

Webinar series on FRAMEWORK FOR REOPENING SCHOOLS

Learning in the COVID-19 era

8 June 2020 (15:00-16:30 GMT+2)



Background

Education institutions have been closed locally or country-wide around the world since early February this year, as part of wider measures to contain the spread of COVID-19. This poses an unprecedented disruption to students' learning.

Past gains in participation, learning loss, together with an increased risk of dropout and widening inequalities, are some of the immediate concerns for the education sector. Lost learning opportunities during lockdowns can also have medium to longer-term effects on the lives of most learners, especially for marginalized and at-risk children.

As governments prepare for school reopening, it is important to understand the extent to which learning has continued during school closures, but also how to turn possible learning losses and gaps into opportunities for better and more meaningful learning and learning outcomes. This will help provide recommendations and appropriate interventions for necessary remedial programmes when schools reopen, but also an opportunity for reimagining and transforming the futures of teaching and learning.

Distance learning, provided through various modalities, has played a key role in ensuring learning continuity for some students but not for all. As schools reopen, it will remain important to come up with a mix of differentiated pedagogical approaches to meet divergent learning needs and capacities of learners, such as blended programmes. This could be facilitated through a combination of distance and face-to-face teaching and it will help strengthen the resilience of education systems to deal with future resurgence, whether schools reopen partially or close again sporadically. Gathering lessons learned, generated during the crisis, can help to better prepare teachers, students and entire education systems to ensure learning continues. This will also promote better learning in the future, from a lifelong and life-wide learning perspective, in the pursuit of the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal on education (SDG 4).

Objectives of the webinar

Departing from the joined [Framework for reopening of schools](#), issued by UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank and WFP, this webinar on learning is part of the effort to support national governments for the preparation and implementation of the reopening of schools. The webinar aims to share experiences, lessons and expertise on strategies to ensure teaching and learning can continue, together with pedagogical approaches when transitioning from school closures to school reopening. This includes monitoring learning gaps and providing appropriate remedial action, paying particular attention to preventing exacerbation of learning inequalities.

Questions the webinar will address

The webinar will address the following questions:

1. What approaches and strategies could be used to effectively measure the learning experience occurred during the crisis and how this information can feed the decision-making process and practice of different actors in the education system?
2. What remedial strategies and interventions could be considered when schools reopen to ensure adequate curriculum implementation?
3. How to support teachers and other education personnel to cope with smooth curriculum transition?

Discussion themes

1. Assessing teaching and learning experience during school closures

This part will look into different strategies to assess the teaching and learning experience, which occurred during school closures. The discussion will help uncover the experiences, lived or perceived, by both teachers and learners in order to identify the challenges and means to overcome them. Related questions include the following:

- What approaches have been used to gauge the teaching and learning experience during lockdown, before initiating the curriculum continuation when schools reopen? How has this information been used and shared among students, parents, teachers, and officials at central and decentralized levels?

- What measures have been effective to strengthen the capacity to assess and leverage the socio-emotional well-being of learners and provide psychosocial support, in an effort to strengthen learners' abilities and preparedness for better learning?
- What logistical arrangements are necessary for the preparation of a conducive environment to facilitate teaching and learning in a timely manner?

2. Organizing remedial actions and accelerated learning programmes

It is also key to examine different options for remedial action that will play an important role when schools reopen. The discussion will therefore focus on the following potential strategies:

- Adjustments to curriculum, timetables and instructional time to catch up on learning gaps;
- Remedial learning programmes to close learning gaps with a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
- Blended courses, when schools remain only partially open.

3. Supporting teachers and other education personnel to manage the smooth transitioning from distance learning to school-based education

Supporting teacher and education personnel in the transition phase will be key for the reopening process. The discussion will look into the following elements:

- Different dimensions to take into account for the preparation of teachers for school-based teaching (psychosocial, interpersonal, pedagogical, and other);
- Additional support to teachers and other educational personnel in view of the reopening of schools and face-to-face teaching in more marginalized settings;
- Planning elements to consider in decision-making processes.

Format

This 90-minute Webinar will include 5 panelists from the co-leading organizations and selected countries around the world. A moderator will facilitate the discussion between the discussants on the three main themes. A Q&A session will follow the discussion.

