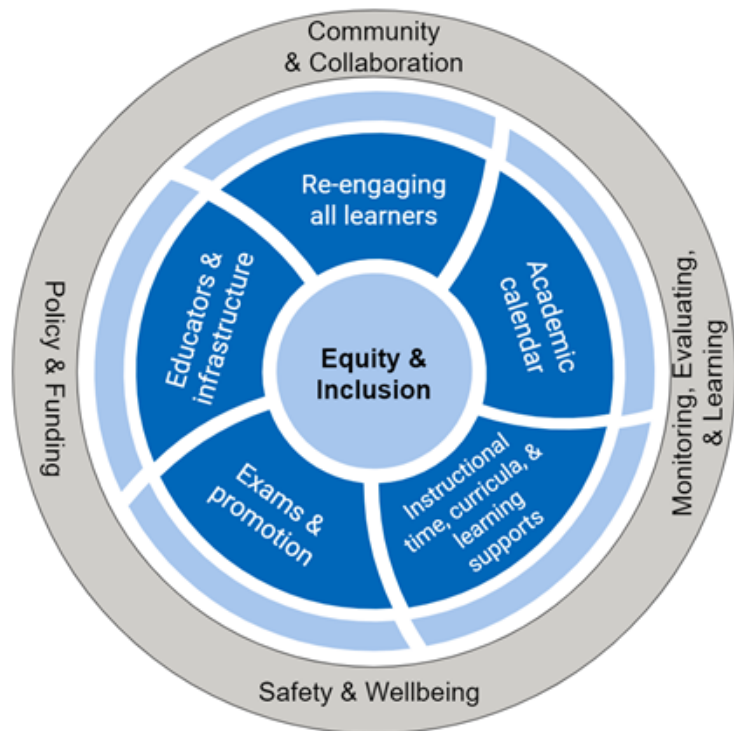


# RETURN TO LEARNING DURING COVID-19

## INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic presents an unprecedented global challenge. On April 2, 2020, at the peak of the virus’s impact on education globally, approximately 1.6 billion learners, from pre-primary through tertiary education, were affected by school closures in at least 194 countries—approximately 91.3 percent of the world’s enrolled students.<sup>1</sup> Since this peak, countries have begun reopening education institutions.

When learners return to the classroom, many will have been out of school or training for several months. To respond to this disruption, it is critical to re-engage learners, including those who dropped out, and to address educational disparities faced by the most marginalized. Countries will need to navigate learner progression and adapt learning so that learners receive essential instructional content. They may implement catch-up programs and continue distance learning as part of remedial education efforts.<sup>2</sup> This will be done alongside new infection prevention and control measures, while ensuring the psychosocial wellbeing of learners and educators.



<sup>1</sup> UNESCO (n.d.) COVID-19 and the Educational Response. Retrieved May 12, 2020. Figures represent country-wide closures.

<sup>2</sup> For definitions, see: Accelerated Education Working Group (2017). Guide to the Accelerated Education Principles.

## CROSS-CUTTING CONSIDERATIONS FOR EDUCATION PLANNERS

In planning for the return to learning, education leaders and planners will need to:

- **Ensure the safety and wellbeing of learners, educators, and school personnel** by working closely with public health officials to develop a criteria-based, phased plan for reopening education institutions, and using existing [Frameworks for Reopening Schools](#).<sup>3</sup>
- **Actively communicate, consult, and collaborate with educators, communities, and other stakeholders** (e.g., parents, other donors, teachers' organizations and unions, non-state education providers). This is essential so that education actors understand local needs, have buy-in for decisions made, and build rather than erode trust with communities.
- **Plan to monitor, evaluate, and learn (MEL)** along the way in order to ensure an effective evidence-based response.<sup>4</sup> This includes needs assessment and ongoing situation analysis. MEL should be conducted in ways that are rapid, feasible, and action-oriented.
- **Revisit policy and funding to benefit all learners.** Policy and funding barriers that exclude marginalized learners should be revised so that adjustments made to the academic calendar, curriculum, teaching, infrastructure, and exams are inclusive and equitable.
- **Plan for resilience.** Planning the return to learning after COVID-19 should contribute to comprehensive crisis preparedness and response plans to mitigate the impact of future emergencies and support countries to build more resilient education systems.

## KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE RETURN TO LEARNING

### PRIORITY I: RE-ENGAGE THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS

The impacts of COVID-19 are far-reaching, but not all learners will be affected in the same way. Children and youth may experience or witness illness, the death of a family member, or disability; poverty and child labor; abuse and neglect; gender-based violence and sexual exploitation; displacement or family separation; stress, trauma, and stigma; fear or grief; and, in conflict-affected areas, increased conflict or recruitment into armed forces.<sup>5</sup> Evidence demonstrates that the longer a child's education is interrupted, the less likely they are to return to the classroom.<sup>6</sup> These impacts will differ within and between groups.

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<sup>3</sup> UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, World Food Programme (2020). [Framework for Reopening Schools](#). New York.

<sup>4</sup> USAID (2020). [Education Sector Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning \(MEL\) During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

<sup>5</sup> The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. (2020). [Advocacy Messages for Child Protection Actors: Prioritizing Child Protection in COVID-19 Response plans](#).

<sup>6</sup> CDC. (2020). [Considerations for School Closure](#).

## ACTIONS WITH MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION (MOES), MINISTRIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION (MOHES), AND EDUCATION PLANNERS

- **Use existing data or conduct rapid assessments to identify at-risk groups.**

To understand how the pandemic has affected learners, especially the most marginalized, ministries, district education officials, and educators will need to identify at-risk groups and strategize to re-engage them in education. National and local education leaders should use existing data or conduct primary data collection to assess the differentiated physical, social, emotional, educational, and economic impacts of COVID-19 on learners and their families. Using this data, education officials can then identify those most at risk of dropping out or those who were previously out of school and the specific barriers they face. This may include girls, young women, learners with disabilities, displaced learners, and other marginalized groups. Self-advocate groups (e.g., organizations of persons with disabilities, faith-based organizations, female-led community groups) can contribute to assessment processes.

- **Collaborate with communities to re-engage all learners.**

Strategies for re-engaging learners include clear, consistent messaging about reopening dates; reopening campaigns and social mobilizers; coordination with local government; training educators to identify and respond to learners at risk of dropping out; school-community partnerships to re-enroll learners; waiving, pro-rating or applying a sliding scale for school fees; providing scholarships, materials, or cash transfers; providing school feeding programs and meeting other basic needs; and providing non-formal education options for those who drop out.<sup>7</sup>

- **Ensure education information and monitoring systems are functioning and capable of tracking re-enrollment of marginalized populations in real time.**

Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) can provide essential information about the reach of education services at district and national levels; however, they may be inaccurate or slow. Local and national education officials should enhance current monitoring systems to rapidly aggregate sex-disaggregated data on re-enrollment. Officials should consider including non-formal education in EMIS to capture learners who may not return to formal education.

- **Promote alternative pathways back to education.**

Alternative pathways can provide a phased on-ramp back to the education system for children and youth who were out of formal learning prior to the crisis or learners who dropped out due to life changes caused by the pandemic (e.g., work or childcare duties, loss of a parent). Education planners, with support from donors and implementing partners, should incorporate non-formal education, including accelerated education, to meet the needs of out-of-school learners.

- **Address policy barriers that exclude some learners from returning to education.**

Some education policies exclude marginalized learners from education, such as those that prevent pregnant girls or teenage parents from enrolling, or those that exclude non-formal education learners

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<sup>7</sup> Hallgarten, J. (2020). Evidence on efforts to mitigate the negative educational impact of past disease outbreaks.

or refugees from sitting for exams or obtaining certification. Policymakers should revise policy to ensure all young people can access appropriate education and ensure funding is available to implement strategies to enroll marginalized learners. Policymakers and leaders in education institutions should also ensure that education policies (e.g., enrollment, attendance) do not punish learners who are uncomfortable returning right away to ensure they are not excluded from re-engaging in education.

## **PRIORITY 2: DESIGN THE POST COVID-19 ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

While some countries have begun to reopen schools, others plan to reopen in the next academic year or may not have decided when to reopen. Even in highly centralized education systems, it may be advisable to allow local education officials to set reopening dates. While this may create challenges for national oversight, it allows communities, regions, or districts that have decreasing rates of infection and increasing capacity for testing and treatment to reopen more quickly.

