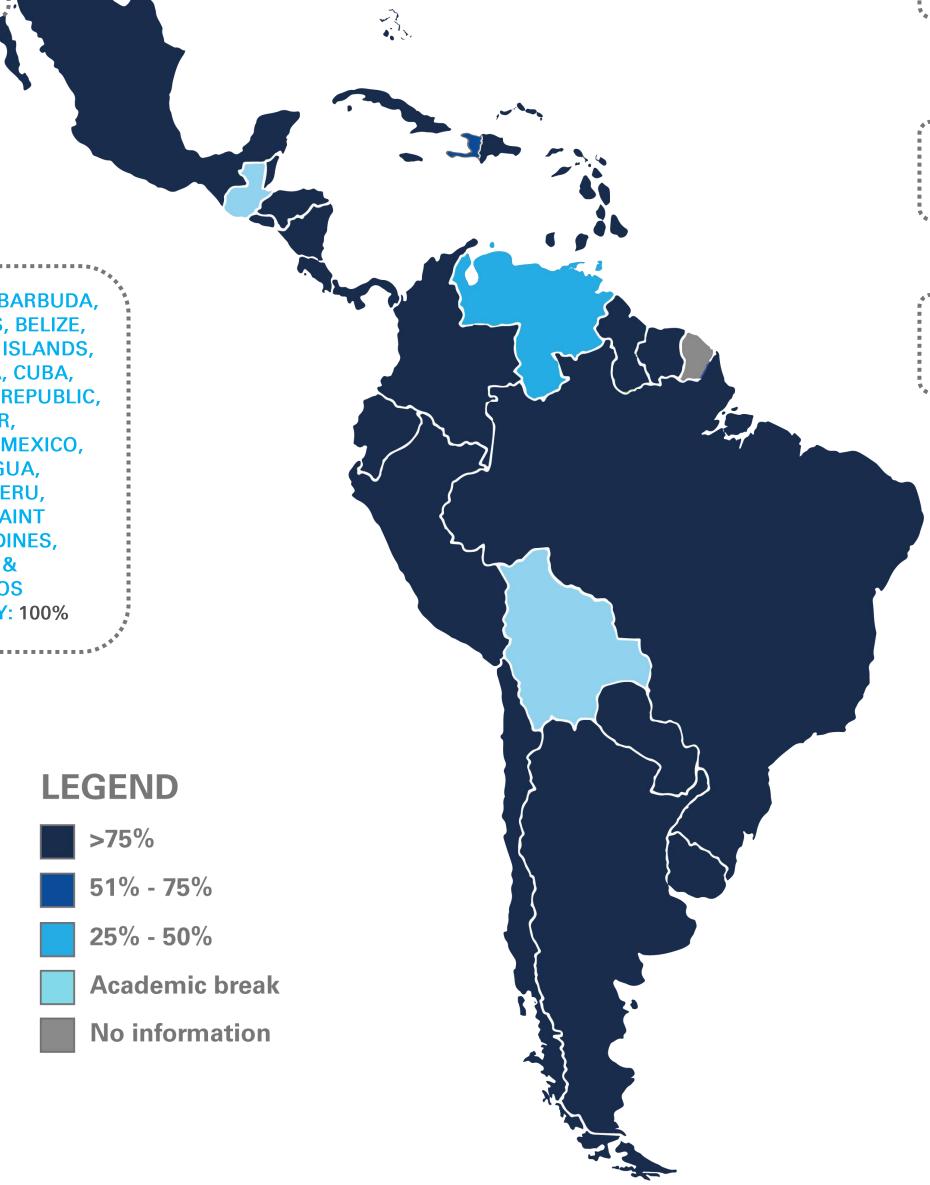
JAMAICA: 90%
(690,336 children)

SURINAME: 82%
(117,801 children)

VENEZUELA: 46%
(4,054,165 children)

CHILE: 91%
(3,300,000 children)

ANGUILLA, ANTIGUA & BARBUDA, ARGENTINA, BARBADOS, BELIZE, BRAZIL, BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS, COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA, CUBA, DOMINICA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, ECUADOR, EL SALVADOR, GRENADA, HONDURAS, MEXICO, MONTSERRAT, NICARAGUA, PANAMA, PARAGUAY, PERU, SAINT KITTS & NEVIS, SAINT VINCENT & THE GRENADINES, SAINT LUCIA, TRINIDAD & TOBAGO,TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS AND URUGUAY: 100%




**Note:** The percentage has been calculated based on the total enrolment of students from pre-primary to secondary school and the number of children and adolescents benefiting from face-to-face classes.

**Sources of information:** Data obtained from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute of Statistics (Welcome to UIS.Stat), and the information provided by UNICEF COs until late December 2022.

## IV. SITUATION OVERVIEW

This section was prepared based on information received by COs and updated as of December 2022 .

**137M** children benefit from the **full reopening** of schools [2].

**1M** children affected by **partial schools' closures** [3].

**2** countries have their schools **partially** closed (Bahamas and Haiti).

**2** countries are on **academic recess** (Bolivia and Guatemala).

Guatemala: **34,678** schools.

**33** countries have all their schools **fully open** (Anguilla, Antigua &Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, British Virgin I., Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts&Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent&the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad&Tobago, Turks&Caicos I., Uruguay and Venezuela).

In **23** countries and territories in the region, **teachers have been part of the vaccination process.**

**31** countries and territories have **prioritized students** in the vaccination process.

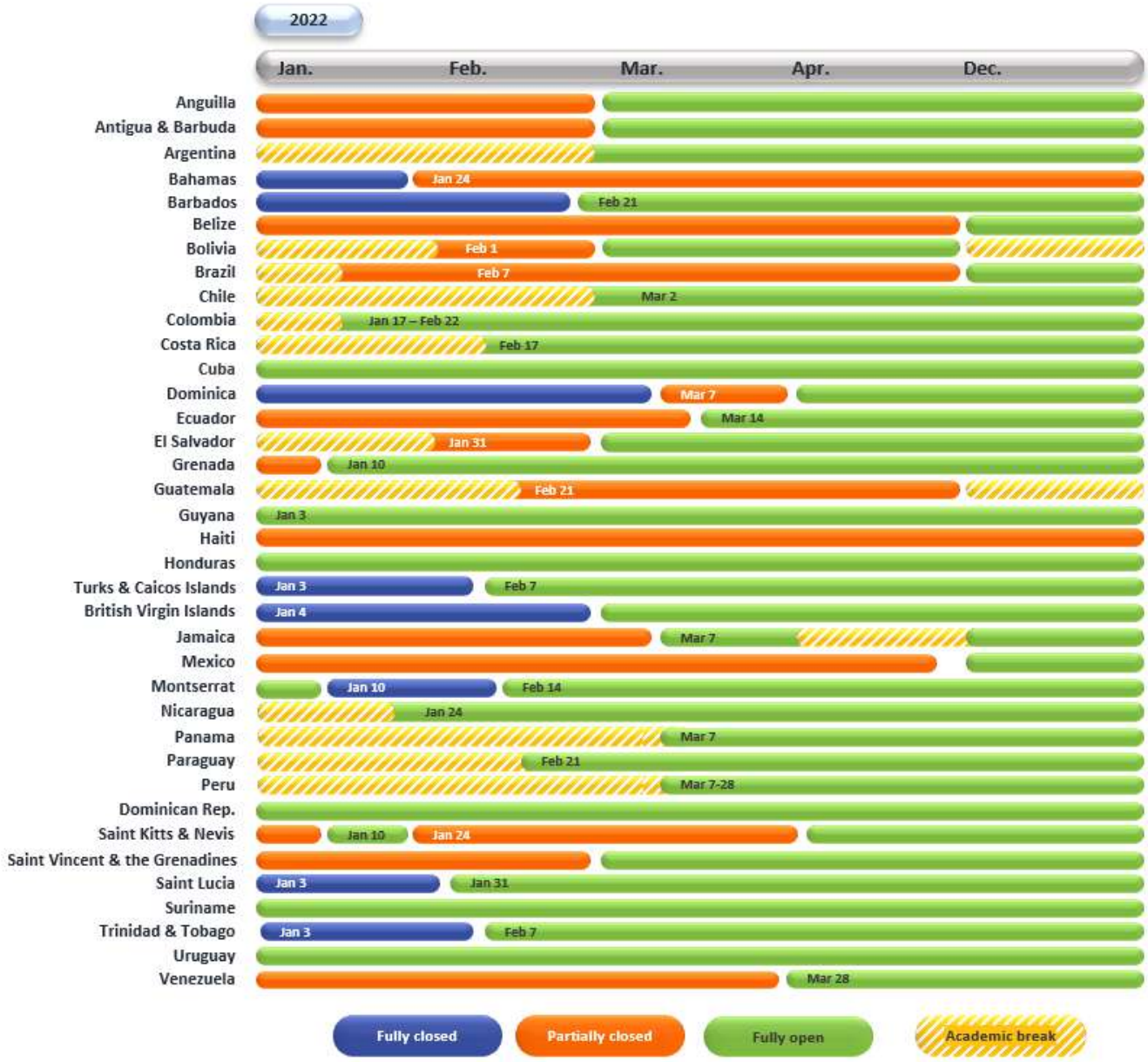
**Sources of information:**

[2] The figure of **137M** has been calculated based on the number of children who benefited from the reopening of schools.

