GUIDANCE FOR COVID-19 PREVENTION AND CONTROL IN SCHOOLS

Supplemental Content B: Contextualization, Dissemination & Implementation

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Key Considerations

Work through local mechanisms (national and sub-national authorities and school communities) to build capacity, disseminate and implement guidance/protocols, and to monitor and evaluate effectiveness.

Utilize existing coordination mechanisms in both education and health, including national task forces, clusters, local education groups, etc., ensuring community participation while maximizing multi-sectoral cooperation with WASH and Child Protection.

Contextualize guidance based on local strengths, risk factors and evolving health advice and public policies, with a focus on serving the most vulnerable.

Contextualization

As COVID-19 is a new virus, we are still learning about transmission and mitigation. Contextualization will be critical to ensure prevention and control measures in school are reflective of and responsive to the latest medical evidence and changing local conditions.

Furthermore, this general global guidance should be adapted to reflect cultural considerations, religious practices, diverse educational settings and the specific needs of vulnerable populations.
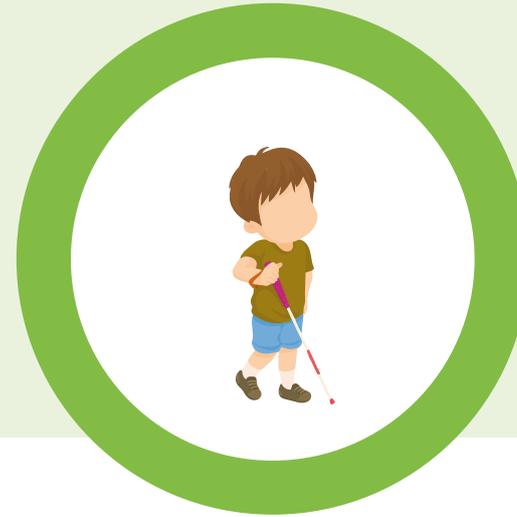
▶ Vulnerable populations may include: indigenous communities, children with disabilities, girls, poor children, children from socio-cultural-linguistic minorities, and children on the move (migrants, refugees, IDPs, asylum seekers).

▶ Consider how guidance will need to be adapted to non-formal and alternative education settings such as specialized schools (schools for the blind, etc.), madrassas, temporary learning spaces, early childhood centers, camp settings, residential schools or schools with dormitories.

Guidance should be reviewed by diverse, representative task teams who can make recommendations for adaptation based on existing school emergency

management plans and the local context. These can then be submitted to educational authorities for approval and wide-spread adoption.

Dissemination

Develop **dissemination approaches** informed by local capacity and system efficiency and based on two scenarios, schools open and schools closed (preparing for re-opening).

Where schools are open:
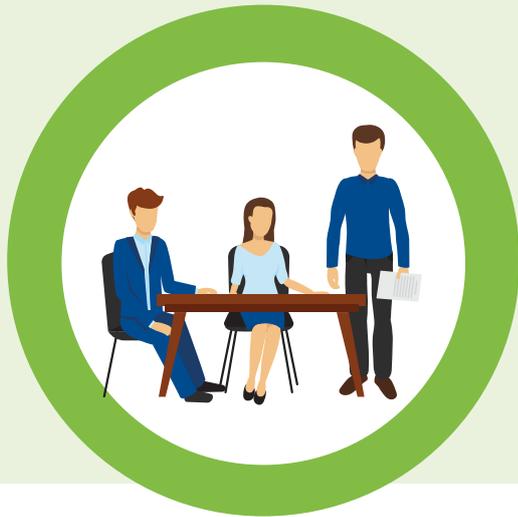
▶ Work with education authorities to provide official communication on the adoption of school protocols to prevent and control COVID-19.

▶ Display informative brochures and posters on key elements of the guidance at schools and make public announcements.
  ▶ Consider targeted guidance for different school audiences: custodial staff, food handlers, students, and teachers, placing guidance in cafeterias, staff rooms, toilets/latrines, etc.

▶ Provide dedicated trainings for school administrators, staff and teachers.
  ▶ This can be a part of regular in-service training or through a dedicated training session.
  ▶ School leaders can be trained as trainers and then utilize a cascade method to train smaller groups of teachers and staff.

- ▶ Provide orientations for parent committees, school management groups, etc. that involve the community.

- ▶ Use existing student groups to promote information on safe, healthy behaviors, increase action to combat stigma and discrimination and awareness of resources in the community.

- ▶ For all groups, where large gatherings are discouraged, consider virtual or video trainings.
  - ▶ Ensure information is accessible in relevant languages and adapted for the hearing or visually impaired as relevant.