### **ACTIONS WITH MOES, MOHES, AND EDUCATION PLANNERS**

- **Develop an education reopening plan.**

Education authorities must work closely with public health officials to develop a criteria-based, phased plan for reopening education institutions. This dialogue between education and health officials seeks to ensure local infection prevention and control measures take into consideration the social and education impacts of those measures, and vice versa. Countries may reopen education full-time, part-time, or by region/district.

Countries may also determine certain grades, levels, or groups of learners who will return first, such as sending primary school learners, those preparing to sit for exams, or special education students back to school first. Some countries may use double shifting to send learners back for half-days or use alternating days to allow for appropriate social distancing in the learning environment.

- **Revise the academic calendar.**

Once a reopening date(s) is established, countries will need to adapt the academic calendar to help learners catch up, in line with country education priorities. Adapted calendars should address four learning aims: 1) recovering learning loss; 2) catching up on missed instruction; 3) condensing curricula to get back on track; and 4) getting to the “new normal.” It may be useful to prepare multiple calendar options as a part of situation planning.

See Annex I for three possible options (of many) for revising the academic calendar for countries following a February to November academic year.

- **Monitor the situation regularly.**

Education planners should work with their monitoring units to identify proxy indicators to be collected at the school or community level that will indicate whether the school reopening plan is achieving both learning and access outcomes, as well as not contributing to community transmission of COVID-19. This will allow education institutions, districts, and national leaders to adapt return to learning plans to respond to contextual changes.

- **Communicate clearly and consistently.**

Learners, educators, parents, and communities need to know when and how education will reopen, how decisions will be made, and how dates will be communicated. When communicating about reopening education institutions, school leaders and local education officials will need to reinforce planning principles of flexibility and adaptability by reminding stakeholders that the academic calendar may change as conditions improve or decline.

- **Involve learners, educators, parents, and communities in decision making.**

In order to address the specific needs of stakeholder groups, education authorities should involve teachers, parents, and self-advocacy groups in reopening planning. This may include setting up a steering committee, conducting rapid surveys, or holding listening sessions to identify their needs and priorities.

### **PRIORITY 3: ADAPT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME, CURRICULA, AND LEARNING SUPPORTS**

As a result of the disruption in schooling, many countries will need to implement a catch-up program to help learners recover lost instructional time and cover essential curriculum.

#### **ACTIONS WITH MOES, MOHES, AND EDUCATION PLANNERS**

- **Understand the range of options for catch-up programs.**

A **catch-up program** is defined as “a short-term transitional education program for children and youth who had been actively attending school prior to an educational disruption, which provides learners with the opportunity to learn content missed because of the disruption and supports their re-entry to the formal system.”<sup>8</sup>

Catch-up programs take into consideration the duration of closures and learners’ academic and psychosocial needs. When schools are closed for a couple of weeks, “catching up” may simply mean adding instructional time by beginning the next semester early or extending the school day or week. When education institutions are closed longer, “catching up” may require accelerating the curriculum. To help learners catch up, educators may provide learners with remedial support, such as individual or small-group instruction (e.g., tutoring or pullout classes), self-directed learning projects, and, for some older learners, crediting prior learning. It will be critical to leverage investments made in distance learning during school closures to help learners get back on track.

- **Adapt the academic schedule, curricula, and teaching and learning materials.**

Education authorities may need to adapt the academic schedule, curricula, teaching and learning materials, and instructional supports to effectively help learners catch up. Annex 2 shows sample academic schedules that incorporate catch-up programming. This should be done based on needs assessments and in collaboration with educators, parents, self-advocacy groups, and local education stakeholders.

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<sup>8</sup> Accelerated Education Working Group. (2017). Guide to the Accelerated Education Principles. p.10. Geneva.

Curriculum units can adapt and/or make available existing local catch-up program curricula, educator guides, learning materials, exams, and training resources for immediate use. Priority should be given to those resources that are the most inclusive and accessible to all learners, as well as those that focus on foundational learning competencies in reading, writing, math, and social-emotional skills. Where resources exist, but are not inclusive and conflict-sensitive, curriculum units should consider revising or developing new materials.

In preparation for the return to learning, teacher trainers will need to build educators' skills to effectively carry out adaptations. Training will need to include strategies for educators to identify learners who have fallen farther behind or who are struggling to keep up with the catch-up curriculum in order to deliver relevant, learner-centered remediation.