[3] 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 late December 2022.

The figure of **1M** has been calculated based on the number of children affected by schools that are partially or fully closed.

## V. 2022 REPENING OF SCHOOLS' TIMELINE [4]




Note: The label for 'Academic break' represents the holiday period in all countries. Timeline made based on the dates of the Updates published in 2022.

Access here the 2020 Reopening of Schools' Timeline.

[4] Data reported by UNICEF COs from January 2022 until late December 2022.

## VI. PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS VACCINATED

The below map provides a mapping of the prioritization of teachers' vaccination in the Latin American and the Caribbean region based on information provided by Ministries of Education to UNICEF Country Offices.

**MEXICO**
100% with 1st dose.

**COSTA RICA**
100% vaccinated.

**BELIZE**
85% with 2nd dose.

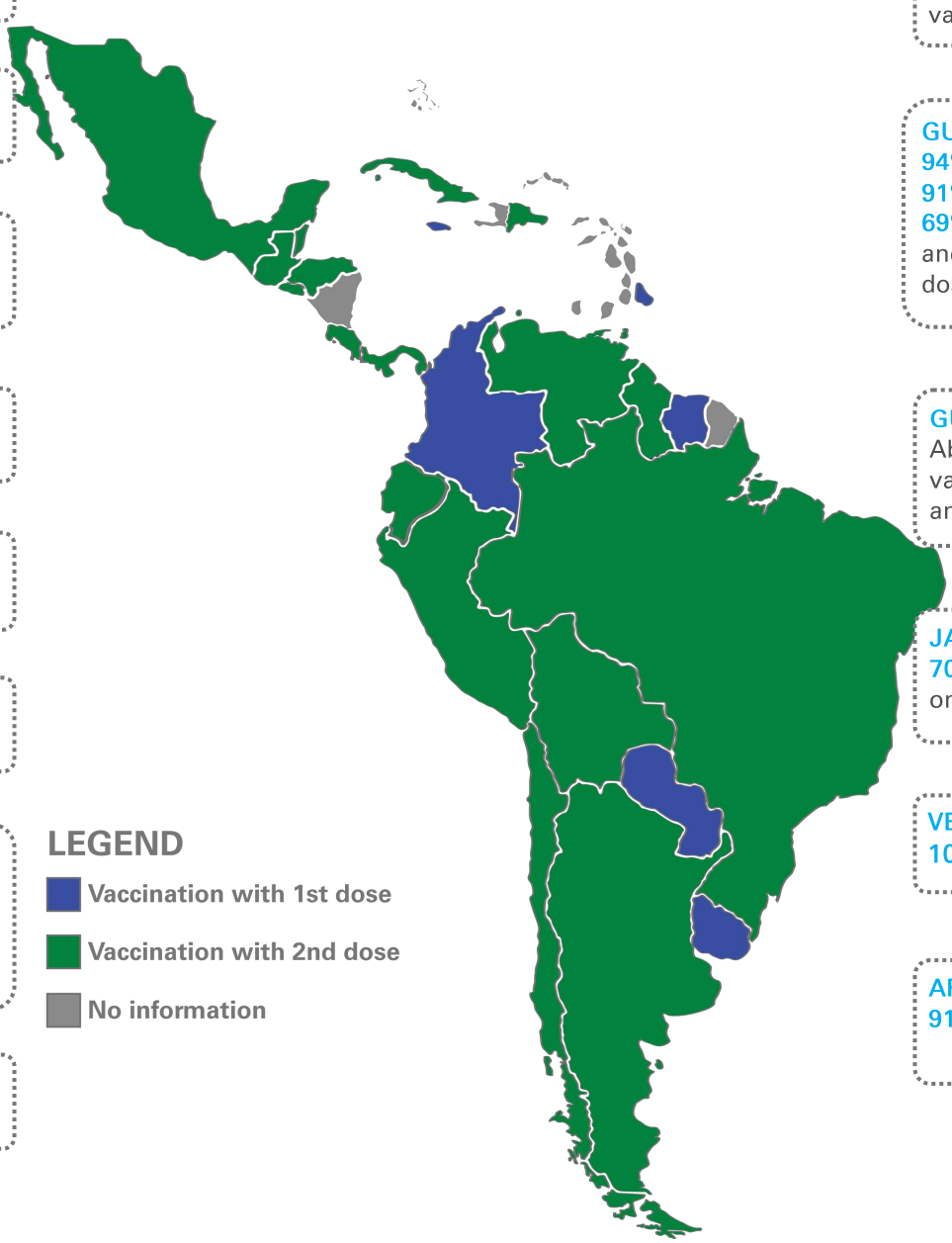
**PANAMA**
Over 93%

**DOMINICAN REP.**
99% with 2nd dose.

**ECUADOR**
Over 90%.

**PERU** [5]
97.4% with 1st dose, 96.2% with 2nd dose and 83.3% with 3rd dose.

**CHILE**
99% with 2nd dose.




**CUBA**
100% fully vaccinated.

**GUATEMALA**
94% with 1st dose, 91% with 2nd dose, 69% with 3rd dose and 12% with 4th dose.

**GUYANA**
About 50% vaccinated with 1st and 2nd dose.

**JAMAICA**
70% with at least one dose.

**VENEZUELA**
100% with 2nd dose.

**ARGENTINA**
91.9% with 2nd dose.

[5] **Note:** In the case of Peru, information provided by the Update 34 Country Office, published on May 25, 2022, was used.

## VII. TABLE OF PRIORITIZATION OF STUDENTS' VACCINATION

The following table shows the prioritization of vaccination of children and adolescents in the Latin American and Caribbean region based on information provided by Ministries of Education to UNICEF Country Offices.

| Country | Age range | 1st dose | 2nd dose | 3rd dose |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Argentina | Between 3 and 17 years old | 9,515,811 | 7,932,750 | |
| Brazil | Between 3 and 11 years old | 52.4% | 35.66% | |
| Costa Rica | Between 6 months and 4 years old | 24.6% | 13.2% | |
| | Between 5 and 11 years old | 80% | 68.1% | 20.1% |
| | Between 12 and 17 years old | 95.8% | 88,.4% | 49.1% |
| Cuba | Between 2 and 18 years old | About 100% fully vaccinated, including booster. | | |
| Ecuador | Between 5 and 11 years old | 82.7% | | |
| | Between 12 and 17 years old | 90.1% | 81% | 33.7% |
| Honduras | | | 57% | |
| Paraguay | Between 5 and 11 years old | 27% | 18% | |
| | Between 12 and 17 years old | 43% | 37% | 5% |
| Peru [6] | Between 5 and 11 years old | | 48.8% | |
| | Between 12 and 17 years old | | 76.6% | |
| Uruguay | Between 5 and 11 years old | 53.4% | 44.1% | |
| | Between 12 and 14 years old | 79.8% | 75.8% | 21.7% |
| | Between 15 and 19 years old | 89.2% | 86.2% | 36.3% |
| Venezuela | Between 0 and 18 years old | 70% vaccinated. | | |

| Country | Age range |
|---|---|
| Barbados | Between 12 and 18 years old |
| Belize | Between 12 and 17 years old |
| Bolivia [7] | Between 5 and 18 years old |
| Dominican Republic | Over 5 years old |
| El Salvador | Over 6 years old |
| Guyana | Between 11 and 18 years old |
| Jamaica | Over 12 years old |
| Nicaragua | Over 2 years old |
| Panama | 5 years and older |
| Trinidad & Tobago | Between 12 and 18 years old |

[6] **Note:** In the case of Peru, information provided by the Update 34 Country Office, published on May 25, 2022, was used.