Where schools are closed:
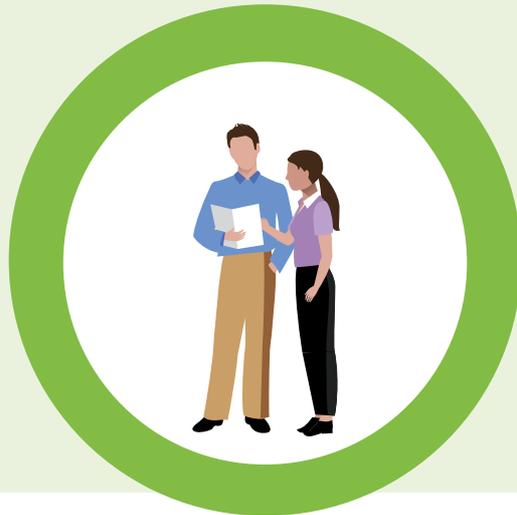
- ▶ Work with education authorities to provide official communication on when, where and to what extent schools will be re-opening (particularly where school systems are opening in stages).
  - ▶ Share information well in advance and broadcast widely over all media outlets.
  - ▶ Communications should be accessible in relevant languages and to the hearing/visually impaired.
  - ▶ Communications should encourage the return to school of students previously out of school, of girls and any marginalized children/youth and explain precautions put in place to ensure staff and students are safe.
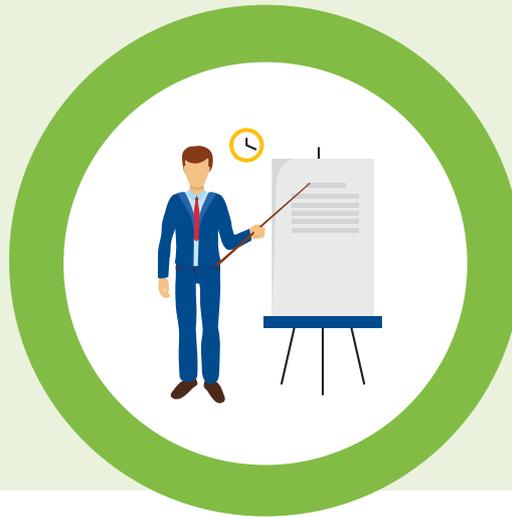
- ▶ Systems should consider staggering school openings to test dissemination and implementation of protocols for COVID-19 prevention and control in schools.

Implementation

- ▶ Before schools are open, ensure they are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

- ▶ Before students return to school, ensure staff and teachers are trained on operating procedures and orient parent committees, school management groups, and other bodies that involve the community (see training suggestion above in *Where schools are open*)
  - ▶ Consider mock drills for procedures when a staff or student are ill.

- ▶ Have teachers orient students on new school protocols in each classroom, emphasizing what to do if they feel ill and promoting safe, healthy behaviors.
  - ▶ Emphasize MH/PSS considerations, including combatting stigma and let students know where they can go for help.
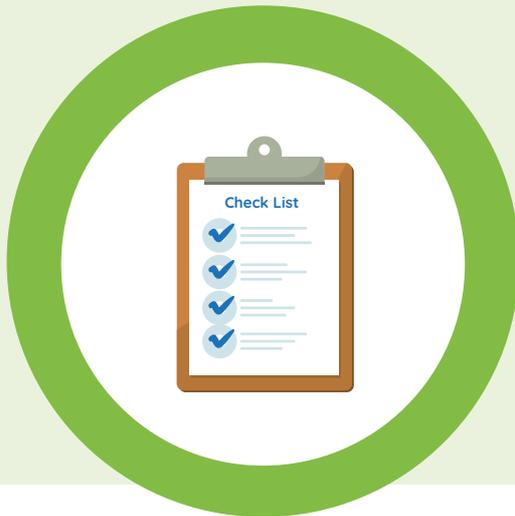
- ▸ Develop contingency plans to ensure continuity of learning and continuation of critical services.
  - ▸ Plans should consider no/low tech options.
  - ▸ Consider what technology can be utilized to support children and families in their homes such as eLearning platforms, radio, TV, telephone calls and messaging services (text message, whatsapp, etc).
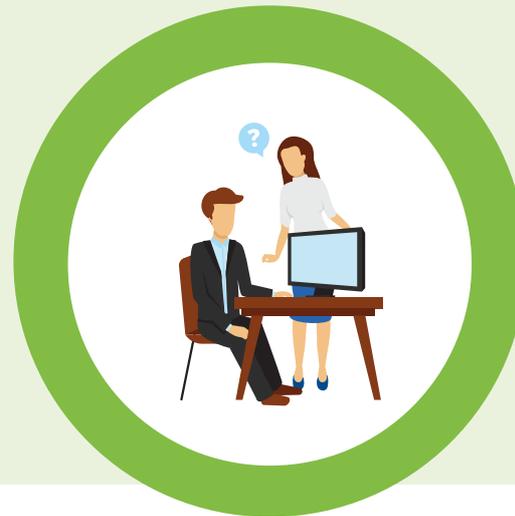
- ▸ Monitor implementation for adoption, adherence, perceptions of safety and track school-based transmission where possible.
  - ▸ Consider innovative messaging tools and social platforms such as U-Report.