PATHWAYS FOR THE RETURN TO LEARNING: Catch-up Programmes

13 May 2021
Improving Accelerated Education Programme (AEP) Quality

AEPs better resourced by all key stakeholders for scale and quality

AE Evidence Base strengthened

Quality of AEPs improved

AEPs included by more governments in national education plans and policies

COVID-19 Response
Catch Up Principles

ACCELERATED EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

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Catch-up Programmes: 10 Principles for Helping Learners Catch Up and Return to Learning

March 2020
COVID-19 Decision Tree & Brief

Implement back-to-school campaigns to (re)engage all learners.

Return learners to same formal or alternative education programme. Extend instructional time to get back on track.

Return learners to same formal or alternative education programme. Implement catch-up programme. Remedial education for those who are struggling.

Enrol learners in non-formal catch-up programme. Remedial education for those who are struggling.

Return learners to AEP. Extend instructional time to get back on track.

Consider extending the school day or term, shortening breaks, double shifting, or distance learning.

Ensure AEP learners stay on the same academic calendar as the formal schools so they can sit exams and transition.

Many barriers to education have been exacerbated by COVID-19. Ensure these specific barriers are addressed by appropriate programming options.

Leverage distance learning to ensure physical distancing standards are met, to provide remedial support to struggling learners and to meet the needs of learners who are unable to return.
Why catch-up programmes?

ACCELERATED EDUCATION PROGRAMMES
• Over-age out-of-school children and youth
• Out of school for 2+ years
• Complete the primary curriculum
• Transition into the next education level

CATCH-UP PROGRAMMES
• Learners who were previously attending an education programme
• Out of school for 3 to 12 months
• Recover lost learning and gain skills they missed
• Return to the same education programme
Catch-up Principles

How are the Principles organised?
The principles are organised into four categories: Learners, Teachers, Programme Management, and Alignment with MOE and Policy Frameworks. These categories are based on the same categories as the Accelerated Education 10 Principles for Effective Practice and emphasise the main components of catch-up programmes.

LEARNERS

ALIGNMENT WITH MOE AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Principle 9: The catch-up programme is recognised by and aligned with the national education system and has clear transition pathways.

Principle 10: The catch-up programme is integrated into the national education system and relevant humanitarian architecture.

Principle 4: Instructional time, delivery modality, and examinations are adapted.

Principle 5: The catch-up programme effectively uses learner-centred pedagogy.
Condensing a Curriculum to Help Learners Catch Up

Catch-up Programmes: 10 Principles for Helping Learners Catch Up and Return to Learning

March 2020

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The principles are organised into four categories: Learners, Teachers, Programme Management, and Alignment with MOE and Policy Frameworks. These categories are based on the same categories as the Apprenticed Educators 10 Principles for Effective Practice and emphasise the main components of catch-up programmes.

**LEARNERS**

Principle 1: The catch-up programme meets the holistic needs of learners whose education was disrupted for several months to approximately a year.

Principle 2: The learning environment is physically and emotionally safe, and emergency prevention, preparedness, and response plans are in place.

Principle 3: The catch-up programme curriculum is condensed—prioritising, integrating, and maintaining the most essential competencies.

Principle 4: Instructional time, delivery modality, and examinations are adapted.

Principle 5: The catch-up programme effectively uses learner-centred pedagogy.

**TEACHERS**

Principle 6: Teachers are re-engaged and their well-being is supported after the education disruption.

Principle 7: Teachers have the capacity and resources to re-engage all learners and implement the catch-up programme.

**PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT**

Principle 8: Learners, families, and communities are informed, consulted, engaged, and accountable.

**ALIGNMENT WITH MOE AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS**

Principle 9: The catch-up programme is recognised by and aligned with the national education system and has clear transition pathways.

Principle 10: The catch-up programme is integrated into the national education system and relevant humanitarian architecture.
Purpose of the Guidance

Introduction
The COVID-19 pandemic has presented education systems around the world with a unique set of challenges. By the end of April 2020, school closures in 185 countries had affected 90% of students worldwide. While a variety of distance learning approaches were rapidly implemented, there was little time to plan quality instruction, equitably access, feedback to learners, or assessment. The result has been a loss of learning time with learners in marginalized and rural communities disproportionately affected.