- **Identify learners' social-emotional, protection, and academic needs.**

When returning to learning, most learners will need psycho-social support (PSS) and social-emotional learning (SEL) services and opportunities. PSS and SEL can be provided through non-academic activities such as art, music, and recreation, or in “kernels” or short, discrete social-emotional learning opportunities.<sup>9</sup> Prior to returning to education, educators may need to be trained to incorporate SEL into daily instruction and classroom routines as a way to transition back to more structured, academic learning for all ages and levels of education.

Educators and education leaders will also need to ensure learners' protection needs are met. This may include (re)establishing and scaling up nutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), and health services (e.g., school feeding, vaccinations, menstrual hygiene management); services for learners with disabilities (e.g., personal care assistants, sign language mentors and interpreters, occupational therapists); and professional care referral and reporting mechanisms for abuse, gender-based violence, and mental health conditions.

Education planners should engage communities to identify learners' social-emotional, protection, and academic needs, and to plan how to (re)establish, scale up, or implement support to holistically address learners' needs.

- **Consider where distance learning should continue.**

During school closures, many countries implemented or scaled up distance learning (e.g., interactive audio instruction, television programs, online modules, no-tech work packets). To complement the return to learning and remediation efforts, education authorities may need to plan for, fund, and build capacity to sustain distance learning. Some countries may implement blended (in-person and distance) learning, especially where part-time or alternating schedules are implemented in alignment with social distancing measures.

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<sup>9</sup> Jones, S., R. Bailey, K. Brush, and J. Kahn. (2017). Kernels of Practice for SEL: Low-Cost, Low-Burden Strategies.

- **Mobilize financial and human resources for planning for catch-up programming.**

Revising curricula, teaching and learning materials, and teacher professional development manuals, as well as conducting teacher training, are resource intensive. Education authorities must allocate appropriate time, human, and financial resources to effectively implement catch-up programs.

#### **PRIORITY 4: MODIFY EXAMS AND LEARNER PROMOTION PRACTICES**

To prepare for the return to learning, education leaders must decide if and how to hold end-of-year, end-of-level, certification, and entrance examinations, as well as how to promote learners.

#### **ACTIONS WITH MOES, MOHES, AND EDUCATION PLANNERS**

- **Identify how exams have been affected by the pandemic.**

In countries with a September to May academic calendar, learners may have been only weeks away from sitting for exams when closures occurred. Some of those exams are used for promotion to the next grade, to the next education level, or for entrance into higher education. Some countries have cancelled end-of-year exams, and others have announced that exams will be used for formative purposes only (i.e., understanding learners' progress). Education authorities will need to communicate with local education officials to understand how exams were affected for different learners in different regions.

- **Identify which exams are a priority.**

Some exams will continue to be required, but other exams may be eliminated or used for formative purposes only. National and district education leaders should engage educators to explore if/how exams can be modified to test only what has been taught. Policymakers will need to revise policy to reflect examination approaches, including promotion. Adaptations to exam practices should continue to be valid, reliable, and equitable, and adhere to infection prevention and control measures.

- **Develop a learner promotion strategy.**

Learner promotion plans will have implications on what remediation and testing will be needed when education reopens. In some cases, prior term teacher-run exams may be used to determine learner promotion. Some countries have announced that all learners will be automatically promoted to the next level. Demographic pressures and availability of pre-primary education may influence learner promotion strategies. Education authorities at national and local levels must make decisions about how learners will progress from one grade to the next, as well as how learners will receive certifications and be promoted to the next level.

- **Communicate with learners, families, and educators.**

Learners, families, and educators will need to know when and how exams will be administered, how the results will be used (e.g., for certification, promotion, or formative purposes only), and what will be examined. Education authorities must clearly communicate new procedures for taking exams, especially to adhere to health and safety measures.

- **Ensure monitoring systems to track access to exams and pass rates are in place.**

National, local, and institution-level education leaders may need to improve systems for tracking exams. Measuring who sits and passes exams will be an important way to better understand the effect of COVID-19 on the education system, as well as ensure equitable access to and completion of education in line with country priorities. Monitoring systems can also help ensure non-formal education is recognized and leads to certified learning.