[7] In the case of Bolivia, information provided by the Update 34 Country Office, published on May 25, 2022, was used.

## VIII. OVERVIEW OF THE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS BY COUNTRY

# ARGENTINA




According to Resolution CFE 404/21, full face to face attendance is established in all schools in the country, with a total of 57,509 fully open schools. According to data from the "Annual Survey (2021)", 10,636,704 students of preschool, elementary and high school attend in face-to-face modality; 1,691,446 correspond to the preschool level, 4,887,910 to the primary level and 4,057,348 to the high school level.

In 2021, the learning assessment "*Reporte Aprender 2021*" was carried out for the sixth year of primary school, and in October 2022, the evaluation operation Aprender 2022 was carried out for primary and secondary school. Regarding learning recovery strategies, an additional hour of classes was incorporated in public elementary schools to reinforce learning in Language and Mathematics in 11 provinces of the country, as part of the program promoted by the Ministry of Education.

The *"Volvé a la Escuela"* Program developed in Catamarca carries out actions to find each student to re-establish and reinforce their link with the school, through strategies for re-engagement, strengthening and sustaining school trajectories and the institutionalization of students' learning, as well as "Progresar" and "Egresar" scholarships to strengthen the continuity and completion of their studies.

In some jurisdictions, actions have been developed such as the promotion of comprehensive health counseling, listening centres and the implementation of the *"Reconectades"* program in 8 provinces, for the reintegration of children, adolescents and young people into the educational system through listening, support and counseling.

### Achievements:

- The opening of schools during 2022 without interruptions, following the school calendar.
- Eleven provinces incorporated an additional hour of class time to strengthen Language and Mathematics at the primary level.
- Distribution of reading books to all primary level students within the framework of the "Reading to Learn Program".

### Challenges:

- To reincorporate all students with intermittent and unfinished trajectories into the educational system. The educational system has the great challenge of delivering an innovative and flexible educational offer that ensures the permanence and completion of studies.

- Strengthen early and initial literacy processes and learning of basic knowledge such as Language and Mathematics.

## Next steps:

- Continue with advocacy actions so that all children who have not accessed or have interrupted their school career are reintegrated into the educational system.
- Generate empirical evidence that allows for an accurate diagnosis of the educational situation, students and their families.
- To provide technical assistance for the strengthening of teaching capacity at the initial and secondary levels, and the technical teams responsible for the management of education policy at the municipal level.
- Strengthen the development of innovative educational models such as "SRTIC" and "PLANEA" for the secondary level, in order to ensure the access of rural adolescents who are outside the educational system.
- Strengthen foundational learning, Language and Mathematics, and the development of transferable digital skills in urban areas.



# BAHAMAS


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As of December 6, 2022, education authorities reported that the attendance rate in public schools in face-to-face modality is 95%, a goal that the government had projected for December. Principals and education personnel have used various strategies to follow-up with students, such as calls to parents, follow-up in school records, to ensure their attendance to classes.

The Ministry of Education reported that it expects to implement assessments to measure learning losses for a better understanding of the true impact of COVID-19 on education.

Regarding the date for the face-to-face tests in public schools, the Director of Education stated that they are expected to be carried out in January, to ensure the connectivity of the devices and disseminate the information to the entire educational community [8].

[8] Information extracted from the local Bahamas website.

# BELIZE

All 607 schools and 219 preschool centres are now fully open in face-to-face modality. The opening benefits 108,000 children and adolescents.

The **Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology Testing Unit** (MoECST) conducted diagnostic testing for all primary schools in the context of the pandemic in the 2021 school year. Data were collected for the design of appropriate remedial and recovery interventions, such as the UNICEF-supported "Let's Catch Up 2022" summer camp, which included face-to-face sessions in schools and online, and focused on Literacy and Numeracy for students aged 5-9 years, featured teacher-led lessons streamed live to 120 classrooms for students and teachers in face-to-face modality, and for households accessing via web platforms or radio. The "A to Z" learning recovery strategy focused on Literacy with digital learning assessments, with access to online guided reading materials. MoECST trained teachers in reading strategies to support students in early grades; most schools used a comprehensive approach to address reading for at-risk students. Finally, as a psychosocial support strategy, training was provided to teachers and school administrators in vulnerable and migrant communities on the "Return to Happiness" strategy to be integrated into school curricula. UNICEF Belize supported two civil society organizations with programs to improve the cognitive, physical and psychosocial skills of students for a resilient response to diverse realities.

## Achievements:

- psychosocial support and the creation of safe spaces through partnership with government and NGOs.
- Use of the "A to Z" reading assessment to improve reading levels, reaching some 1,600 students, including out-of-school students.
- Support for the implementation of the "Let's Catch Up" learning catch-up program, which impacted the social well-being of the most vulnerable children, including children from rural areas, migrants, and students in lower levels and transitional grades.
- Technical support to the government in the reform of the national curriculum, from preschool to secondary school. Despite the great effort to adapt to the new realities, there are still issues that need to be addressed to ensure progress towards a post-pandemic return to learning that emphasizes the cognitive, physical and psychosocial needs of children.



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- MoECST together with UNICEF Belize has convened a National Curriculum Reform Steering Committee to develop The National Curriculum Framework, which demonstrates the Government's commitment to investment in education, with a fully budgeted implementation of the Belize Education Sector (BES) Plan 2021-2025 as a guide in the return to learning. The National Curriculum Framework recognizes the reality of curriculum overload and emphasizes the value of competency-based education.

- A comprehensive and holistic program was spearheaded with Think Equal to equip preschool children with the fundamentals needed to lead positive lives. The program will be used in all Kindergarten 1 and 2 classrooms across the country. The Government's commitment to increased investment in early childhood education, along with key partners such as UNICEF, Mission 4.7 and Think Equal, was launched at a side event with Mission 4.7 at the Education Transformation Summit.

- In 2022, led advocacy and commitment to gender equality and gender transformative policies and programming; investing in girls in their learning process as a priority. Also implemented key elements of the humanitarian strategy to ensure the provision of safe water and adequate sanitation for children and women, with a special focus on menstrual hygiene in school.

## Challenges:

- Decreasing enrollment at the preschool level, problems with sanitation of preschools due to time constraints (time between the end of morning sessions and the start of afternoon sessions), reevaluation with the number of learning centres used in preschools.

- Practices and social norms in most of the Caribbean that encourage and support punitive disciplinary practices, at home and at school. Parents lack skills needed to administer positive discipline at home; and only a few teachers are trained to use Positive Behavioral Support in schools and effectively use classroom management strategies.

- The importance of early stimulation and quality attention to child development is undervalued; there is a belief that no special knowledge is required to work with infants, which promotes the persistence of uncertified service providers.

- Most early childhood centre directors lack formal training and certification. Most educational environments are not inclusive for all children, especially for people with disabilities. Teaching materials are inadequate to accommodate different learning styles.

- Consultation, remedial interventions and capacity building of Early Childhood Development teachers will help to address inclusive educational environments for all children 0-8 years.

## Next steps:

- UNICEF Belize together with key stakeholders will launch the Giga Project in 2023 to expand the Internet infrastructure in order to ensure that all schools have adequate Internet access, and support the acquisition of digital devices for all students.

- MoECST launched the online platform "501academy" which is now a repository of unit plans that are created as part of the National Curriculum Reform activities. UNICEF will continue to strengthen the education system with the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the new curriculum, which includes the national roll-out of Think Equal in the first two primary school grades.

- Complete the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) assessment and strategy in schools for the development of climate resilient schools and communities for disaster risk preparedness and response.

# BOLIVIA

The schools are currently in academic break; before the break, all schools were fully open in face-to-face modality, benefiting 2,947,649 boys and girls in pre-primary, primary and secondary education.

The Plurinational Observatory of Educational Quality (OPCE) conducted a diagnosis to determine the learning obtained by children with the prioritized educational contents; the report will be published soon. Regarding learning recovery strategies, in 2021 a content dosage was carried out, academic content was strengthened during the first trimester and the rest of the school year focused on the prioritized content. During the first trimester of the current school year, a learning leveling is carried out in which the contents of the previous year are reviewed.

