COVID19 EDUCATION RESPONSES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

EDUCATION COALITION STUDY REPORT

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COALITION
ÉDUCATION

SCOPE OF THE STUDY AND ITS OBJECTIVES

To prevent widespread disruption to the education of the most vulnerable populations, including girls, this report aims to make use of the lessons learned from Covid19 in education interventions by identifying the best practices implemented in response to the pandemic by CSOs and to a lesser extent by governments.

The assessment looked at 35 CSO-led initiatives and four government-developed programmes, which either worked with or received support from UNICEF and local stakeholders in 37 countries, half of which were in Africa.

We thank the CSO stakeholders for their time and contributions to this study: Aide et Action, Afrique Secours et Assistance, Amal Alliance, Blind's People Association, Brazilian Campaign 4 Education, CALID, Campaign 4 Female Education, Care France, CIFA ONG, Enfants D'Asie, ESSOR, Futur au Présent, Guéra Touristique, Humanity and Inclusion, L'APPEL, MAEECHA, Partage avec les Enfants du Monde, Plan International France, Savana Signatures, Solidarité Laïque, Un Enfant Par La Main.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY
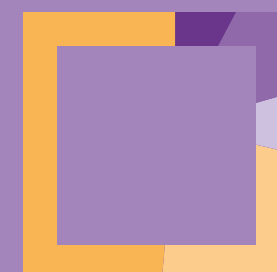
- ● Central America **7.9 %**
- ● South America **12.9 %**
- ● Europe **7.9 %**
- ● South Asia **22.8 %**
- ● Africa **48.5 %**

This report presents a series of best teaching practices implemented by civil society organisations and governments to ensure educational continuity during these times of crisis. They are involved at different points in medium and long-term emergency and development responses initiated between March and September 2020. They also respond to the crisis in a variety of ways, either through programme adjustments or implementing of initiatives or approaches that may be considered innovative, depending on the context.

This study was not intended to be exhaustive, but rather highlights approaches and practices to strengthen learning programmes in future crises.
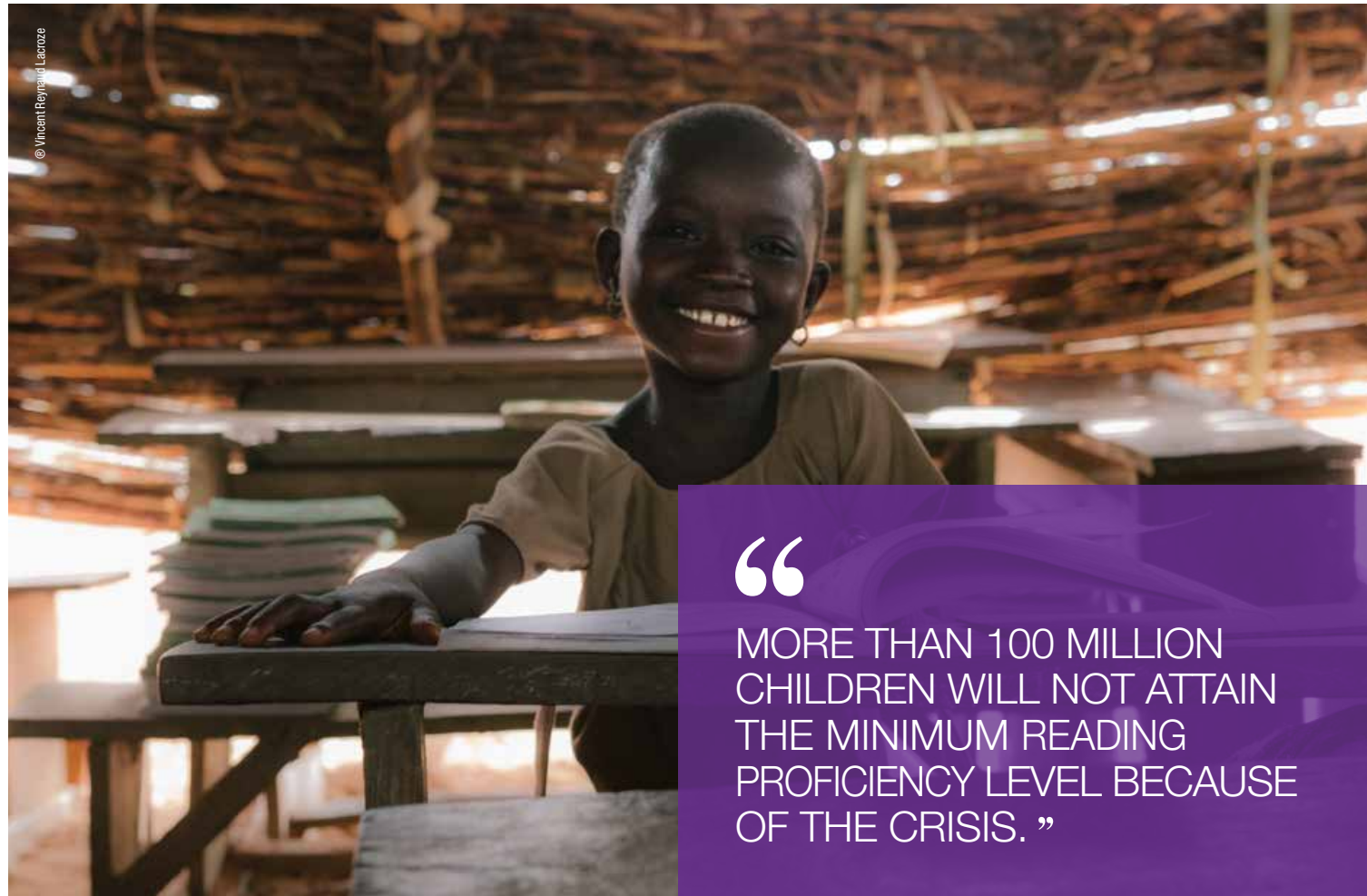
"… PREVENT WIDESPREAD DISRUPTION TO THE EDUCATION OF THE MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS, INCLUDING GIRLS."