- **Mobilize resources needed to implement adapted exams.**

Due to social distancing measures, additional infrastructure, human, and financial resources may be needed to effectively administer exams. As a result of the interrupted academic calendar, standardized examinations may need to be revised to test only what was taught. National and local education authorities will need to revisit budget and human resource allocations to ensure the new exam strategy is feasible.

## **PRIORITY 5: RE-ENGAGE EDUCATORS AND PREPARE INFRASTRUCTURE**

To prepare for reopening, educators will need to be mobilized, and schools, non-formal learning centers, and higher education institutes will need to be prepared to welcome learners back.

### **ACTIONS WITH MOES, MOHES, AND EDUCATION PLANNERS**

- **Revisit workforce needs.**

While education institutions were closed, many educators were out of work. Some educators may have taken other jobs or may no longer be a part of the workforce. Others may be afraid to return to work. Cancellation of educator licensing exams during COVID-19 may also exacerbate the workforce gap.

As a result, MOE/MOHEs will need to re-engage the education workforce. This may mean remobilizing existing educators, recruiting and training new educators, or deploying educators to areas hard hit by the crisis. To do this, it may be worth exploring rapid or emergency certification processes. Meeting workforce needs will require close collaboration with teachers' and faculty organizations and unions.

- **Address educator capacity development needs.**

Trainers will need to provide educators with continuous professional development and psychosocial support to adapt to the new normal of COVID-19. Educators will need training and support to: 1) re-engage learners and identify those at risk of dropping out; 2) assess learning loss and plan for remediation; 3) implement a catch-up curriculum; 4) meet learners' social-emotional and protection needs; and 5) talk with learners about COVID-19 in age-appropriate ways.

In addition, trainers should help educators learn how to implement infection, prevention, and control (IPC) measures, and promote hygiene, in collaboration with local public health authorities, to ensure adherence to local guidance and consistency of messages.



- **Assess the need for repairs and creation of new learning spaces, as well as disinfection of learning spaces.**

To mitigate infection and disease transmission in and around learning environments, education authorities will need to assess the capacity of all schools to implement IPC measures. Where gaps exist, facility construction or maintenance may be required. This includes providing WASH facilities (e.g., handwashing stations, latrines, water pumps) and sanitation supplies (e.g., thermometers, soap, and non-medical personal protective equipment). Learning spaces may need additional cleaning before they reopen, especially if they were used for quarantine or as treatment units. Different learning institutions may require different IPC measures, for example, higher education institutions where labs were used for testing. When implementing IPC measures, local education authorities must adhere to humanitarian inclusion standards for people with disabilities.<sup>10</sup>

Infrastructure investments are insufficient without comprehensive behavior change communication. Education authorities, education personnel, and educators must communicate early, often, and consistently about the health and safety measures required of learners, parents, and community members in the learning environment.

IPC considerations are thoroughly discussed in several guidance documents, including:

- UNICEF. (2020). *Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools*.
- WASH in Schools Network. (2020). *Knowledge Map: WASH in Schools and Coronavirus*.

- **Develop or revise policy to meet education workforce needs.**

Re-engaging the educator workforce may also include reviewing and revising educator policies. Some education policies restrict who can teach and who can become a certified educator (e.g., excluding refugees), while others require strict ratios of certified and non-certified teachers in learning spaces. Policy changes that allow refugee educators to teach, that accelerate teaching credentials from higher education institutions, or that waive mandatory retirements may be critical to address workforce needs.

- **Mobilize financial resources to fill gaps.**

Additional funding may be needed to implement the above action items: re-engaging the educator workforce and preparing education infrastructure. In order to build a more resilient education system, education authorities should develop a short-term plan to address immediate needs, as well as a longer-term plan to prepare for a future health crisis.

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<sup>10</sup> Inter-Agency Standing Committee (2019). *Guidelines: Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action*. Geneva.

## CONCLUSION

For many countries, districts, and educational institutions, addressing the above priority areas is an opportunity to plan for prevention, response, recovery, and resilience in the face of future emergencies. In planning for reopening, education actors will reflect on what would have helped to mitigate the impact of the crisis on learners, educators, and educational infrastructure. They will also identify what was needed to respond to the crisis, for example by conducting an after-action review to determine what actions were effective or not. Countries, districts, and educational institutions will then be well placed to develop or update comprehensive crisis preparedness and response plans to prevent and mitigate the impact of future outbreaks of COVID-19 and other emergency situations. For additional resources on planning for safety, resilience, and social cohesion, refer to UNESCO-IIEP's resources: <http://education4resilience.iiep.unesco.org/>.