Finally, as part of the implementation of the back-to-school protocols, several teachers had access to psychosocial support content, and UNICEF Bolivia is supporting the link between schools and the toll-free hotline "Familia Segura".

## Achievements:

- The Ministry of Education has prioritized educational quality in its new Strategic Plan.
- The need to modernize the education system, including digital literacy, has become evident, which has led to a participatory curriculum review in order to modernize the system.

## Challenges:

- In the context of the return to school this academic year, the greatest challenge is to make the entire educational community, especially the authorities, aware of the educational backwardness resulting from the pandemic.

## Next steps:

- Generate evidence for education sector diagnostics, measurement of learning outcomes, measurement of the digital gap, measurement of connectivity, etc.



# BRAZIL




Most public and private schools reopened in face-to-face modality in 21 states in February, and currently all schools are open in face-to-face modality, benefiting 46,700,000 children.

In terms of learning diagnostics, several studies have been prepared on learning losses at the local level, such as the "Report on Learning Losses in the Pandemic". The study "Brazilian Education in 2022 - the voice of adolescents" was conducted with boys and girls aged 11 to 19, which details information on school exclusion, learning resumption and mental health of adolescents. Finally, there is a platform for Diagnostic and Formative Evaluations, as a result of a partnership between the Ministry of Education (MEC) and CAEd/UFJF to support the resumption of on-site classes and the recomposition of learning.

One of the learning recovery strategies was the "Undime Education for Pandemic Survey" to collect data on the Municipal Departments of Education's planning of school activities and the 2022 school calendar; the survey revealed that most learning recovery activities were face-to-face. Also, the survey reflected that each Municipal Secretariat adopted learning reconstruction practices according to their context.

UNICEF Brazil worked on *"Trayectorias e Suceso Escolar"*, a strategy that aims to contribute to the development of good practices in schools, focused on the learning leveling of students with school delays. The psychosocial support strategy is based on school environment and school welcome, based on protective educational planning, with the active participation of the school community, courses that promote community action in the prevention and response to violence and mental health care.

## Achievements:

- The development of a flexible curriculum in response to the health crisis by COVID-19, which includes flexibility in terms of time, space, materials and educational resources.
- The motivation provided to children, adolescents and parents in returning to school.

## Challenges:

- Regarding the planning and implementation of remedial/learning strategies one of the identified challenges is the lack of logistics and infrastructure. This includes difficulties in transporting students to and from school, provide food for classroom activities during extracurricular hours, as well as the lack of connectivity to perform these activities remotely.

## Next steps:

- UNICEF Brazil has been in contact with the Education transition group of the new federal government team.
- Distance training meetings are being prepared, focusing on reading, writing and oral expression for managers, technicians and trainers from 8 states (Acre, Amapá, Distrito Federal, Espírito Santo, Pará, Rio Grande do Norte, Roraima and Sergipe).
- Prepare two-day face-to-face meetings with managers, technicians and trainers from 3 states (Amapá, Pará and Sergipe).
- Review and expand the course material for cultural adaptation.
- Promote the systematization of good practices of the network.
- Elaborate Action Plans for learning recomposition.
- Prepare six guidelines for early and/or late literacy.
- Create practical examples in materials for different training contexts.



# CHILE


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All schools are open in face-to-face modality, with the exception of some, due to infrastructure maintenance and cases of COVID-19 infection, which have been temporarily closed. Approximately 3,300,000 children in primary and secondary school and 700,000 children in preschool education (0 to 5 years old) benefit from face-to-face education.

As part of the learning diagnosis strategies, the Comprehensive Learning Diagnosis (DIA) was carried out. In addition, as a response to the strategies to recover and level learning, a Comprehensive Educational Reactivation Policy was implemented with several components, among them: 1) curricular prioritization; 2) tutoring for students who are lagging behind; and 3) strengthening of the "Leo y Sumo Primero" Program.

Finally, the response of the "Life Skills Program" was strengthened in communities that did not have the program, specific support was provided to psychosocial teams in 60 educational communities, where coexistence and socioemotional well-being topics were diagnosed, an advisory council for school coexistence and socioemotional well-being was established, and intersectoral work was carried out with the Ministry of Health to provide preferential attention to teachers in mental health matters.

## Achievements:

- An important achievement is the recovery of attendance in schools. The attendance of children in on-site classes increased as the school year progressed, since it began in March with significant levels of non-attendance, with more than 15% of days of non-attendance.

## Challenges:

- Achieve school attendance levels in the context of the pandemic, particularly in early education.
- Addressing issues of socioemotional wellbeing, school coexistence and violence in schools, which were evident to a large extent at the beginning of the school year.
- To address the challenge of high absenteeism among teachers, many of whom were on leave due to mental health issues.

- To address the learning lags and the heterogeneity present in the classroom, where boys and girls who had more support at home to acquire learning and others who did not, particularly in the 1st to 3rd grade levels, coexisted.

## Next steps:

- A pending challenge is the educational reinsertion of more than 50,000 students who dropped out of the educational system between 2021 and 2022.

- A working agreement is being initiated with the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) that will address the emergency with children in situations of human mobility in the north of the country, the issues of school coexistence and mental health.

- The monitoring of good practices for learning recovery and socioemotional support, which will end in January 2023. It is expected to be disseminated before the beginning of the 2023 school year for use by other educational communities.



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# COLOMBIA


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All schools and early childhood centres are fully open. The education system reports that as of October 2022, 9,958,459 students (4,899,223 girls and 5,059,236 boys) in preschool, elementary and middle school are attending classes in person.

The Ministry of Education (MEN), the Colombian Institute for the Evaluation of Education (ICFES) and different educational stakeholders have deployed the *"Evaluar para Avanzar 3º a 11º Strategy"* since August 2020. Between 2021 and 2022, the strategy supported the assessment of learning during the return process and in face-to-face; and is available on a microsite developed by ICFES with 3 modalities: Online, Offline and PDF workbooks. In November 2022, the platform had 248,893 teachers and 5,744,345 students registered to participate.

The strategy has 3 components: 1) Assessment of development and learning; 2) Appropriation of results; and 3) Academic and pedagogical strengthening plans. Regarding learning catch-up strategies, the *"Evaluar para Avanzar"* strategy proposed to: 1) Identify the state of the students' development and learning process; 2) Implement pertinent actions based on the use, analysis and interpretation of the results of the development assessment to strengthen learning; 3) Promote the use and appropriation of the information generated on the students' educational process for making academic and pedagogical decisions to strengthen learning; and 4) Strengthen the capacities of the actors involved in the development and learning process to participate in the strategy.

Strengthen the capacities of educational actors and the involvement of the family in the educational process, and the definition of differentiated mechanisms to meet the specific needs of students according to grade and level.

From the MEN and in the framework of the return to face-to-face education, accompaniment processes were designed for certified territorial entities in education, 96 territorial committees for school coexistence and educational personnel for the pedagogical approach to risk cases within the framework of the comprehensive care route for school coexistence. There are 6 pedagogical approach protocols for risk situations, which include mental health issues and psychosocial support, together with a kit of materials for the use of the Unified Information System for School Coexistence (SIUCE) and material for the prevention of child abuse. In addition, since 2021, training processes have been carried out for teacher counselors to strengthen their socioemotional competencies and for school counseling in schools; this training is an important strategy for reflecting on teaching pedagogical practices in relation to socioemotional development, citizenship and democracy in the school.

Finally, the "Loving and Protecting Toolbox" was designed to strengthen parental competencies and their interaction in the educational community.

## Achievements:

- Strengthening and consolidation of actions aimed at the education departments, within the framework of the territorial strategy oriented to accompaniment, technical assistance and follow-up.
- From the Ministry of Education, the deployment of the "Evaluar para avanzar 3° a 11° Strategy", which provides information for decision making from formative evaluation, to advance with the teaching and learning processes.
- The program *"Profe en tu Casa"* completed 504 episodes distributed in three seasons, and was nominated for the Latin American Television (TAL) awards and the India Catalina awards in the category of Best Audience Favorite Production.
- Access to the "Be the 1 Challenge" application in the *"Aprender Digital"* initiative designed to learn English while playing. Design of guides, tutorials and training for its use, with the participation of 2,000 teachers and 22,000 students.
- Strengthening of the 3 socioemotional competencies (knowledge and management of emotions; understanding the point of view of others; and conflict resolution through creative and peaceful means) from the Ministry of Education, which provided the materials of the *"Emociones para la Vida"* strategy for children from 1st to 5th grade of primary school.