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> **MORE THAN 100 MILLION CHILDREN WILL NOT ATTAIN THE MINIMUM READING PROFICIENCY LEVEL BECAUSE OF THE CRISIS. 99**

INTRODUCTION

A year and a half after the first restrictive measures were implemented by governments across the world to curb the spread of Covid19, the education of close to half of all students is still significantly affected. More than 100 million children will not attain the minimum reading proficiency level because of the crisis. The poorest countries and the most marginalised individuals, including girls, children and disabled young people, are most at risk. Before the Covid19 pandemic occurred, 258 million children were out of school, 130 million of whom were girls[1]. However, there are less than ten years remaining to achieve SDG 4. Learning losses will not decline equally in this respect, with school closures disproportionately affecting children from the poorest households[2]. The Save The Children Report lists 12 countries as "running" a "high risk" of seeing their progress towards SDG 4 falling behind (Niger, Mali, Chad, Liberia, Afghanistan, Guinea, Mauritania, Yemen, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal and Ivory Coast). Equality for all, particularly in accessing the right to education and public education services, is essential to ensure the pandemic does not worsen inequality.

Significant gaps were observed in the measures designed to enable children to learn safely, to support teachers and to ensure no-one is left behind, including women and girls.

Education officials interviewed[3] in 75 countries state that the most difficult problem to resolve when implementing their Covid19 response was the availability of technological facilities. Inequality related to access is striking in the countries where remote teaching strategies were implemented. Even though more than 465 million children and young people in these countries don't have Internet access at home, over 60% of remote learning alternatives rely exclusively on online platforms. When it is available, it is less likely to be available to girls. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 89% of learners don't have access to a computer at home, 82% don't have Internet access and around 28 million learners live in areas that aren't covered by mobile networks[4]. Even in regions that do have substantial resources, a lack of connectivity led to an unequal transition to remote learning for families during the Covid19 pandemic and continues to be a major challenge in

comprehensive access to quality education. In six provinces in Afghanistan[5], only 28.6% of children can access remote learning programmes by television,[6] 13.8% by radio and 0.2% by Internet. In India, only 12.5% of students have Internet access.

The role of education in social protection, access to high-quality key services, awareness of preventive measures, preventative healthcare and sharing information to increase health practice standards and change behaviours is fundamental to the Covid19 response. School closures deprived many children and young people of essential nutrition during school meals and increased the risk of hygiene-related diseases as well as child protection risks including gender-based violence, child marriage, child labour, child trafficking and their recruitment and use in armed conflict. These risks are all the more significant for adolescents who face concurrent hardships, which compromise their rights and well-being (including health and education) and expose them to an increased risk of violence, early pregnancy and forced marriage.

It is essential that children can safely return to school and resume their education. However, many learning institutions do not have adequate facilities. In 2016, only 53% of schools reported having basic hygiene services (defined as handwashing facilities with soap and water)[7]. This therefore means that 620 million children do not have decent school toilets and around 900 million are unable to wash their hands properly.

In this context, civil society organisations and governments continue to support and ensure educational continuity, protect and ensure the well-being of students and teaching staff, and promote education as an essential tool in prevention and health information in places affected by the Covid19 pandemic, so as to mitigate the increase in all forms of inequality. Civil society is involved wherever possible to support and supplement the local, national and global policies combatting school dropout and the disruption to education for the most marginalised individuals, including girls.

1 According to UIS data for the academic year ending 2018.

2 "Save Our Education Report: Protect every child's right to learn in the COVID-19 response and recovery", 2020

3 https://globaled.gse.harvard.edu/files/geii/files/framework_guide_v2.pdf

4 Half of the world's locked-down pupils lack computers: UN, France 24, April 2020

5 "Save Our Education Report: Protect every child's right to learn in the COVID-19 response and recovery", 2020

6 "Who goes online to study in Covid times? 12.5% of Indian student homes have Internet access", The Print, April 2020 7 DRINKING WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE IN SCHOOLS Global baseline report 2018, UNICEF

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IMPLEMENTING A HYBRID, CONTEXT-SPECIFIC TEACHING APPROACH

A ADAPTING LEARNING TO THE CRISIS AND CONTEXT

Various local contexts and regular developments in the Covid19 crisis have a significant impact on education and the ways in which interventions are implemented. In order to provide adequate responses which as closely as possible meet the needs of the beneficiaries, and to continue to meet and respect their rights, particularly the right to education, learning must be adapted to crisis and context.

Based on the study results, the latter may occur at at different points.

1 AN EDUCATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE EMERGENCY/ REHABILITATION/DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM

Using an iterative process enables the continuous adaptation of interventions and implementation of content and support innovations whilst identifying needs in each of the project's development phases.

