The rationale for following up on COVID-19 related policy decisions

3rd iteration of the joint Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19
1 February 2021
Manos Antoninis,
Global Education Monitoring Report, UNESCO
COVID-19 impact on education is complex

- Policy responses
- Access and equity
- Quality and learning
- Finance
- Data challenges

+ Other levels: early childhood, vocational education, student mobility etc.
+ Big picture: distance learning as imperfect substitute and new reality
Policy responses

Joint UNESCO-UNICEF-World Bank survey

- Round 1: May to mid-June 2020
- Round 2: July to September 2020
- Round 3: February 2021 (with OECD)

- duration of school closures (24% of instruction days),
- approaches to distance learning: potential reach
- support measures for students/parents: internet, devices
- support measures for teachers: new staff; teaching content
- learning loss mitigation

...even if countries differ by region

To be used to monitor commitments made at Global Education Meeting
COVID-19 impact on inequality is large
...although it is hard to show by how much

Data collection systems challenged: various data sources, each casting light to different aspects

- Indirect assessment based on past data
- Direct assessment based on:
  - Administrative data/online systems
  - Phone surveys
  - Subjective views
  - Anecdotal but insightful media coverage
  - Research on multiple topics: from psychological impact to home support to peer effects
Access and equity
Internet, devices and living conditions

- internet, incl. cost and speed
  - e.g. 41% of rural communities in Canada have inadequate broadband access

- computers and smartphones
  - e.g. 45% had computer in Latin America

- radios and TVs among poorest 20%
  - e.g. Ethiopia 7%, D. R. Congo 8% own radio
  - e.g. Nepal 5%, Guatemala 13% own TV

- quiet room for studying
  - e.g. 30% of 15-year-olds don’t have one in Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand

Source: ITU and UNICEF
Access and equity
School attendance: online surveys

In Germany:
- **Much less time on education**
- **Low-achievers spend more time on detrimental activities**
- **Parents said child learned much less:** 72% if low-achiever and 58% if high-achiever

Various issues to deal with: self-motivation, home inputs etc.
Access and equity

School attendance: phone surveys

Substituting normal household surveys

▶ Ecuador
- zero time spent doing schoolwork: 9% if they have internet; 23% if they have no internet
- poorest more likely to work than be in education
- boys and girls have distinct gender-segregated roles

▶ Living Standard Measurement surveys
= phone surveys substituting traditional surveys

- Uganda: urban-rural differentials – and growing
- Lao PDR: 55% enrolled before, 25% engaged in education during COVID (but 19% among ethnic minorities)
Quality and learning

General issues

Long term impact:
... so far, projections on scenarios, no real data

Quantify relationship between duration/nature of disruption and magnitude of learning losses

▶ Impact of distance learning mechanisms
▶ Effects of schools meals and income shocks
▶ Country capacity to monitor learning

Learning losses due to school closures could continue to accumulate after children return

A 3-month school closure could reduce long term learning by 1-year’s worth of learning.
Quality and learning

Big data

Significant constraints in availability and use of such data to privacy regulations

Socioeconomic status cannot be inferred, except through proxies

A study based on user activity logs from an online learning platform in Japan shows that study time was larger for students with access from home

Average weekly study time by access to online platform from home
Ikeda and Yamaguchi, 2020
Quality and learning
Opinion surveys

- United Kingdom
Survey of more than 2000 schools
  e.g. three months behind in their studies after lockdown
  e.g. learning gap between rich and poor pupils
grew by almost half (47%) between March and July
Financing for equity

- Evidence on budget impact just emerging... but serious concerns given multiple priorities and recession.

- Education not a major part of stimulus packages
  According to UNESCO, education received just 0.8% of stimulus packages; the share of was 2% among 13 of G20 countries

- Targeted measures are not very common
  e.g. few measures on disadvantaged groups
  - adaptation of support programmes to students with disabilities
  - adaptation of school feeding: direct cash transfers or home deliveries
  - additional funds per child distributed to poorer regions (e.g. United States)
  - school grants for internet access, adaptation costs, tutorial programmes (e.g. United Kingdom)
  - topping up of cash transfers, e.g. Child Support Grant in South Africa
Monitoring the impact of the pandemic on equity

...is work in progress
Your contribution to this third iteration is crucial
Thank you