## Challenges:

- Work was carried out jointly with the Secretaries of Education, schools and partners in the territory to recover and clean up educational spaces deteriorated by the closure of schools.
- The provision of school retention strategies, such as the "School Feeding Program" and School Transportation was a challenge for the Ministry of Education in terms of articulation with the school calendar.
- Application and consolidation of results obtained with the ""Evaluar para avanzar" strategy for the design of academic strengthening plans, so that the schools can harmonize the processes of accompaniment, teaching and learning and permanent feedback.

## Next steps:

- Continue promoting the implementation of the commitment to action and work jointly with the Ministry of Education to promote the communication campaign, so that the school is the center of all action.



# COSTA RICA


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Currently, all 5,235 schools are fully open, as are the early childhood centres, benefiting 1,014,869 students with on-site education.

Teachers conducted diagnostics to be able to reinforce the areas of knowledge in which students have difficulties. The current administration of the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) has not yet presented a proposal to recover learning; however, the Integral Plan for Pedagogical Recovery was already in place. This plan had the objective of ensuring the pedagogical recovery of public education through academic leveling in the school years 2021 to 2025 for students to achieve the expected learning and comprehensive development processes. At present, it has not been defined whether this strategy will remain enforced or a new one will be created. Finally, UNICEF Costa Rica established a hotline as a psychosocial support strategy for children. The "Aulas de escucha" program was also promoted for the primary education level, which provides a space for accompanying children through "classes" dedicated to talking, learning and attending to psychosocial elements of each student.

## Achievements:

- The main achievement has been to keep enrollment up.
- The effort of the Ministry of Education to generate knowledge platforms "Saber" and "Conectados" where students have access.
- A strategy for the return to the educational centers and for the leveling of learning.

## Challenges:

- The main challenge was the interruption of the back-to-school strategy already planned due to the change of administration of the Ministry of Education.

## Next steps:

- Promote the integration and permanence in the educational service of children and adolescents, especially those from the most vulnerable groups, until the completion of their studies.

# CUBA

The 10,931 schools and 1,080 early childhood centres opened their doors on November 28, the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year in face-to-face modality, benefiting more than 1,700,000 students.

Regarding the learning diagnostics aimed at children, the national consultation for the Education Transformation Summit was carried out. The results of the consultation show psychological affectations (anxiety, depression) and lack of motivation to study, lack of social relationships and learning difficulties as a result of the pandemic.

Regarding learning recovery strategies, all resources were mobilized in a systematic and coordinated manner, attention to education was maintained during and after the pandemic, and the measures taken were positively evaluated (curricular adaptations, guidance for study through TV, television programs aimed at the family and others).

As part of the learning catch-up strategies, the curricular adaptations approved for the 2022-2021 school year continue to be applied, achieving the integration and adjustment to the evaluation system without the need to eliminate the contents or objectives of each grade. Finally, attention to students and their families was strengthened through the Diagnostic and Guidance Centers, in addition, the psychosocial support guidelines for teachers were further developed and coordination with the Ministry of Public Health (MINSAP) was improved.

**Achievements:**

- Stabilization of the normal course of the school year, which began on November 28.
- Completion of studies for 9th grade graduates, ensuring the continuity of studies for students who passed this level.
- 6,844 students who successfully finished 12th grade were able to enter university directly through different channels: medal winners in provincial and national competitions, members of the national pre-selection, pedagogical and university colleges.
- Preparation of teachers and directors for the new school year.
- 2,300 university graduates, resulting in an overall total of more than 8,900 new teachers.






- "Entrega pedagógica" is a process developed by the Ministry of Education that allows having a characterization of each student in order to design learning strategies appropriate to the student's needs.
- Maintenance and repair of 1,071 educational centers and ongoing work on the maintenance of 551.
- Process of provision of children's circles for 2-year old infants. The opening of 60 *"casitas infantiles"* with 2,000 beneficiaries, the opening of new children's circles and the repair of others [9].

## Challenges:

- Favorable teacher coverage, with some instability, especially in the capital city, which resulted in an overload of work for almost 3,000 teachers.
- Having the necessary educational materials such as textbooks and workbooks, in the context of the country's acute economic crisis.
- Difficulty in ensuring adequate food and hygiene conditions in the schools due to the country's economic conditions.

## Next steps:

- Work to increase institutional access to early childhood education.
- Continue with the implementation of a new educational model aimed at adolescents studying in vocational schools, including students with disabilities.
- Incorporate access to safe water and adequate sanitation in schools as a priority.

[9] Information extracted from the website of the Ministry of Education of Cuba.

# DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The schools are fully open, so all 2,761,118 children benefit from face-to-face education.

Regarding learning recovery strategies, UNICEF Dominican Republic and "CON BASE" carried out the "Programa de Alfabetización Inicial, Construyendo la Base de los Aprendizajes" (Initial Literacy Program, Building the Basis for Learning). Regarding the leveling of learning in the 2021-2022 school year there was little preparation given the health emergency, however, this year 2022-2023 CON BASE has been universalized to reinforce learning with guides in a sequential plan for Language and Mathematics in the first three grades of primary school, and learning reinforcement for the third grade. Finally, in the 2021-2022 school year, the country office carried out the "Return to Joy" Program adapted to COVID-19, for the psychosocial support of more than 2,000,000 students and their teachers. This school year we worked on this program for two weeks with a second adaptation by the Ministry of Education (MINERD).

## Achievements:

- According to a MINERD analysis, there has not been a significant loss of students compared to previous years in the context of the pandemic.
- Response to the phenomenon of student mobility from the private to the public sector. Creation of a school voucher to support families with the payment of school fees where there is no space; the situation of school overpopulation is aggravated by this mobility.

## Challenges:

- School overcrowding due to mobility from the private to the public sector.
- Lack of vacancies in the public school.

## Next steps:

- Promote at a national level the program to improve teaching in the first levels of schooling CON BASE.
- Progressively implement the App "Early Alert and action protocol for school retention and reinsertion" nationwide.
- Work together with the Ministry of Education, initiate a process of reconversion of school services into inclusive ones, and the design of accessible resource kits and training for their use.


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## ECA (Eastern Caribbean Area)




Schools and early childhood centres are fully open in the twelve countries and territories that make up the Eastern Caribbean Area, in a face-to-face modality. In total, 1,510 Schools and 1,552 early childhood centres are fully opened in a face-to-face modality.

Regarding psychosocial support strategies, UNICEF Eastern Caribbean supported several capacity building and training activities focused on psychosocial well-being.

### Achievements: [10]

- Pedagogical support at the pre-primary, primary and secondary education levels.
- Psychosocial support at the pre-primary, primary and secondary school levels.
- Support with online learning resources at pre-primary, primary and secondary education levels.
- Support to the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene sector in schools.
- Support with learning supplies in schools and early childhood centres.

### Next steps:

- UNICEF Country Office will hold discussions with Ministries of Education regarding the Education Transformation Commitments as part of the 2023 planning processes.

[10] Information extracted from Update 34, published on May 25, 2022.

# ECUADOR

All 16,169 schools and 1,989 early childhood centres are open offering face-to-face education and distance education through web platforms. A total of 4,389,668 (2,208,330 girls and 2,181,338 boys) attend school in face-to-face modality.

Regarding learning diagnostics, the National Institute for Educational Evaluation conducted the "*Ser Estudiante*" tests in this school period, which identifies at a general level the learning losses during the pandemic. The Ministry of Education developed the National Plan "Learning on Time" to reduce learning gaps, and seeks to generate meaningful and lasting learning experiences through the "Recovering Learning Methodology". At the beginning of the school year, teachers carry out an evaluation of the basic learning that each student should have, and in cases where learning gaps are identified, a remedial plan is established for approximately one month. Finally, as part of the psychosocial support strategies, within the National Plan "Learning on Time" (*Aprender a Tiempo*) there is an axis and tools to address socioemotional issues in parallel.

## Achievements:

- The main achievement is the return of children and adolescents to the schools in a face to face manner.

## Challenges:

- The process of recovering from learning loss is a great challenge that demands resources.
- Student learning loss is a complex problem that demands a great effort on the part of the entire educational community.
- The progress of returning to school demanded a significant effort of advocacy and generation of evidence to promote the return.
- Having adequate educational infrastructure in place once the return to school has begun.
- Identification of cases of depression and violence that require attention.