The **YUNIT under Covid**[8] project conducted by **Enfants d'Asie** in the rural areas of Medellin, Daanbantayan, in Alegria and in the vulnerable urban districts of Ermita, Carreta and Minglanilla on the island of Cebu in the Philippines implemented emergency response efforts along with long-term measures that made it possible to strengthen the resiliency of the beneficiaries (schools, teachers, learners and parents).

In the emergency phase (lockdown, restrictions on activities, freedom of movement constraints), the CSO interventions assessed mainly focused on protecting key services and responding to the heightened vulnerabilities associated with and intensified by disruptions to education and the lack of protective environments that school environments represent (financial, food and health assistance, emotional support, hygiene, social protection, etc.). Meanwhile, the government interventions assessed attempted to deal with the most urgent matters by focusing their efforts, amongst others, on the risk

of school dropout and on maintaining educational continuity for the transition exam years in order to prevent lost years, as well as providing the equipment necessary for remote learning.

The **YUNIT under Covid** project carried out individual activities that were adapted to the lockdown constraints and suspension of the academic year: unconditional monthly cash transfers via direct financial services without bank accounts, in addition to government assistance, thereby enabling the learner to contribute to the household economy, as well as food assistance or a financial equivalent, for 500 beneficiary families, and individual support for socio-emotional learning.

In the post-emergency/new normal phase, the activities are adapted to the constraints imposed by the evolution of the pandemic and related restrictive measures.

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8 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HVWycbkk1yDceOpvfhnRsk6mCmZje4Gz/edit

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> " THE EMERGENCY - REHABILITATION - DEVELOPMENT APPROACH ENABLES INTEGRATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND THE RECOVERY OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS AND COMMUNITIES. "

The **YUNIT under Covid** project based its activities on:

a. **Individual socio-educational follow-up:** cash transfers subject to remote learning enrolment and follow-up, food assistance, individual support in socio-emotional learning (throughout the year), identifying specific needs (health and child protection), guidance, and providing smartphones and phone credits for all 500 learners.

b. **Community-based resilience and capacity-building** (learners and families): training and awareness-raising for learners and families about best health practices, gender-based violence, child protection, especially abut online sexual abuse (remotely by video recordings and practical exercises), career guidance and training in professional integration (remote and in person, with provision of hardware: computers and printers), and Internet access points.

c. **Support for learning institutions and teachers:** facilitation of participatory evaluation of institutional capacity, temporary distribution of hardware in educational institutions, facilitation of training for tutors in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), teachers and learners, as well as needs assessment and hardware provision.

Enfants d'Asie highlights the importance of planning for activity continuity and funding in the event of future lockdowns, working on resiliency support mechanisms that are flexible and included in the projects (such as the transition from conditional to unconditional cash transfers) and post-crisis planning during the crisis.

The programme makes it possible to reduce the additional costs and constraints associated with education, particularly for girls, thereby enabling the most underprivileged children and young people to receive long-term basic, technical, vocational and higher education, depending on their ambitions and abilities. The project has also facilitated communities' access to digital tools and strengthened their ability to identify and refer learners who need specific supports, particularly in terms of gender violence and social protection. Resources and skills in education and remote follow-up have been developed for teachers in the school system.

The emergency - rehabilitation - development approach enables integration of emergency management, recovery of educational systems and communities, and development of their resilience through interventions.

The social, economic, human, and institutional effects of Covid19 have varied in several contexts throughout the world, and in some cases, intensified. The differences require responses adapted to the understanding and knowledge of local contexts and socio-economic upheavals caused by Covid19.

2 UNDERSTANDING AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC UPHEAVAL

Understanding and knowledge of local context and socio-economic upheaval is a key component of adapting learnings to fragile crisis situations. To be effective, responses to direct and indirect impacts must align with the sociocultural and economic contexts in which the interventions occur.

The CSOs consulted, as well as UNICEF in the cases of shared initiatives, led context evaluations before and during pandemic crisis periods in order to identify the risks the populations were exposed to. They particularly noted an exacerbation of poverty, an increase in gender-based violence, school dropout, country-wide needs, racial discrimination, low levels of education of parents or legal guardians and the absence of legal documentation, disabilities, children in migration situations or belonging to indigenous and/or ethnic minority groups, children who are working, who live in institutional care units and/or who are in conflict with the law, regional factors that limit access to school (remote areas), and the absence of educational infrastructure.

This approach allows us to address the context of an intervention, which may include multiple crises (security, economic, social, ecological, health), community perceptions and sociocultural norms.

In **Burkina Faso**, which was already facing a security crisis before the pandemic, the Covid19 health crisis created more upheaval in the functioning of generally informal family economies for all populations. In this context, the program **Together for Resilient Public Education During Crises** of **Solidarité Laïque**[9] supported continuity of education for children, particularly the daughters of female-headed households who became vulnerable due to security crises and the Covid19 pandemic. It was based on a three-pronged approach: social negotiation as a success factor, the household economic analysis (HEA) method as a way to target the most vulnerable groups, and the link between humanitarian and development activities as a mechanism for resilience in vulnerable populations. The program has allowed the children of female-headed households to integrate into the daycare and public school system, and has allowed the households to strengthen their economic activities.