Education systems are now faced with developing pandemic response plans that address complex instructional needs. They need to address the impact of lost learning time, while ensuring students continue to learn grade-level skills. They need to address new health and safety measures, as well as the social-emotional needs of learners and teachers. And they need to do so within the context of an accelerating school year that is likely to include instructional disruptions, such as reduced in-class time, the use of distance learning to supplement or replace face-to-face instruction, and unpredictable school closures.

A condensed curriculum may be one part of the response education systems employ to meet these needs.

A condensed curriculum supports learners’ acquisition of key knowledge and skills in a compressed time frame that may include discontinuous face-to-face instruction. A well-organized condensed curriculum helps teachers teach more effectively through school-year disruptions and stoppages. While a condensed curriculum is not a stand-alone strategy for addressing lost teaching and learning time, it can be an important element of the overall instructional response when countries implement national catch-up programs or non-formal options, such as accelerated education.

Purpose
The goal of this document is to assist Ministers of Education (MoE), district offices, curriculum developers, and implementing partners in developing a condensed curriculum for primary school or guiding practitioners to do so. The key considerations and planning tools in this document are not meant to be prescriptive, but instead provide a broad overview of best practices that can guide decisions about condensing a curriculum in a way that best meets the needs of learners and teachers in the local context.

➢ Practical and flexible
➢ Focuses on primary school
➢ Part of an overall instructional response to COVID-19

For more information on education options in response to COVID-19 see the AFG COVID-19 Decision Tree.
What is a condensed curriculum?

Condensed Curriculum = Prioritised Curriculum

A condensed curriculum prioritises high-leverage, transferable knowledge and skills in literacy, mathematics, thinking skills and problem solving.

In response to COVID-19, it addresses:

- Lost learning time
- Essential grade-level knowledge and skills
- Success at the next grade-level
- Social-emotional needs through social-emotional learning
Condensing curriculum – Basic Design Principles

**Inclusive**
- Practices, pedagogy, and materials are gender-neutral including girls from marginalized communities.
- Learning outcomes describe everything learners are expected to know and be able to do by the end of the school year. All outcomes are assessed equal in importance in the curriculum.

**Outcome-based**
- Lessons objectives and learning experiences are logically sequenced to build knowledge and skills at the current grade level.

**Coherent**
- Model lessons include examples of instructional practices and learning materials that engage and motivate learners.

**Comprehensible**
- Learning activities, cognitive tasks, language, materials, and pacing are developmentally appropriate.

**Supportive**
- Learning experiences should address learners’ physical, social, and emotional well-being.

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**Condensing Curriculum: Planning Tips**

1. Use clear criteria to establish priority outcomes. It is important to use consistent criteria to establish priority outcomes and to communicate both the priority outcomes and the criteria. School-level curriculum developers can use the same criteria to establish their instructional decisions.

2. Determine a learning sequence that focuses instruction on the attainment of all the prerequisite knowledge and skills. Lessons need to have a step-by-step experience builds upon the last. In addition, key skills from the previous school year should be introduced at the beginning to ensure that prerequisite skills that support priority outcomes are revisited at the end of the instructional sequence. It is effective to try to address them at all levels or to avoid repeating them.

**Condensing aCurriculum Getting Started**

1. Focus on the essential curriculum to develop and implement a condensed curriculum.

2. Select and prioritize the essential curriculum.

3. Ensure that the selected curriculum is aligned with state standards and goals.

4. Identify learners to condense curriculum for each grade level.

5. Plan learning and time to learners responsibilities for condensing the curriculum.

6. Use clear criteria to establish priority outcomes for literacy and mathematics, and develop a vertical alignment.

**Priority Outcomes: All subjects and age groups**

- **Endurance**
  - Priority outcomes should focus on knowledge and skills that learners will need throughout their lives.
  - Examples: Teaching complex mathematical concepts.

- **Leverage**
  - Priority outcomes should focus on knowledge and skills that learners need to succeed in the academic and non-academic areas.
  - Examples: Understanding key international relations and thinking critically about the role of advertising in our lives.