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**Next steps:**

- Implement formative assessment models and school support to reduce learning gaps.
- Implement models of accelerated catch-up and eliminate barriers to access to the educational system. Educational inclusion with emphasis on the adolescent population and pregnant women and/or teenage mothers.
- Implement programs to improve the school climate and reduce the growing problems of violence and insecurity.
- Jointly develop with the Ministry of Education an early warning model to prevent school dropouts.
- Generate information on a regular basis to identify the main current challenges of the educational community.
- Prioritize interventions with teachers and students in the rural sector and indigenous communities.

# EL SALVADOR

All schools and early childhood centres are fully open in face-to-face, distance learning through web platforms, print media and hybrid models. In total, 1,269,756 students (638,806 boys and 630,950 girls) are benefiting from the reopening.

Several learning diagnostics were carried out:

- In November 2020, the "Avanzo" test was conducted, which is an evaluation aimed at all students in the second year of secondary education, as part of the process to obtain the bachelor's degree. Skills tests were applied in Mathematics, Social Studies and Civics, Natural Sciences and Language and Literature. The tests evaluated the achievement indicators that the National Curriculum established as learning priorities in the context of the pandemic. In addition, a survey of the socioemotional status of students at the national and departmental levels was conducted. This test was conducted again in November 2021 and additionally analyzed occupational interests and skills and socioemotional effects in the context of the pandemic. Finally, in November 2022 the "Avanzo" test was conducted to analyze the same parameters.
- From May to June 2021 and in May 2022 the "Knowing my achievements" (Conociendo mis logros) tests were conducted which explored cognitive skills in students from 3rd to 2nd grade of high school in subjects of Language, Social Studies, Science and Health and Environment and Mathematics.

Regarding learning recovery strategies, reinforcement was made in the areas of reading and writing and Mathematics. For learning leveling, Accelerated Education was implemented for students from 8 to 15 years of age who are in basic education, which means first to sixth grade. Finally, attention is provided through the School Counseling System to provide psychosocial and socioemotional support to reduce the symptoms of depression and anxiety in children and adolescents.

## Achievements:

In order to guarantee educational continuity, several actions were carried out:

- Curricular rethinking giving rise to a transformation to the student's graduation profile, and a new pedagogical model.
- Education for the use of biosafety measures.


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- Changes in methodologies and socioemotional attention.
- Development of technological competencies on the part of the teaching staff.
- Provision of computers to students and teachers, as a support to the student's educational continuity.
- Provision of Internet packages to students and teachers.
- Application of the Standardized Test to students in the second year of high school in virtual modality.
- Teacher training not only in methodologies, but also in topics such as the use of technological tools, didactics for virtual teaching, socioemotional education, the use of Google Classroom and Google Space tools, the use of platforms for the development of comprehensive and written reading skills, among others.
- Proposal for family education harmonized with the new curriculum.
- Establishment of connections with families to accompany children's learning.
- Development of self-learning guides, television programs, virtual classrooms and radio programs.
- Recognition of the value of all technological tools and educational platforms to ensure inclusion and the development of quality learning for students.
- Implementation of projects that develop leadership and student participation.
- Use of simulators for practice in the Technical Vocational High Schools.

**Challenges:**

- Monitoring the development of communication and socioemotional skills.
- Protection in the use of Internet sites inappropriate for children.
- Projects that develop leadership and student participation.

**Next steps:**

- Provide early childhood care, social-emotional education and family education.

# GUATEMALA

To date, all 34,678 schools and 1,250 early childhood centres are on academic break. Before the break, schools were partially closed.

## Achievements:

- Regarding learning diagnostics, a formative diagnostic test was conducted for Reading and Mathematics at all levels. A learning improvement strategy was also developed, which consisted of individual tutoring for 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade students according to the results of the diagnostic tests in Reading and Mathematics. Finally, material for teachers, parents and students, workshops and classroom activities were socialized as psychosocial support strategies.

## Challenges:

- The main challenge was access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: lack of access to safe water, cleaning supplies, toilets in poor conditions.
- Deterioration of classrooms due to climatic events.

## Next steps:

- Human mobility processes (migration) of children and school dropout.
- Continue with the implementation of learning improvement strategies.
- Support the remodeling of educational centres affected by the storms.



# GUYANA


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Currently, the 1,179 schools (507 for pre-primary, 445 for primary and 267 for secondary), and all 500 early childhood centres (359 separate schools and 141 kindergarten classes) are fully open in face-to-face and hybrid modalities, benefiting 144,327 students (71,812 boys and 72,515 girls).

Regarding learning diagnostics, the Ministry of Education has implemented diagnostics that refer to various sources. With regard to learning recovery strategies, individual worksheets and consultations with parents, children and teachers have been carried out. Learning catch-up strategies are based on remedial learning sessions. Finally, gender-sensitive counseling approaches are developed through the school wellness program for teachers and students.

## Achievements:

- The catch-up operation led by the Ministry of Education, which resulted in a school attendance rate of over 70%.
- Participation rate of 90% in the 6th grade national assessment, which determines entry into the secondary level of education, and the secondary school leaving examination for grades 10, 11 and 12, prepared for all Caribbean secondary school students.
- Distribution of cash grants to all eligible students.

## Challenges:

- Pace of the assessment of learning los.

## Next steps:

- Ensure that all eligible children return to school: implement flexible and inclusive learning pathways.
- Accelerating the assessment of learning loss and responding to same with focus on literacy and numeracy
- ApSupport the health, nutrition and psychosocial well-being of students and teachers.

# HAITI

As of December 28, 73% of the schools reopened to resume school activities on January 3. The Ministry of Education published a new school calendar from January to August 2023 [11] .

Strategies for learning recovery are based on remedial classes and non-formal education, and psychosocial support strategies have a cascade approach, in which Ministry of Education officials are trained to provide psychosocial support, focusing on the children who especially need it.

## Achievements:

- Despite the insecurity, violence and political crisis that the country is going through and the late reopening of schools due to these problems, UNICEF Haiti managed to support the construction of schools, provided materials to children: school kits, school furniture, etc.
- Implementation of the non-formal education policy.
- Support through cash transfers.
- Provided remedial classes and support to departmental education authorities in coordination and data collection.

## Challenges:

- Insecurity, rising prices of basic commodities (especially fuel) and lack of fuel in the market due to gang violence.
- Insecurity in the schools transmits fear among parents, who are afraid to send their children to school.
- Lack of economic resources for families to send their children to school.

## Next steps:

- Advocate for the school to be a safe place for children, and for education as a fundamental right for all. Peace building education.
- Work with greater focus on early childhood development/early childhood education to support early learning.
- Strengthen non-formal education for school dropouts or out-of-school children.
- Provide multiple learning pathways such as: printed materials, distance education via radio, etc.




[11] Information extracted from the official website of the Haitian Ministry of Education on Facebook. Published on December 28, 2022.

# HONDURAS




Currently, all schools are open, benefiting 1,845,819 children with face-to-face and combined education ( face-to -face and distance learning).

In response to the general orientation for learning diagnostics, at the beginning of the school year, the *"Educatrachos"* educational portal was made available, together with the "Learning Guide for Spanish Leveling" (*GANE*) developed by USAID. UNICEF Honduras has promoted remedial learning strategies through the *"Pasaporte de Aprendizaje"* (Learning Passport) and the *"Puentes Educativos"* initiative. The catch-up strategies implemented include curricular content in Spanish Language, Mathematics and Science through *"Puentes Educativos"* and *Learning Passport* materials. The development of psychological first aid strategies through *"Espacios Seguros y Amigables"* (Safe and Friendly Spaces) is carried out by applying a toolbox designed for this purpose.

## Achievements:

- The opening of schools in face-to-face and hybrid modality, starting April 22, 2022, facilitating the return to school and the beginning of learning recovery. However, it has a very limited scope.

## Challenges:

- The main challenge is to make learning recovery a national priority.

## Next steps:

- Provide technical assistance and advocacy with the Government to prioritize the recovery of learning as part of the Refoundation of Education in Honduras plan.
- Continue improving school rehabilitation conditions, water, sanitation, connectivity, educational materials and furniture directly in UNICEF Honduras interventions, and influencing the policy of the Ministry of Education.
- Continue supporting teacher training for the development of flexible and alternative modalities.
- Expand the contents available in the online platform " Learning Passport" (fundamental and transferable skills).
- Explore the use of the " Learning Passport" platform with children and adolescents in mobility situations.