The project **Distance-Learning for Disabled Students** in three specialized schools led by **Humanity & Inclusion in the Gaza Strip**[10] was incorporated into the State of Palestine emergency education strategy, which identified the use of distance learning to respond to the educational needs of students during school closures. Because of the Cluster Education emergency preparation plan developed before the Covid19 crisis as a result of the country's geopolitical situation, it was easier to shift to online learning. In fact, the initial plan already

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9 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pKs_RCmMOXaFMCZRD3ObYxSs5osszzqT/edit
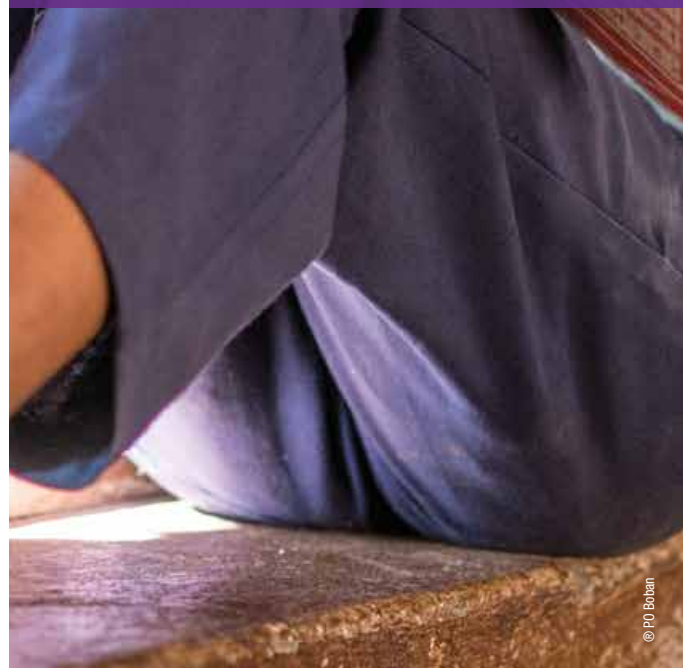
included the scenario of school closures and online learning support with the creation of a task force. In this context, Humanity & Inclusion as a member of Cluster Education and the task force on distance learning proposed a specific response adapted to the educational needs of disabled students who were excluded from the distance learning program proposed by the Minister of Education.

3 ADAPTATION TO SOCIOCULTURAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXTS

The adaptation of approaches and pedagogy to the availability of technology, in addition to specific sociocultural and economic needs, has emerged as key to offering an inclusive, equitable, quality education.

Among the CSOs consulted and the UNICEF initiatives implemented in support of governmental responses, adaptation resulted in the implementation of a participative approach, translation into a local language, response to priority local challenges (such as passing examinations, early childhood, socio-economic reintegration, the granting of scholarships, etc.), involvement of parents, training to lead lessons, decentralized management, the strengthening of community resilience and the implementation of regional/local approaches.

The project **Education and Social Inclusion During Covid19** implemented by **the Guéra Tourist Association**[11] in the province of Guéra in Chad was based on a participatory approach and process. All relevant stakeholders (students, women, civil and military authorities, teachers, technical and financial partners, etc.) were consulted and were able to provide their input.

Essor[12] and its local partners introduced **educational workbooks** adapted to the reality and context of each country: in paper format (in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau) or in digital format (Brazil), thus enabling the supply of social and educational support to preschool and adolescent children and their families during the pandemic. The educational workbooks contain pages of entertaining and educational activities, corresponding to the five domains of child development (knowledge of the world, pre-writing, mathematics, fine motor skills, pre-reading), to be completed by the children (based on monthly themes: my health and my safety, my family, the plant world, the animal world, food). The notebooks have enabled children and adolescents to take ownership of their learning.

Distribution of the notebooks and support for families is also adapted to the local context. In nursery schools or community development centres (in Mozambique), parents make a trip every month to obtain the notebooks. During home visits (in Guinea-Bissau, in Mozambique when the situation stabilizes): educators travel to families to provide guidance to parents in supporting their children. In Brazil, a country heavily impacted by the pandemic and where the Internet is more

> "
> ## THE NOTEBOOKS HAVE ENABLED CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS TO TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THEIR LEARNING. "

developed, families have been informed on social networks about Covid19 prevention and issues relating to child exploitation and labour. A volunteer psychologist has also provided online support to struggling families. Virtual sessions have been conducted for others by the youth themselves. The notebooks have been available to parents and were co-funded by ESSOR and its partners in order to make these activities accessible to everyone.

The project **Colors of Kindness**[13] run by **the Amal Alliance** provides Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) content focusing on trauma and the deep understanding of human dignity to Rohingya refugees and to host communities in Bangladesh in the context of formal and informal learning. This project was introduced in response to an observed lack of appropriate content for supporting children and their families in these situations or distance learning tools that work with limited resources and connectivity. The content is aligned with the Global Compact on Refugees and the Refugee Education Strategy for 2030; it enables the learner's holistic re-engagement and facilitates the transition to a national educational system

after a period of disruption. Work in the refugee camps has been carried out with the help of the Commissioner for refugees and repatriation. *Colors of Kindness* has developed a series of podcasts, with each episode exploring a subject related to the five fundamental skills of SEL: (1) self-awareness, (2) self-management, (3) making responsible decisions, (4) relationship-building, and (5) social awareness. The project has helped strengthen local partners' capacity to support distance learning and encourages the adoption of open source software. The content is available in open source, in order to allow for translation, adaptation and adoption by other organizations.