The preparation that goes into the COVID-19 education response and recovery ultimately will allow countries to learn from a time of adversity and build more resilient education systems.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ANNEXES

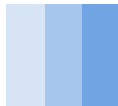
### ANNEX I: CHECKLIST: RETURN TO LEARNING DURING COVID-19


|   |   |
|---|---|
| ✓ | <b>RE-ENGAGE THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS</b>   |
|   | Use existing data or conduct rapid assessments to identify at-risk groups.  |
|   | Collaborate with communities and educators to re-engage all learners.   |
|   | Ensure education information and monitoring systems are functioning and capable of tracking re-enrollment of marginalized populations in real time. |
|   | Promote alternative pathways back to education.   |
|   | Address policy barriers that exclude some learners from returning to education.   |
| ✓ | <b>DESIGN THE POST COVID-19 ACADEMIC CALENDAR</b>   |
|   | Develop an education reopening plan.  |
|   | Revise the academic calendar.   |
|   | Monitor the situation regularly.  |
|   | Communicate clearly and consistently.   |
|   | Involve learners, educators, parents, and communities in decision making.   |
| ✓ | <b>ADAPT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME, CURRICULA, AND LEARNING SUPPORTS</b>   |
|   | Understand the range of options for catch-up programs.  |
|   | Adapt the academic schedule, curricula, and teaching and learning materials.  |
|   | Identify learners' social-emotional, protection, and academic needs.  |
|   | Consider where distance learning should continue.   |
|   | Mobilize financial and human resources for planning for catch-up programming.   |
| ✓ | <b>MODIFY EXAMS AND LEARNER PROMOTION PRACTICES</b>   |
|   | Identify how exams have been affected by the pandemic.  |
|   | Identify which exams are a priority.  |
|   | Develop a learner promotion strategy.   |
|   | Communicate with learners, families, and educators.   |
|   | Ensure monitoring systems to track access to exams and pass rates remain in place.  |
|   | Mobilize resources needed to implement adapted exams.   |
| ✓ | <b>RE-ENGAGE EDUCATORS AND PREPARE INFRASTRUCTURE</b>   |
|   | Revisit workforce needs.  |
|   | Address educator capacity development needs.  |
|   | Assess the need for repairs and creation of new learning spaces, as well as disinfection.   |
|   | Develop or revise policy to meet education workforce needs.   |
|   | Mobilize financial resources to fill gaps.  |

## ANNEX 2: SAMPLE OPTIONS FOR REVISING THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR: RETURN TO LEARNING DURING COVID-19

An academic year may be condensed into several months, or educational institutions may return early over summer breaks. Catch-up programming may last for several years until learners are back on track. Calendars may differ by education level or location. Likewise, if schools must close again, this should be reflected in adapted calendars.

| 2020               |          |     |     |                  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 2021    |          |     |     |                  |     |     |     |     |     |                  |     | 2022    |         |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
|--------------------|----------|-----|-----|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------|----------|-----|-----|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------------|-----|---------|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|
| JAN                | FEB      | MAR | APR | MAY              | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | JAN     | FEB      | MAR | APR | MAY              | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV              | DEC | JAN     | FEB     | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |  |
| SY 2020            |          |     |     |                  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | SY 2021 |          |     |     |                  |     |     |     |     |     |                  |     | SY 2022 |         |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| COVID-19 SCENARIOS |          |     |     |                  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |         |          |     |     |                  |     |     |     |     |     |                  |     |         |         |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| 1                  | COVID-19 |     |     | Catch-up SY 2020 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |         | SY 2021  |     |     |                  |     |     |     |     |     |                  |     |         | SY 2022 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| 2                  | COVID-19 |     |     | Catch-up         |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |         | SY 2020  |     |     | Catch-up SY 2021 |     |     |     |     |     |                  |     |         | SY 2022 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |
| 3                  | COVID-19 |     |     | Catch-up SY 2020 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |         | Catch-up |     |     | SY 2021          |     |     |     |     |     | Catch-up SY 2022 |     |         |         |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |  |

