

**INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES FOR ASSESSING LEARNING OUTCOMES
EMERGING IN THE COVID-19 ERA IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA:
THE CASE OF LESOTHO
17 MARCH 2021
KIX AFRICA 19 HUB**



Presentation by Letsatsi NTSIBOLANE

Background

- Lesotho is in transition from the subject-based (traditional) curriculum to an integrated curriculum
- The role-out, in phases, begun in 2012 with Grades 1-3 to be fully completed in Grade 11 in 2021.
- Studies reveal that teachers are crippling with not only understanding the theoretical underpinning integrated curriculum and the inherent assessment therein (formative assessment) but also the key components of integrated curriculum, inter alia, learner-centeredness.
- Thus the advent of COVID 19 found Lesotho still in the learning curve on integrated curriculum.
- The pandemic has added more salt in the wound

Background cont.

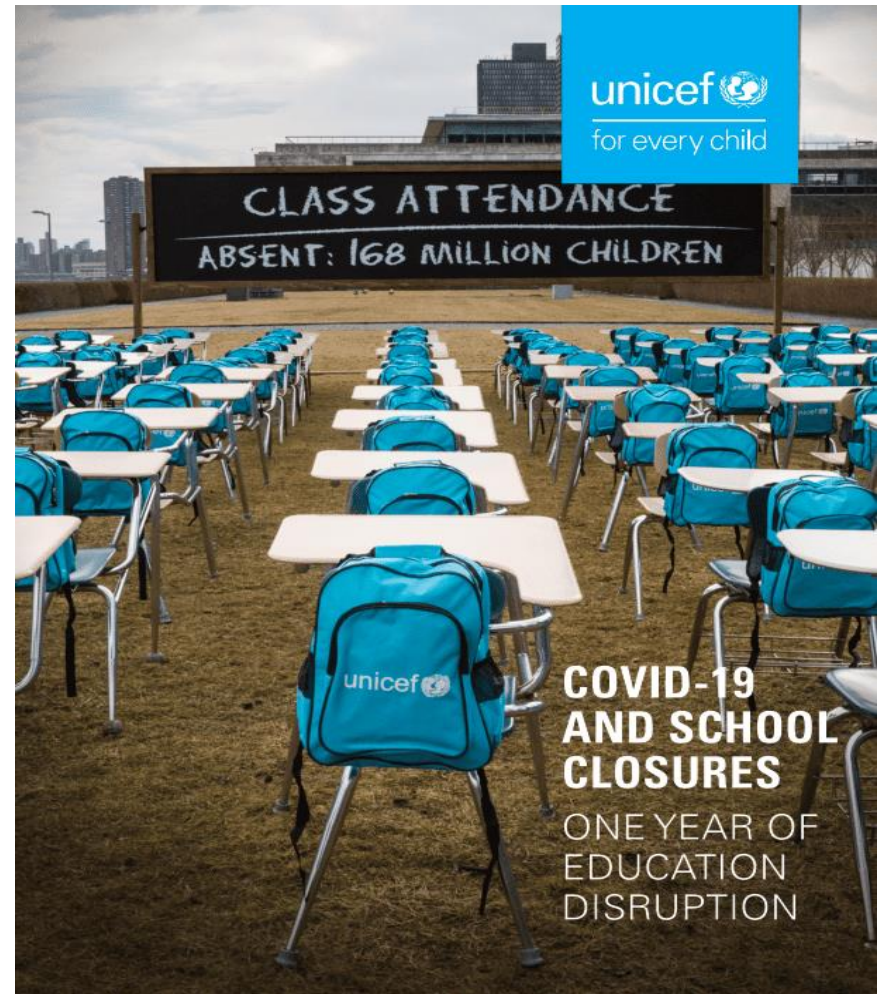
- Public primary schools have since closed from the 19 March 2020 and are yet to open on the 6 April 2021
- Public secondary schools opened on the 3rd March 2021 save classes sitting for external exams that opened intermittently
- Distance learning efforts to use learner packed not successful

POLICY PAPER
WEIGHING UP THE RISKS:
SCHOOL CLOSURE AND
REOPENING UNDER COVID-19
— WHEN, WHY, AND WHAT IMPACTS?



Assessment during COVID 19

- Radio and Television employed from April to July 2020 by UNICEF
- The programme had to stop due to challenge
- Access remained a challenge
- Little to no assessment done, at least by educators
- Private schools employed WhatsApp during lockdown



Assessment cont.

- Some public schools used WhatsApp for learners sitting for final examinations
- Based on teacher voluntarism
- Assessment remained a challenge
- Teaching mainly a one-way traffic
- All grades have been promoted to the next level without any assessment



Assessment cont.

- Efforts to employ class presentations realised in some public (sec.) and private schools
- Assignments given to learners at schools currently
- Marking still a challenge for fear of infection
- Oral classroom assessment preferred



Government efforts

- Development of accelerated teaching and learning interventions
- Zero-rating to Lesotho Learning passport website for Basic Education
- Accessible by students, teachers, parents and the Ministry of Education and Training officials



Conclusion

- While efforts are made to employ some form of assessment in schools that have opened, there are more challenges than success
- A number of challenges, inter alia, curriculum change, internet connectivity, shortage of teachers and classrooms have hampered not only schooling but the critical component of learning: assessment
- With sluggish progress in COVID 19 vaccine procurement and vaccination, it is imminent that should a third wave strike, learning will seriously be hampered.
- Distance learning is also under threat
- Lesotho education remains very vulnerable

Merci