10 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UT3LUTiE9HHu40Cqa8VwKu_XO24yiTXl/edit

11 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zzcqA4PQKoPgAaUde-5QCxNLJuhxx4KL/edit?us-p=drive_web&ouid=100696290450842034432&rtpof=true

12 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kg9emto0ZVvcDte6PQioJ6ELQqD9Pz-T/edit

13 https://docs.google.com/document/d/19pkisusZmIN_33Yi8Gr6mkVkTn1mnbJ-/edit?rtpof=true

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" THE INFORMATION AND POSITIONS IN THE GUIDE HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO DECISION-MAKING AND PUBLIC DIRECTIVES FOR EDUCATION-RELATED SOCIAL POLICY IN BRAZIL. "

4 A MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACH

The effects of Covid19 are multidimensional and therefore require a multidimensional approach. The importance of implementing an approach that operates on different levels of intervention has also emerged as a factor in successfully adapting to the crisis. Programmes must therefore include three levels of action:

- individual, through learning support, including socio-emotional learning, access to essential services, and financial support;

- collective, through training, awareness-raising and provision of supplies;

- systemic, through advocacy action and parternships/ co-construction with public authorities in order to ensure and reinforce the inclusion of education and the safety of learning environments in prevention, response and post-crisis/ development policies.

The Brazilian campaign for the right to education[14] introduced **nine awareness and advocacy guides** (1/ *Education and protection of children and adolescents intended for the school community, families, and professionals working in child and adolescent protection, 2/ Education and protection of children and adolescents for political decision-makers, 3/ Distance learning, 4/ Best practices in protection, 5/ School feeding programs, 6/ The voice of school communities, 7/ Special education from an inclusion perspective, 8/ Re-opening of schools* and *9/ Municipal elections*) that provide information and recommendations about citizen and public authority actions to collaboratively strengthen the protection of all and guarantee the right to education. They have been widely distributed by the CME, members of the Brazilian campaign, state and municipal secretaries and officials, education directors and other educational professionals. This initiative is enhanced by videos that have been broadcast live and made available on digital platforms, in order to allow regional committees to organize public debates to discuss local issues. The guides have notably been publicized by the national union of city councillors for education, the national council for children and adolescent rights, the special committee for the defence of children and adolescent rights of the Brazil Bar Association, UNICEF, and their content informed the UN report on education in the context of Covid19. The information and positions in the guide have contributed to decision-making and public directives for education-related social policy in Brazil.

In addition, the program **Busca Activa Escolar** (Active research system in the schools - *SRA*), led in Brazil and developed by **UNICEF** in collaboration with **Undime** - the national association of municipal educational departments - uses a social mobilisation methodology implemented in 2017 using a free data platform. This has supported national and sub-national governments to identify, register, monitor and follow up on children and adolescents from ages 4 to 17 who are out of school or at risk of leaving school. UNICEF has also led strong advocacy for the safe reopening of schools based in accordance with child protection principles. The SRA program has also made available 13 campaign logo applications, three videos, seven radio spots, eight jingles, and 18 informational maps about social networks, so that municipalities and states may conduct their own advocacy and communication campaigns.

14 https://docs.google.com/document/d/174vPdGGJhQmPfHCOOdm9sPNDsQ39KMlLa3tF2gO31J0/edit

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> THE COVID19 PANDEMIC HAS HIGHLIGHTED THE NEED TO ADAPT LEARNING TO INTERVENTION CONTEXTS, THE NEED TO DIVERSIFY CONTENT AND LEARNING TOOLS, AND HAS SHOWN THE ABILITY OF ACTORS TO ADAPT TO "NEW EDUCATION DATA".

B DIVERSIFICATION OF CONTENT AND REMOTE LEARNING TOOLS TO ENSURE THEIR COMPLEMENTARITY AND ADAPTATION TO THE NEEDS OF POPULATIONS

While the Covid19 pandemic has highlighted the need to adapt education to the context of intervention, it has also shown the need to diversify content and learning tools and has demonstrated the capacity of actors to adapt to "new ways of teaching."

1 TAKING INTO ACCOUNT DIVERSE LEARNING PROFILES IN ORDER TO ADAPT TO STUDENTS' ABILITIES

One of the lessons learned from the analysis of initiatives in the field is the need to address diverse learning profiles in order to adapt to students' abilities.

In the Comoros, the **NGO Maeecha**[15], in its project **"Distance Learning Support for Students of the Public Primary Schools of Nyumakele"**, facilitated the organization, design, and broadcast of radio shows intended for 1500 CM2 students (second- year students ages 10-11) in the area, in order to better support them in preparing for college entry exams. Educational programmes for French, mathematics and early learning were produced, taking into account a wide range of learning profiles and adapted to pupils' sensory strategies and abilities (auditory, visual or kinaesthetic). This involved designing programmes that borrowed from the originals, while managing to "speak to an absent audience." To accompany these, and in order to maximise the benefits, Maeecha produced

and distributed written materials (documents for pupils and manuals for teachers). The complementarity of the radio programmes and the written materials facilitates learning: comprehension, concentration and application exercises.

Finding "alternative" ways to communicate knowledge was also an issue in the work undertaken in the Guéra region of Chad by the **Guéra Tourist Association** as part of its **"Education and Social Inclusion During Covid19"** programme. The project has enabled pupils to complete the study programme and provided support for pupils preparing for exams, particularly girls and children with disabilities. Six strategies were used: lessons broadcast on Mongo Community Radio, including literacy for female learners; the creation of WhatsApp groups for pupils with smartphones; the provision of tailored material for pupils in a variety of subjects; individual lessons for children with disabilities and for vulnerable girls, while observing protective measures; and raising awareness among the parents of pupils, particularly girls, of the importance of the radio lessons.