# JAMAICA

All schools are open: approximately 770 public sector primary and secondary schools, 150 private sector schools, and approximately 2,200 early childhood centres. The Ministry of Education projected that 690,336 students benefit from reopening by 2022; figures continue to be calculated as the return to school in the context of the pandemic began after almost 2 years of closure, in September 2022.

Diagnostics were conducted at two points in time during the pandemic in all core areas. The "National School Learning and Intervention Plan" encompasses personalized instruction based on the diagnostic results and offers the student the opportunity to continue learning through summer school and extra classes financed by the government.

National and regional learning assessments were conducted at key stages, with additional diagnostic assessments in Maths and English added at key stages during 2021 and 2022, although most schools administer their own tests at December and June term end; accelerated options are also offered where relevant.

Remedial sessions, summer programming, assessments, emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy, extra time for teaching selected core subjects and revised exam formats are undertaken. Grouping of students according to learning assessments, extended teaching time for core subjects, modifications to national exam formats, small group teaching, summer programs in face-to-face and distance modality, banks of lesson plans to be referenced by teachers island-wide.

Finally, psychosocial support strategies include training of teachers and counselors in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), training of teachers in the Return to Happiness Program, prioritization of mental health by the Ministries of Health and Education (visits to schools and public education campaigns), the creation of the U Matter chat line by UNICEF and the Ministry of Health, which provides referrals to counselors, and the National School Learning Improvement Plan (NSLIP) which includes a psychosocial framework to guide interventions in the school.



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## Achievements:

- Full reopening of the schools.
- Implementation of the national assessment for 4-year students, national and regional exams.
- Prioritization of mental health and well-being of teachers and students, organization and implementation of recovery program.
- Increased emphasis on the collection and use of real -time data to drive data-driven interventions: accelerated progress towards the creation of an operational Education Management Information System (EMIS).
- "Fundoo" platform pilot project to target and re-engage out of school youth/out of employment, education and training.
- Basic Literacy and numeracy pilot program.
- Pilot course focused on the "Heart of Learning" (SEL) aligned with the "Return to Happiness" course to be offered again in 2023.
- Continued advocacy for inclusion and reallocation of Early Childhood Development funding in relation to the public spending review.

## Challenges:

- Funding; not all schools have the same amount of resources in terms of learning, public health and safety materials, as well as some teacher migration at the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

## Next steps:

- Support EMIS, the " Learning Passport" pilot project (1st quarter 2023).
- Finalize the complete series of Accessible Digital Textbooks.

# MEXICO

All schools (250,150) are fully open in face-to-face modality: 21,346 upper middle schools and 228,804 primary schools. The opening benefits 34,413,485 (17,374,293 girls and 17,039,192 boys).

The National Commission for Continuous Improvement of Education (MEJOREDU) developed a diagnostic instrument to be applied voluntarily by basic education teachers after the return to face-to-face classes in the 2021-2022 school year; in order to have disaggregated information on the learning level of students after the long-term closure of schools. Several diagnostic assessment tools were published for 2022.

At the upper secondary level, the Ministry of Education and UNICEF Mexico are collaborating to use the Learning Passport for the recovery and leveling of learning, based on key learning identified in the study plans and programs for Mathematics, Communication, English and Natural Sciences. At the basic education level, a toolkit was published to support teachers in the learning recovery process. UNICEF Mexico supported educational authorities in Guerrero and Chiapas in the recovery of learning of approximately 6,000 children through "Teaching at the Right Level". The Undersecretary of Basic Education has developed the "National Strategy to Promote Continuous, Complete and Excellent Trajectories" to address the loss of learning due to the prolonged closure of schools, school dropout and socioemotional affectation.

## Achievements:

- The opening of all schools with face-to-face classes.
- According to the Ministry of Education, 99% of the enrollment has been recovered for the 2022-2023 school year.

## Challenges:

- The recovery of learning continues to be one of the greatest challenges in the return to classes. Based on the diagnostic evaluation for the 2021-2022 school year, MEJOREDU indicates that the percentage of incorrect answers from 4th grade of primary school to 3rd grade of secondary school is around 50%. The hypothesis is that the higher the socioeconomic disadvantage, the higher the learning loss.

## Next steps:

- Continue working on fundamental skills and the recovery of learning, with emphasis on children with educational lag at the basic education levels.
- Scale the use of digital platforms such as "Learning Passport", for the leveling and recovery of essential learning, at the high school level.



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# NICARAGUA


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All 9,125 schools are fully open, as are all early childhood centres. To date, 1,800,000 children are benefiting from the opening of schools. Education in face-to-face, hybrid and distance learning modalities through TV are maintained.

The main learning recovery strategies used include teleclasses. Homework follow-up, the involvement of parents in the educational process, and peer support have been part of the learning leveling strategies. As part of the psychosocial support strategies, UNICEF Nicaragua has strengthened the Institutional Counseling Program for Educational Communities, which is based on peer support. This program has more than 200,000 volunteers (teachers, parents and students) nationwide.

## Achievements:

- Measuring learning continues to be a difficulty, especially when it is not recognized that there are losses and that a special effort must be made to recover learning.

## Challenges:

- Although no schools were closed, school attendance was reduced at the peak of the pandemic.
- The schools are functioning regularly, even without observing biosecurity protocols against COVID-19, although their use is promoted. The application of biosecurity protocols is rarely observed.

## Next steps:

- Continue contribution to ensure that children and adolescents from the most vulnerable groups have access to higher quality education.

# PANAMA

Face-to-face education for all schools as of March 7, 2022 was established by Executive Decree 2077 of December 1, 2021, so all schools and early childhood centres are fully open, with the exception of some schools closed for construction, remodeling and/or infrastructure maintenance. The reopening benefits 954,233 students at all levels of the official and private sector.

UNICEF Panama together with the Ministry of Education of Panama (MEDUCA) are working on the elaboration of learning diagnosis documents for children that will be published soon. In addition, they are working on the Learning Recovery Plan at the pre-medium level, prioritizing Literacy and the Fundamental Learning Rights. Accelerated education and the prioritization of literacy are part of the learning leveling strategies aimed at students. Finally, the Cabinets together with guidance counselors and special education teachers have implemented containment strategies and support lines as psychosocial support strategies, and there is a guide "General Guidelines: return of students to face-to-face education in the 2022 school year".

## Achievements:

- The total reopening of the schools after two years of classes in blended or distance modality.

## Challenges:

- Recovery of learning. It is estimated that before the pandemic, 70% of 15-year-old students did not reach the minimum learning levels in Reading and Mathematics; this figure could have increased by 90%.

## Next steps:

- Work on learning recovery in pre-high school, in flexible educational modalities, early warning systems.



# PARAGUAY



Unicef Paraguay- Karanda - El Estribo - Chaco Py-225

Ministerial Resolution No. 88/2022 established that all educational institutions at all levels and sectors, including early childhood centres, were enabled for the face-to-face modality. To date, 10,292 schools are fully open benefiting 1,549,000 students.

Resolution No. 1/2022, which regulates the 2022 school calendar for educational institutions of the official, private and subsidized private sector at different levels of the country, contemplated diagnostic tests carried out in three periods: at the beginning of the school year, at the return from winter vacations and at the end of October. Regarding learning recovery strategies, in 2021 the technical teams and the Pedagogical Innovation Units worked on the 2022 curricular prioritization for primary and secondary education. The document is based on three aspects: offering feedback and reinforcement spaces to students according to their respective grade, guaranteeing socio-emotional health care, and offering tools that allow them to develop their competencies according to their respective grade and course.

The Pedagogical Counseling Project was carried out for teachers in classrooms and the distribution of learning workbooks for 100% of the students. The learning leveling stage was carried out from March 7 to May 31 in the areas of Communication and Mathematics, according to the skills prioritized for the first and second cycle of basic education, while for the third cycle and middle school, this stage was determined according to the results of the diagnosis. As psychosocial support strategies, teacher training has prioritized the care of psycho-emotional health with the use of tools and guidelines for timely attention.

## Achievements:

- The use of the platform "Tu Escuela en Casa/ Paraguay Aprende" (Your School at Home/Paraguay Learns).
- The development of educational materials, both in television and digital format.
- Formation of a network of volunteer teachers as material development units.
- The return to school of almost the total enrollment, according to the study of children out of school, a reduction of children out of school is visible.
- Effort for curricular prioritization.

