

UNESCO COVID-19 Education Response

Education Sector Issue Notes

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Crisis-sensitive educational planning

Introduction

In light of the far-reaching consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on education systems around the world, with 89% of the world's student population affected by COVID-19 school closures as of 1 April 2020, governments and partner organizations have ramped up efforts to facilitate the continuity of learning¹. It is important to acknowledge that the current crisis will have long-lasting consequences for education systems in terms of access, quality, equity and management, which are likely to persist beyond the pandemic. Furthermore, risks of disasters, conflict and violence, are becoming more frequent, pointing towards the increased need to strengthen risk reduction capacities in the education sectors, including through prevention, preparedness and mitigation activities.

Therefore, while recognizing the urgency of immediate action to minimize educational disruption, UNESCO advocates for rapid response efforts to be underpinned by a mid- and longer-term, multi-risk and sustainability-oriented approach. Initiatives that are put in place as part of an immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic should ideally build on and strengthen local strategies to sustain responsiveness and engagement at all levels of the education system.

In this way, rapid response measures can contribute to reinforcing the resilience of national education systems, and supporting the long-term education vision of national authorities.

Defining the topic and related key issues

While many countries struck by the COVID-19 crisis may require international support to ensure educational continuity for all learners and to protect and maintain the welfare of the education workforce during the current emergency, governments, through their Ministries of Education (MoEs), remain responsible for education provision. Rapid response programmes that aim to ensure continuity of education provision should align with MoE priorities and long-term activities. Supporting MoEs in institutionalizing crisis risk reduction and management into education planning processes can help MoEs in better leading the planning and delivery of education before, during, and after a crisis, as well as in preparing for and mitigating the impacts of the crisis. This approach is referred to as 'crisis-

¹ <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>