The need for an appropriate educational response for children with specific requirements was central to the **"Ensuring School Continuity for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Children"** initiative established by Humanity and Inclusion in Senegal. In order to facilitate educational continuity for these children, HI funded a system of specific supports intended to guarantee access to learning during school

15 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xw0hmkNlXmqJavtax-sf1Umc-8oLCC2E/edit?usp=drive_
web&ouid=100696290450842034432&rtpof=true

closures. The teachers define the teaching strategies, based on the needs of each child, monitor the children's individualised educational projects (PEI) and provide soft assistance to the classroom assistants (AVS), who in turn provide remote support, via WhatsApp, to parents and tutors, and then conduct PEI assessments at the end of each week. The system has enabled better, individualised targeting of children's specific issues, and thereby the identification of remedial actions.

The imperative to adapt teaching for pupils with learning difficulties through the creation of specific supports aimed at preventing drop-out has been amply demonstrated by other projects.

The **"Colors of Kindness"** online education project, set up by the **Amal Alliance** in Bangladesh, took this approach, offering emotional and socio-educational learning in each episode of its podcast series, which covered self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship-building and social conscience. The programmes have also included activities such as yoga and methods for managing stress and trauma. Ultimately, the podcast project broadcast on WhatsApp in displaced persons camps in Greece and Lebanon has brought generations together, as the podcast has been shared across 17 platforms by 543 organisations, reaching an audience of more than 160,000 people.

Humanity and Inclusion set up the **"Offer an Inclusive Education to Girls and Boys Affected by the Covid19 Pandemic in Mali[16]"** project, which provides an educational alternative for girls and boys affected by both the security crisis in Northern Mali and the pandemic, ensuring access to educational content via radio, television and physical media, so that they can participate in distance learning. 755 vulnerable students (347 girls and 408 boys) received solar radios, 39 deaf children (21 girls and 18 boys) received tablets to help with distance learning, and 770 children (384 girls and 386 boys) with learning difficulties benefited from supports over a two-month period. Advocacy work has been undertaken by civil society actors, to encourage the inclusion of children with disabilities and girls when planning distance learning. Radio messages have been broadcast to communities about the importance of educational continuity when schools are closed due to Covid19. This work is part of the Ministry of Education's Covid19 response strategy and the second generation of the ten-year education and vocational training development programme (PRODEC), 2019-2028. The educational content takes into account the specific needs of girls and of deaf and blind children, enabling the children to successfully participate in classroom lessons remotely. Lessons filmed and translated into sign language showcase teaching strategies based on the use of practical resources

and media adapted to facilitate the understanding of certain concepts (e.g. geometric shapes). These sign-language adapted clips allow deaf and hearing-impaired children to follow lessons on a tablet. The distribution of portable solar radios to the most vulnerable children enables the dissemination of not only educational content, but also Covid19 information and prevention messages. The teachers' strike and the health situation prevented the organisation of training sessions for educational actors. Monitoring by these same stakeholders of learning and of observance of protective measures by the children has also been affected. Socio-political instability has meant that not all of the planned activities have been implemented, particularly those requiring institutional validation, such as inclusive educational material. The work must also ensure that 30,000 girls and boys will receive, post-crisis, a high-quality, inclusive education in a safe learning environment.

In Cambodia, **Bandos Komar** set up additional remedial classes to help students overcome their learning losses when schools reopened in September.

The NGO **ESSOR**, in support of its partners in Brazil, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, similarly promoted the strengthening of supports for disadvantaged children by distributing educational workbooks and providing the close supervision of facilitators on local teams.

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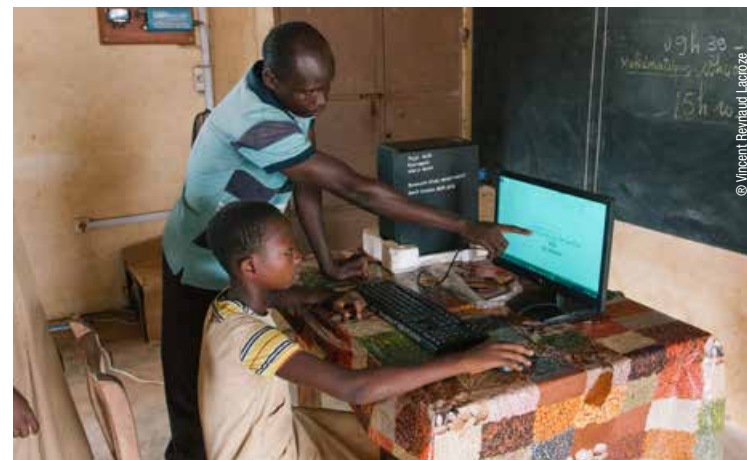
> 66
> THERE IS A SET OF POSSIBILITIES ON THIS AXIS, RANGING FROM "ALL FACE-TO-FACE" TO "ALL REMOTE/VIRTUAL", A RANGE OF HYBRID ARRANGEMENTS."

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2 THE PROVISION OF VARIOUS INCLUSIVE LEARNING TOOLS

The need for provision of various inclusive learning tools, focused on e-learning and distance learning, is one of the key lessons learned from the analysis.

The Covid19 crisis has shown that there are many possible scenarios, which have necessitated the development of hybrid teaching strategies to adapt to learners' circumstances. Solutions to these scenarios need not be dichotomous or binary. There are many possibilities, ranging from "all face-to-face" to "all remote/virtual", and many possible hybrid arrangements.