Key:  Typical academic calendar, 2020-2022

 Three scenarios for revised calendars based on various re-opening dates, 2020-2022

### ANNEX 3: SAMPLE REVISED ACADEMIC SCHEDULES FOR CATCH-UP PROGRAMMING: RETURN TO LEARNING DURING COVID-19

Below are two examples of how academic schedules can be revised to help learners catch up. (Note: These examples are not recommendations for the number of instructional hours needed per subject. Local and global curriculum and instruction experts should be consulted in all decisions regarding revising curriculum and the daily/weekly school schedule. The examples are illustrative to show how content can be reduced, distance learning can be leveraged, and additional instructional time can be added.)

| EXAMPLE #1 JUNIOR / SENIOR SECONDARY CALENDAR REVISED FOR RETURN-TO-LEARNING AFTER COVID-19 |            |            |          |           |          |          |          |          |            |            |
|---|------------|------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|------------|
| Monday  |            | Tuesday    |          | Wednesday |          | Thursday |          | Friday   |            |            |
| Gr. 6-8   | Gr. 9-12   | Gr. 6-8    | Gr. 9-12 | Gr. 6-8   | Gr. 9-12 | Gr. 6-8  | Gr. 9-12 | Gr. 6-8  | Gr. 9-12   |            |
| 8:00  | Math       |            | Math     |           | Math     |          | Math     |          | Math       |            |
| 9:00  | English    |            | English  |           | English  |          | English  |          | English    |            |
| 10:00   | Soc. Stud. |            | Arabic   |           | SEL      |          | Arabic   |          | Soc. Stud. |            |
| 11:00   | SEL        | DL         | Religion | DL        | Science  | DL       | Religion | DL       | Science    | DL         |
| 12:00   |            |            |          |           |          |          |          |          |            |            |
| 13:00   | DL         | Math       | DL       | Math      | DL       | Math     | DL       | Math     | DL         | Math       |
| 14:00   |            | English    |          | English   |          | English  |          | English  |            | English    |
| 15:00   |            | Soc. Stud. |          | Arabic    |          | SEL      |          | Arabic   |            | Soc. Stud. |
| 16:00   |            | SEL        |          | Religion  |          | Science  |          | Religion |            | Science    |

In this example, the school day is divided into two shifts—one for junior secondary, one for senior secondary. While one level is in school, the other is completing work at home or in small groups using distance learning approaches developed and scaled up during the immediate pandemic response. Non-examinable materials have been reduced, but SEL has been added as an essential component.

| EXAMPLE #2 JUNIOR / SENIOR SECONDARY CALENDAR REVISED FOR RETURN-TO-LEARNING AFTER COVID-19 |            |                   |                   |             |                   |                   |            |             |                   |                   |            |
|---|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Mon   |            | Tues              |                   | Wed         |                   | Thurs             |            | Fri         |                   | Sat               |            |
| Gr. 6-8   | Gr. 9-12   | Gr. 6-8           | Gr. 9-12          | Gr. 6-8     | Gr. 9-12          | Gr. 6-8           | Gr. 9-12   | Gr. 6-8     | Gr. 9-12          | Gr. 6-8           | Gr. 9-12   |
| 8:00  | Math       | Distance Learning | Distance Learning | Math        | Distance Learning | Distance Learning | Math       | Math        | Distance Learning | Distance Learning | Math       |
| 9:00  |            |                   |                   |             |                   |                   |            |             |                   |                   |            |
| 10:00   | English    |                   | English           | English     |                   |                   | English    | English     |                   |                   | English    |
| 11:00   |            |                   |                   |             |                   |                   |            |             |                   |                   |            |
| 12:00   | Soc. Stud. |                   | Soc. Stud.        | Soc. Stud.  |                   |                   | Soc. Stud. | Science     |                   |                   | Soc. Stud. |
| 13:00   | Science    |                   | Science           | Arabic/Rel. |                   |                   | Science    | Arabic/Rel. |                   |                   | Science    |
| 14:00   | SEL        |                   | SEL               | SEL         |                   |                   | SEL        | SEL         |                   |                   | SEL        |

In this example, the school day is extended by one hour, junior secondary and senior secondary attend on opposite days, and each participate in distance learning on their day “off.” Saturdays are also used for instructional time. Non-examinable content has been reduced, but SEL is a main component.