## Challenges:

- According to the study of children out of school, there is an increase in the number of children at risk of exclusion, mostly in the case of over-aged students. Although three rounds of classroom evaluations have been carried out, the socialization of data and the detailing of specific classroom interventions are still pending.

## Next steps:

- To implement in the field in 2023 the Out-of-School Children Project in priority departments, with the objective of enrolling 7,000 children and adolescents, providing personalized pedagogical support and coordinating intersectoral efforts to prevent the expulsion of students.

- Continue working in schools in indigenous communities to prepare for emergencies, both in terms of health and the effects of climate change in El Chaco. Provide water and sanitation improvements, teacher training and adolescent participation.

- In terms of learning, UNICEF Paraguay will analyze the quality of early childhood services in the formal modality and will make progress in learning measurement instruments with the use of literacy kits in the mother tongue, distributed within the framework of the pandemic for the continuity of learning.



# PERU



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All 110,910 schools are fully open in face-to-face modality, as are all 52,648 early childhood centres, with the exception of a small number of schools closed for infrastructure remodeling. 8,830,123 students (4,448,337 boys and 4,381,786 girls) attend classes in face-to-face modality.

The Ministry of Education (MINEDU) promoted the application of diagnostic tests in Reading and Mathematics at the national level, however there is no monitoring of the application at the school level. in addition, MINEDU launched the "National School Reinforcement Strategy" at the end of April 2022, promoted school reinforcement plans and authorized the addition of hours in the school day for reinforcement activities in Reading and Mathematics, especially for the most vulnerable students. This effort has not been implemented at the national level due to lack of resources and has depended on the capacities of the territorial units (Regional Education Directorate (DRE) and the Local Education Management Unit (UGEL)).

UNICEF Peru and other partners have supported with reinforcement workshops for students with greater need, through the support of volunteers and promoters complementing the work of teachers. Finally, the "National School Reinforcement Strategy" includes socio-emotional support actions to address critical issues such as bullying and mental health problems; these actions are implemented in some areas of the country, with the support of MINEDU, DRE and UGEL.

## Achievements:

- Most schools have reopened in person in the first weeks of the 2022 school year.
- Several regional governments have implemented diagnostic evaluations, and there have been some school reinforcement actions in schools.
- UNICEF and other humanitarian organizations have undertaken school reinforcement actions with different methodologies, supporting or complementing State actions.
- MINEDU has developed a standardized learning test in Reading and Mathematics in November 2022, which will help to analyze the real learning situation in the country.

## Challenges:

- Political instability has generated a great deal of uncertainty and educational issues have ceased to be prioritized.
- Despite the efforts of UNICEF Peru and other organizations, the recovery of learning has not been made a priority in the public agenda and is not a focused effort but a general one.

- Lack of information and accurate monitoring of learning.
- Greater efforts to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable groups (indigenous children, children with disabilities, migrants and refugees).

**Next steps:**

- Advocate to make learning recovery a public priority with the new government cabinet.
- Use the work in schools supported by UNICEF Peru and the different programs to model solutions that improve learning, especially for the most vulnerable children.
- Make better use of digital technologies and solutions to complement school reinforcement actions inside and outside the school.



# SURINAME




The reopening began on October 1, 2021 and currently all 578 schools and all early childhood centres are open in face-to-face modality.

A learning evaluation was carried out for students through the periodic formative evaluation system. With regard to learning recovery strategies, content was adapted and the transition from primary to lower secondary education was reformed: primary education was extended to include 9th and 10th grades as orientation years before moving on to secondary education.

Finally, as psychosocial support strategies, training for student counselors and decentralization of attention to students were carried out.

## Achievements:

- Reform of the system in terms of the transition approach through the primary level.
- Reform of the student assessment system and expansion of the primary level.

## Challenges:

- Rapid adaptation of caregivers, teachers and other stakeholders as well as students to adopt the new form of assessment and transition.

## Next steps:

- Continue working on reforms to improve student-centered learning together with the Ministry of Education.

# URUGUAY

Currently, all 3,600 schools and 765 early childhood centres are fully open, benefiting 772,463 children with on-site education.

In terms of learning diagnostics for boys and girls, the Aristas 2020 First report of results for third and sixth grade of primary education evaluation, was carried out,. As a learning recovery strategy, virtual education was strengthened through the CEIBAL Plan, and in March 2022, a Plan for Beginning of the Course was approved with a focus on those with educational vulnerabilities with emphasis on the first and last grades, on socioemotional accompaniment for students and teachers, and on health promotion in the context of the pandemic. A formative diagnostic evaluation was applied for basic secondary education, and during the school year educational trajectories were monitored, identifying students at risk of disengagement, adapting the curriculum and making the passing of grades more flexible in order to protect school trajectories. Finally, a general orientation plan was designed on socioemotional and psycho-affective aspects focused on students at risk of dropping out of school.

## Achievements:

- In 2022, classes were conducted entirely face-to-face.
- The return to permanent, face-to-face classes proved to be the major change from the pandemic.
- Once face-to-face classes resumed, there were no major changes in sight. The pandemic was behind us and we were partly back on track pre-pandemic.

## Challenges:

- The main challenge has been to get students to attend classes on a permanent basis.
- To recover (equalize) the learning lost during the pandemic.

## Next steps:

- Contribute to the development and systematization of educational proposals and devices in secondary schools in vulnerable contexts. With emphasis on educational reintegration and learning recovery.
- Generate knowledge, support center models, promote diagnostic evaluations.
- Strengthen educational proposals based on digital learning and the Ceibal model.
- Support the educational system to reinforce its capacities for inclusive education, through the improvement of student records; the generation of devices and tools that allow greater access; the strengthening of inclusive education models and the sensitization of families and teachers.



# VENEZUELA




100% of the schools are open in face-to-face modality, with the exception of some temporarily closed due to the rainy season, which maintain the hybrid education model. Similarly, all 16,301 early childhood centres are open. To date, 4,054,165 students (1,985,271 boys and 2,068,894 girls) are benefiting from the reopening.

As strategies for learning recovery, curricular and timetable adjustments have been made, with emphasis on the teaching of language, mathematics and socio-emotional support. In addition, as strategies for learning leveling, diagnostics and project-based learning were carried out and use was made of the accelerated education guides for middle school. Finally, the psychosocial support strategies were based on sports for development and life skills, which are included in the curriculum and the students' study plans.

## Achievements:

- Progressive recovery of schooling and consolidation of regular teacher attendance.
- Process of establishing guidelines for the recommendation of learning (return of Venezuela to the Latin American Laboratory for the Evaluation of the Quality of Education (LLECE)).
- There is a curriculum adaptation in secondary education in the area of basic competencies.

## Challenges:

- Active search for children and adolescents out of school, and support with social protection policies for families to favor the return and permanence of children and adolescents in school.
- Prioritization of teacher training in the teaching of basic skills.
- Recognition of good practices developed with Non-Governmental Organizations for their elevation to public policy (Program "Nos Vemos en la Escuela" for the reinsertion of children and adolescents out of school; and school leveling program for primary education).
- Extension of the psycho-emotional support program (life skills and sports for development) to pre-school and primary education.
- Adoption by the Ministry of Education of a program to support children and adolescents out of school.
- Strengthening digital competencies in teachers and students.

- Strengthening the school feeding program of the Ministry of Education to provide attention to the most vulnerable.

**Next steps:**

- Develop didactic capacities in teachers for the recovery of basic competencies.
- Continue with the curricular adaptation in basic competencies in initial and primary education.
- Promote initiatives to strengthen the hybrid education model to strengthen digital competencies in teachers and students.
- Accompany the Ministry of Education in its return to LLECE and in the strengthening of the Educational Quality Laboratory.

## XI. REGIONAL RESOURCES

- On September 12, the global launch event ***"Commitment to School Safety: Comprehensive School Safety Framework 2022-2030"*** was held in virtual modality. You can access the GADRRRES website here.
- The LAC region launch of the ***"Commitment to School Safety: Comprehensive School Safety Framework 2022-2030"*** will be held on January 19, 2023 in virtual modality.
- On November 22 and 23, 2022, the ***II Safe Schools Forum of the SICA Region*** was held in the Dominican Republic, which ended with the update of the SICA region's Roadmap on school safety. Access more information here.


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