- **Academic Significance**
  - Priority outcomes should focus on knowledge and skills that learners need to succeed in college and beyond.
  - Examples: Understanding the role of ecology in our daily lives.

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**COVID-19 PATHWAYS FOR THE RETURN Guidance on Condensing a Curriculum**

- The COVID-19 pandemic has required significant changes in how we teach and learn. With the current situation, teachers and schools have had to quickly adapt and adjust to remote and hybrid learning environments.

- The goal of condensing a curriculum is to focus on the most critical and essential content while still meeting the needs of learners.

- By condensing a curriculum, teachers can ensure that students are receiving a high-quality education in a safe and healthy environment.

- Condensing a curriculum can also help to reduce the workload for teachers and school staff.

- With the ongoing pandemic, condensing a curriculum is a valuable tool for educators to help keep students engaged and on track with their learning.

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**NOTES**

- This document is a resource for schools and educators to use in condensing their curriculum in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- It provides guidance on how to identify and prioritize essential content, as well as strategies for delivering that content in a condensed format.

- For more information, please refer to the COVID-19 PATHWAYS FOR THE RETURN guidance document.
For further information:

• inee.org/collections/accelerated-education

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Accelerated Education

Topic(s): Accelerated Education

Millions of children remain out of school, especially where educational systems are struggling with growing populations and increasing displacement and migration. So how can we provide education opportunities for the millions of disadvantaged, over-age, out of school children and youth? Accelerated Education can be a pivotal strategy that addresses this need.

What is Accelerated Education?

Accelerated Education (AE) is a flexible, age-appropriate programme, run in an accelerated time frame, which aims to provide access to education for disadvantaged, over-age, out of school children and youth. This may include those who missed out on, or had their education interrupted by conflict, or face other education barriers. Rapid Accelerated Education Programmes (RAEPs) focus on delivering the curriculum content quickly and efficiently.
CARED

Short-term, transitional education programme accredited by MINEDUB

For children and youth who actively attended school before an educational disruption

Developed: Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa (ERNWACA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and UNICEF
CARED

Ensures re-entry into the formal education system
Learners 6-13
Education interrupted for less than 2 years
Formal education teachers
Classes delivered during school break
Transition into formal education
Community mobilisers support identification and enrolment
Strengthened capacity of SMC’s/ PTAs
Coordination

MINEDUB
- technical aspects
- identification of schools communities
- training of CARED instructors
- pedagogical supervision
- reintegration of CARED learners into formal schools

Education partner
- providing material
- Finance
- monitoring with respect for children's rights
Challenges

Lack of physical capacities of formal schools to host additional number of children

Overcrowded classrooms

Lack of birth registration

Negative impact of COVID 19

Language of instruction
Lessons learnt

Community involvement

Language of instruction

Teachers
Catch-up Programming in Luminos’ Second Chance Program in Liberia

Abba Karnga

May 2021
Luminos Second Chance Program

Our 10-month accelerated education program supports out-of-school children to become literate and numerate and return to mainstream school.

• Takes children from not recognizing letters to reading passages in just 10 months
• Celebrates traditional, five senses learning methods
• Condensed phonics-based curriculum
• Free midday meal provided to all students
• Helps out-of-school children (aged 8-12) become intrinsic learners
Second Chance has remarkable evidence of long-term, transformative impact for children at the margins

Achievement
About half of Luminos children are highest achievers on standardized tests.

Completion
Luminos children complete primary school at twice the rate of other local children.

Resilience
Among poorest households, Luminos children complete primary school at a much higher rate.

Happiness
Luminos children are happier and more confident.

Aspiration
Luminos children have higher education aspirations than their peers.

Luminos catch-up programming during COVID-19
Who are Luminos ‘catch-up learners’?

Watta

• 10 year-old girl from Montserrado county, Liberia;
• Before attending Second Chance, was out-of-school; worked in the market for her parents
• During COVID-19
  • Caregivers were unable to assist her with home-based learning provided by Luminos
  • No handwashing stations available in her community
  • Listened to radio lessons provided by the Ministry of Education
  • Anxious about COVID-19
• Looks forward to continuing in the Second Chance program, and improving her reading skills, when schools reopen

“I was scared of the coronavirus.”