Observance of "protective measures" and the closure of schools have restricted education stakeholders to searching for solutions adapted to the realities of the intervention environment, as pupils have not been able to attend in-person lessons. Broadly speaking, the use of computers, social networks and online lessons has increased dramatically. However, in more low-tech regions, "traditional" media such as television and radio have gained widespread acceptance, provided learners have access to electricity.

Analysis suggests that in remote areas, on the wrong side of the digital divide, printed media, radio and television remain the primary vehicles for accessing lessons, as evidenced by numerous initiatives.

Launched in Ivory Coast on 9 April 2020, three weeks after schools were closed, and with the backing of UNICEF, the **"Mon école à la maison"** ("My School at Home") programme is an example of emergency government measures rolled out using an adapted, hybrid approach and a range of broadcast media in response to anticipated content access issues. Primarily intended for pupils preparing for exams (second, third and final year classes), educational resources were disseminated in the form of teaching clips, recorded and broadcast on radio and television, a dedicated digitised platform for replaying teaching clips, and content and messages shared on social networks.

Rapid response, enabled by the technical support of the UNICEF office, was a key factor in the programme's successful roll-out three weeks after schools were closed. It potentially allowed for more than 90% of exam students in urban areas to be reached via television and radio, and more than 60% in rural areas. Problems accessing content could not be resolved in some rural regions and among certain disadvantaged groups. These problems are primarily linked to issues of reception, inadequate access to the Internet or telephone networks, or a lack of equipment. Some villages were able to arrange for the installation of television services in community halls.

16 https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gH0Rku2LvZm5MkorzPaX6cS9yly7ccjv/view?usp=sharing

Generally speaking, radio and television broadcasts alone cannot adequately guarantee the effective assimilation of educational content. To complement the "oral" programming, CSOs worked in partnership with education authorities to produce **student workbooks and printed technical materials for both pupils and teachers.**

The teams have made use of the methodologies available and encouraged incremental innovations, developing part-nerships according to context and requirements.

Likewise, an audit carried out at the mid-point of **Maeecha's project** showed the disparity in assimilation of educational concepts between those pupils limited to simply listening (no workbook or manual) and those able to listen while following a manual. The combination of the required competencies (oral/written) was an even more important factor for exam students, who were still required to sit written exams.

In Cambodia, the NGO **Bandos Komar**[17] , in its **"Distance Learning During Covid19 Pandemic"** response, produced and distributed various workbooks for children ages 3 to 6: colouring books and introductory mathematics and geography booklets, sent out weekly by teachers.

In more "connected" environments, the preferred learning tools have been social networks, particularly Facebook groups set up between pupils and the use of WhatsApp, etc.

In Somalia's Puntland State, more than 235,000 primary and secondary pupils had their education disrupted due to school closures. In order to ensure the continuity of their education, the government of Puntland, in partnership with **UNICEF**, adopted the **Learning Passport** digital learning platform. Between June and July 2020, a total of 2,500 videos to support lessons for primary and secondary classes were incrementally made available online.

Despite access to the platform being free of charge, the limitations of relying on a purely digital solution for educational continuity have become apparent. They are primarily linked to infrastructure problems, limiting access to electricity and the Internet. Between 30% and 35% of pupils in Puntland have been unable to access basic primary teaching while schools have been closed. Evidence of a very sizable digital divide has emerged between pupils living in large urban areas and those in more rural and isolated areas. The majority of users live in the better-connected urban areas. The poorest children, living in remote areas or in refugee camps, have fared particularly badly in this regard.

The need to diversify the range of learning tools and media, in order to ensure educational continuity, has become very apparent. UNICEF and the Ministry introduced alternatives to the Learning Passport in order to support children living in remote and hard-to-access communities. These include the distribution of MP3s containing pre-recorded lessons, solar radios and lamps, the hiring of tutors and the printing of educational materials, in addition to the transmission of remedial lessons by local radio stations.

The **Amal Alliance** organisation, via its **"Colors of Kindness"** project, has also used an app, Ustad, available both online and offline, which has enabled 137 pupils (including Rohingya refugees) to access lessons, engage in interactive exercises and obtain books and videos from a digital library. This has improved the engagement of these pupils and allowed them to participate in distance learning.

Irrespective of the area in question, and the quality of families' access to new information and communication technologies (NICTs), parents were seldom adequately equipped to enable their children to access lessons, either online or remotely. And, in order to get their projects up and running, local CSOs and other educational stakeholders frequently had to provide families with equipment:

- **HI** has distributed solar radios and tablets in Mali.

- **Maeecha** provided the parents of students with radios in the Comoros.

- CSOs have also had to provide families with conventional equipment: exercise books (1500 copies from **Maeecha**, 5703 from **ESSOR**) and homework supplies (ESSOR).

- As part of the **YUNIT project** implemented by **Enfants d'Asie** in the Philippines, the team provided 500 learners with smartphones, telephone credits and data.

- In Senegal, as part of the **HI project**, children and their parents, classroom assistants and sign language tutors were all provided with tablets and packages for Internet and telephone connection, making it easier for students to attend lessons.

- **In Montenegro, UNICEF** provided over 700 tablets for Romani children with disabilities in foster care who were unable to attend online lessons due to lack of online equipment.

- In Cambodia, **Bandos Komar**[18] facilitated the creation and encouraged the use of Telegram groups, Facebook, messenger groups and the E-school Cambodia app.