Audience

The webinar is primarily directed to ministry of education officials, education practitioners, and other interested partners and stakeholders.

Technical platform

The webinar will be held in English, conducted through the Zoom webinar platform. The link will be provided on the following website: <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/webinars>

Agenda

Monday, 8 June 2020	
15:00-15:05	Welcoming remarks Ms Suzanne Grant Lewis Director of the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP)
15:05-15:10	Moderator Mr Hugues Moussy Head of the Research and Development Team, IIEP
15:10-15:50	Panel discussion Mr Gwang-Chol Chang Chief of Section of Education Policy, UNESCO Ms Jane Courtney Education Specialist, UNICEF Jordan Ms Tara Beteille Senior Economist and Thematic Lead on Teachers for the Education Global Practice, the World Bank Ms Rukmini Banerji CEO of Pratham Mr David Steiner Executive Director, Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy
15:50-16:25	Questions & Answers
16:25-16:30	Closing remarks Mr Hugues Moussy Head of the Research and Development Team, IIEP

Panellists

Suzanne Grant-Lewis is the Director of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) since 2014, providing strategic vision and leadership. She has over 25 years of experience in improving educational opportunities, particularly in education policy and planning in Africa. She helped launch the International Education Funders Group to promote Education for All and directed the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa. As a Harvard University faculty member, she co-developed and directed a Master's degree International Educational Policy Programme. She has taught postgraduate courses on gender inequalities in education and education planning and policymaking in international settings.



Jane Courtney is an Education Specialist at UNICEF Jordan where she is designing programmes to promote children's Learning Recovery during and post COVID-19. Previously she worked in Jordan as the Chief Academic Director at the Queen Rania Teacher Academy, where she led on the planning for operationalizing how pre-service teacher education could be developed nationally; in two London universities in teacher education including as Head of an Education Department, where she led and taught undergraduate and post graduate degrees; on a number of education projects in several countries, predominately Cambodia in 2001 - 2017.



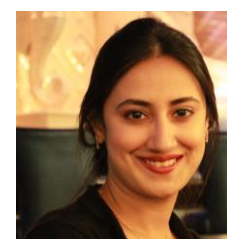
David Steiner is the Executive Director of the Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy and Professor of Education at Johns Hopkins University. He currently serves as a member of the Maryland State Board of Education. He previously served as Commissioner of Education for New York State. He holds degrees from Oxford University (B.A. and M.A.) and Harvard University (Ph.D.).



Rukmini Banerji is CEO of Pratham, where she has been part of the leadership team since 1996. Since 2005, she has led the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER). In 2008 Rukmini was the inaugural recipient of the Maulana Abul Kalam Shiksha Puraskar Award conferred by the Government of Bihar, India. She is internationally recognised as a champion and expert of foundational learning.



Tara Bêteille is a Senior Economist in the East Asia Pacific region and leads the World Bank's Teacher Careers and Professional Development Thematic Group. She has also worked in the World Bank's South Asia education team, the Independent Evaluation Group, the Chief Economist's Office for South Asia, and the Caribbean education team. Her research focuses on the political economy of teacher labour markets and higher education. She manages early childhood education, school education and higher education projects.



Hugues Moussy is head of the UNESCO-IIEP Research and Development team. He is a senior education specialist and educational planner with extensive international experience, currently focusing on the use of learning assessment data. Previously, he was chief of party for the French cooperation and special advisor to the Minister of Basic Education for international cooperation in Cameroon; headed the unit of human development at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs; represented France in the GPE Board of Directors in 2009 and 2010 and served as a senior education specialist at the GPE Secretariat in 2011- 2017.



Gwang-Chol Chang is the Chief of Section of Education Policy in the Division of Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems at UNESCO. Since joining UNESCO in 1996, he has held various positions at the Education Sector in Paris, supporting diverse programmes such as policy analysis, planning and management, including in post-conflict and post disaster situations (PCPD). He also served as Senior Programme Specialist at the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education and led the Education Section of the UNESCO Regional Office for West Africa-Sahel until 2019.