“When I go to school I learn, and I become smart.”
COVID-19 Education Crisis in Liberia

**Liberian Context**

Population: 4.9 million

**Multiple recent crises:**
- COVID-19 (2020-now)
- Ebola (2014-16)

**Access to technology:**
- Basic Phone: 68%
- Electricity: 12%
- Internet: 8%

**60%**
Of children are out-of-school

**COVID-19**

- 2,097 cases
- 85 deaths

**2.2 million**
School-aged children out of school
(From Mid March 2020 – end of 2019/20 school year)
A different academic year

Luminos Second Chance Liberia (10-month AEP)

Normal Year
(no pandemic)

- 10-month Second Chance program (Sept-June)
- Placement Exam
- Transition to formal education

2019/20
(COVID-19 disruption)

- Second Chance (Sept-mid March)
- Schools closed
- Micro-classes
- Learning materials
- Food rations
- Home visits
- Transition to formal education

Government schools reopen in Liberia
Luminos considerations for the return to learning

COVID-19 DECISION TREE

Before COVID-19, for learners who were...

- Attending formal education
- Out of school

What type of alternative education program were they attending?

- Accelerated Education Program
- Alternative education or skills training (non-accelerated)

Will they be able to return?

- Yes
- No

Considering school closures and access to distance learning, how much education have they missed?

- A lot
- A little

Return learners to same program. Implement catch-up program. Remedial education for those who are struggling.

Luminos Second Chance Micro-Classes
### Luminos catch-up programming during COVID-19 (Micro-Classes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AEWG COVID-19 Catch-Up Principles</th>
<th>Luminos Second Chance Micro-Classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principle 1 Meeting the holistic needs of learners</td>
<td>• Conducted a rapid needs assessment in collaboration with the MOE to understand barriers learners faced in the return to education (economic, health, psychosocial, safety, etc.)&lt;br&gt;• Adapted Second Chance policies to ensure students could return to school at any point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 2 Learning environment is physically and emotionally safe and emergency response plans are in place</td>
<td>• Increased number of classes (4 shifts/day) and reduced class size to 7-8 students per class (vs 30 students in a normal Second Chance class) to ensure 1-meter physical distancing (MOE guidance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 3 Curriculum is condensed – prioritizing and reinforcing the most essential competencies</td>
<td>• Luminos Micro-classes curriculum covered concepts students missed during the school closures and revised key concepts taught earlier in the year&lt;br&gt;• Focus on literacy and numeracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 4 Instructional time, delivery modality, and examinations are adapted</td>
<td>• Extended academic year (Micro-classes were held Sept-Nov 2020; normal SY ends in June)&lt;br&gt;• Added classes on Saturdays&lt;br&gt;• 1 hr 45 min classes vs normal 8-hour Second Chance school day&lt;br&gt;• Placement Exam adapted to assess students on content covered during 2019/20 academic year (accounting for missed learning during school closures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 5 Effective use of learner-centered pedagogy</td>
<td>• Student learning levels assessed at the start of micro-classes&lt;br&gt;• Additional support provided to struggling learners&lt;br&gt;• Use of small groups, pairs, activities aligned to key literacy/numeracy concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 6 Teachers are re-engaged and well-being is supported</td>
<td>• Mobilized existing Second Chance facilitator workforce&lt;br&gt;• Facilitators compensated during micro-classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 7 Teachers have the capacity and resources to re-engage all learners</td>
<td>• Remote training deployed to facilitators prior to the start of micro-classes (a first for Luminos!)&lt;br&gt;• Provision of all necessary resources to facilitators to implement micro-classes&lt;br&gt;• Weekly on-site training and support provided to facilitators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle 9 Catch-up program is recognized and aligned with national education system and has clear transition pathways</td>
<td>• Close collaboration with the MOE to gain approval for running micro-classes&lt;br&gt;• Students transitioned (as planned) into government schools for 2020/21 school year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q&A

inee.org/collections/accelerated-education

The recording and presentations will be shared on the INEE website – inee.org