Re-opening Schools

Erin Tanner | June 2020 | Mini-International Learning Exchange on WASH and School Re-opening
Overview on school closures and reopening

26 countries in the East Asia and Pacific Region

380m children enrolled in schools in East Asia and Pacific Region before COVID-19

15 countries with schools completely or partially closed due to COVID-19

50% (189m) of enrolled children currently not attending classes face-to-face
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>November 01</td>
<td>2.8m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>May 08</td>
<td>232.2m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>July 13</td>
<td>82.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>May 18</td>
<td>1.7m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>June 24</td>
<td>6.7m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>Sept 01</td>
<td>0.7m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>July 21</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.5m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>March 09</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>24.9m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNG</td>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>May 08</td>
<td>2.1m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>March 18</td>
<td>July 01</td>
<td>13.9m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>March 28</td>
<td>June 29</td>
<td>0.4m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viet Nam</td>
<td>Feb 02</td>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>18.7m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Purpose:** to inform the decision-making process on preventing COVID-19 in schools

- Basic facts
- Key messages and actions
- Environmental health focus
- Engages care-givers & children
- Suggestions for age specific educational activities
Framework for Reopening of Schools

**Purpose:** to inform the decision-making process on why, when and how to reopen schools

- Supports national preparations
- Guides the implementation process
- Contributes to overall public health and education planning processes
Key Dimensions of School Re-openings

- Safe operations
- Learning
- Including the most marginalized
- Wellbeing and protection

WASH related guidance
- Protocols on hygiene measures
- Training of administrative staff and teachers
- Hygiene behavior
- WASH in Schools budget
## How to Re-open Schools?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prior to reopening</th>
<th>Part of reopening process</th>
<th>With schools reopened</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepare with critical policies, procedures, and financing plans focused on safe operations and reforms needed to strengthen systems, including remote learning practices.</td>
<td>Adopt proactive approaches to reintegrate marginalized and out of school children. Invest in water, sanitation and hygiene to mitigate risks and focus on remedial education to compensate for lost instructional time.</td>
<td>Actively monitor health indicators, expanding focus on wellbeing and protection. Strengthen pedagogy, adapt remote education for blended teaching and learning, including knowledge on disease transmission and prevention.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example:** Develop detailed protocols on hygiene measures, including handwashing, respiratory etiquette, use of protective equipment, cleaning procedures for facilities and safe food preparation practices.

**Example:** Work toward ensuring all schools have access to adequate safe water, handwashing stations, cleaning supplies and, wherever possible, establish or expand sex segregated toilets or latrines including provisions for menstrual hygiene management.

**Example:** Emphasize behavior change to increase both the intensity and frequency of cleaning and disinfection activities and improve waste management practices.
Purpose: to help program teams plan an integrated, participatory process for safe school reopening. Checklists for school reopening incl. for WASH

HEALTH, NUTRITION, & WASH

- Ensure that cleaning and disinfection measures are effective and regular.
- Plan for routine cleaning and disinfection of school facilities and surroundings especially frequently touched surfaces such as tables, doors/door handle, etc. See School Hygiene COVID-19 Cleaning Instructions (in English or French).
- Carry out the routine maintenance of WASH facilities. All functional toilets should be open for use and maintained.
- Ensure safe water and soap is available at accessible, age-appropriate and gender-sensitive hand washing stations.
- Clean and disinfect water tanks regularly.
- Encourage equal sharing of water sources and cleaning tasks between women and men.
- Educate children and young people about good hygiene, health, nutrition and menstrual hygiene.
  - Ensure hygiene practices, including physical distancing and alternatives to sharing materials with others, are in place and integrated into classroom activities.
  - Share inclusive, accessible, age-appropriate messages on handwashing and safe sneezing/coughing into your elbow in schools regularly and through various formats (i.e. posters, daily announcements).

- Support safe peer-to-peer and child/youth-led learning, education and risk communication activities.
- Build on existing sexual and reproductive health rights education initiatives to address SGBV increases during COVID-19.
- Increase air flow and ventilation
  - Open windows or use air conditioning when possible.
  - Consider open-air schooling where feasible.
- Ensure the safety of school canteens
  - Ensure regular cleaning and disinfection for canteen facilities and utensils.
  - Consider staggered lunches to ensure physical distancing.
  - Procure additional bowls and utensils to prevent sharing or ask children and young people to bring their own from home. Regularly remind children not to share the same cup or utensils for eating or drinking.
  - Ensure food vendors and canteen staff to wash hands with soap and clean water before entering school, before preparing food, and when leaving, in addition to standard handwashing practices (i.e., after using the toilet). Encourage male shared responsibility for school feeding so women are not inequitably burdened.
- Canteens staff should use gloves and dispose
Guidance on COVID-19 Prevention & Control in Schools

Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19

Interim guidance
16 April 2020

Background

Across the globe, countries have implemented a number of control measures to comprehensively prepare for and respond to COVID-19. The overarching goal of the WHO global COVID-19 response strategy is for all countries to control the pandemic by slowing down transmission and reducing mortality associated with COVID-19, with the ultimate aim of reaching and maintaining a state of low-level or no transmission. Based on local epidemiology, some countries are in the process of scaling up public health and social measures, while others are or currently considering scaling down these measures.

Although the goal in all countries is to suppress transmission and provide care for all patients, the intensity of implementation of control measures to achieve this—excluding identification, testing, isolation and care for all cases, tracing and quarantine of all contacts, public health and social measures at individual and community levels, etc.—varies based on the transmission scenario each country is facing (no cases, first cases, clusters of cases, or community transmission).

Public health and social measures

This document is intended for national and regional public health and social protection decision makers in countries that have confirmed cases of COVID-19 and are considering adjusting and scaling up school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19. It supports countries through adjusting various public health measures in different contexts. The document was drafted based on a review of available literature, discussion with experts, regional partners and country examples.

Considerations for school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-18

Annex to Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19

10 May 2020

Background

As response to COVID-19, countries around the world have implemented several public health and social measures (PHSM), such as social distancing, closure of schools and businesses, and international travel restrictions. As the local epidemiology of the disease changes, countries will adjust (i.e., loosen or restring) these measures according to the intensity of transmission. WHO has developed a series of annexes to help guide countries through adjusting various public health measures in different contexts. This annex provides guidance for decision-makers and educators on how to plan to reopen schools in the context of COVID-19. These documents have important implications for children, parents, caregivers, teachers and other staff, community, and society at large.

What should be considered when deciding to close or reopen schools?

Deciding to close partially or completely schools should be guided by a risk-based approach to maximize the educational and health benefits for students, teachers and staff, and the wider community, and to help prevent a new outbreak of COVID-19 in the community. *WHO, UNICEF and UNESCO have issued guidance on the prevention and control of COVID-19 in schools.* Factors to consider in a general health risk assessment include epidemiological factors, health system and public health capacities, community engagement and preparedness capacity to sustain social and economic support to the most vulnerable. In a recent framework for community engagement and preparedness capacity to sustain social and economic support to the most vulnerable, six key dimensions were identified: planning, policy, financing, risk assessments, learning, and reachability. The risk assessment should consider both the need and ability of the community to sustain support.
Guidance on COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools (AR, ENG, FR, SP)  Mar 2020

Framework for Reopening Schools (AR, CH, ENG, FR, SP, PO)  Apr 2020
https://www.unicef.org/documents/framework-reopening-schools

World Health Organization, Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19 Interim guidance: Consideration for Schools  May 2020

Safe Back to School: A Practitioner’s Guide  May 2020
https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/safe_back_to_school_guide_16.5.20.pdf

Global Education Cluster  https://educationcluster.net/COVID19