© Sandrine Assouline

> **" THE POOREST CHILDREN LIVING IN SECLUDED AREAS OR IN REFUGEE CAMPS HAVE PARTICULARLY SUFFERED. "**

3 THE NEED TO PROVIDE TRAINING AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT TO TEACHERS.

In general, the projects described have revealed a desire to train parents, teachers, school management and all those who participate in education, so that everyone can play a constructive role in this crisis or others. Like families and children, teachers have found they have no choice but to manage the school closing crisis without any prior preparation. Struggling with technological challenges and their use in teaching, ill-equipped to use unfamiliar or digital tools they have not mastered, teachers have had to adapt their pedagogical practices to the new context.

Analysis of these initiatives has shown that CSOs and UNICEF initiatives - supporting government responses - in particular have faced this issue, and have taken action to improve teacher competence on using the available tools with new teaching strategies.

In Cambodia, throughout these times, schools have been closed only for students. Teachers have been encouraged to come to school to prepare lessons, teaching and learning materials and to correct homework. Teachers are then asked to go to villages to give lessons to small groups of children, household by household. As part of the **"Distance Learning During Covid19 Pandemic" project** the NGO **Bandos Komar**[19], in partnership with several MoEYS offices and schools, facilitated the understanding and effective implementation of the guidelines produced by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) and the Ministry of Health, from the provinces to the field level. The Bandos Komar team supported teachers in three of the country's provinces to familiarise themselves with certain tools, notably the "E-school Cambodia" app, an online teaching platform built with the help of professors and experts, and consisting of videos and tutorials. In preparation for the reopening of schools in September, certain schools were late in informing teachers and some schools remained closed. To solve this problem, Bandos Komar worked in close collaboration with those concerned, such as the provinces and the Districts of Education, Youth and Sport,

17 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1E_p_6jXm_M466WeVmCZbSbHTsPQt8sSP/edit?rtpof=true

18 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PoyWXV53UgvMubjOUkj25Nxa19yzVbnL/edit

19 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PoyWXV53UgvMubjOUkj25Nxa19yzVbnL/edit

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In terms of the pandemic, different forms of intervention have been implemented by CSOs, in close cooperation with local authorities and States, depending on the context, in order to address all forms of vulnerability and thereby ensure inclusive, egalitarian education.

A IDENTIFYING VULNERABILITIES AND CONTINUOUSLY EVALUATING NEEDS

the town councils, the school support committees and the headteachers of the schools, in order to identify problems and to start opening schools. The town council allocated a budget to finance teacher salaries for 10 months, from November to August. During the Covid19 pandemic, ECCD teachers worked for over 10 months, but there were no more incentives or them because the budget had been established the previous year.

Using the same approach as the **Amal Alliance** project,they were able to equip teachers and give them initial training on curricula and on how to interact with students on the Ustad mobile app. Once they had completed their training, team leaders prepared local teachers to implement the programme within their own communities. The content is available in open source, and is therefore easier to replicate, and can be translated into several languages (the project is implemented for vulnerable populations, particularly Rohingya refugees).

Training teachers in techno-pedagogy was also one of the objectives of the project implemented by **Enfants d'Asie** in the Philippines. In order to improve school attendance, to prevent students from dropping out and to ensure education continuity during Covid19 for students and marginalised youth, particularly girls, the initiative strengthened teacher capacity via a cascade training system: 30 teacher-trainers received techno-pedagogical training so that they could then share their knowledge with school teachers and almost 5000 learners.

For its part, **the National Coalition for Education for All in Burkina Faso (**CN-EPT/BF) held a training workshop to support its members on sensitive planning for safety and health crises. This workshop allowed participants to gain a better understanding of the stages in the process of planning education which is inclusive of people affected by crises; and to familiarise themselves with the different stages of action plans and education budgets in order to identify opportune points at which to address their concerns about education in emergency situations in terms of action plans and budgets.

UNICEF has also supported the creation of digital content for formal and non-formal education and the continued training of teachers as part of its programme supporting the government's educational response in Montenegro, **"UCI DOMA"**. To help schools make optimal use of their new digital tools, including the use of Office 365, the agency has supported capacity-building for over 4,500 teachers, which has benefitted over 55,000 primary and secondary school students (24,750 girls and 30,250 boys). In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, UNICEF has also provided capacity-building for preschool teachers in order to support the learning of Romani children (or who have been identified as such) and to prepare blogs and support material as peer support.

However, because of the lack of support from education authorities, who are often overwhelmed and under-equipped to provide support, teachers have also experienced psychosocial difficulties. Relationships with the parents of students and more broadly with communities have evolved. Their status has changed in certain contexts, and their role and importance in knowledge acquisition have been acknowledged by the community.

The need for Identifying and assessing the specific needs of learners in terms of accessing lessons remotely, health, child protection, support for very vulnerable populations living on the grey economy or on seasonal work, protecting girls *(and in particular, tackling gender-based violence, forced marriages and students dropping out of school),* and protecting children who are at risk or in fragile situations, are our primary learnings.

1 IDENTIFYING AND MAPPING THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF LEARNERS VIA DATA COLLECTION

The organisations consulted (as well as UNICEF in collaboration with governments) have attempted to collect data on the education situations in the target countries, including on the emergency intervention strategies implemented by education authorities. The CSOs have also worked to identify the needs of children and their families, particularly vulnerable children who face multiple risks.

● **Some initiatives include a study/diagnosis or an evaluation of recipient needs.**

The **Yunit Under Covid**[20] project, implemented by the **Enfants d'Asie** association, is based on an evaluation of the context before and during the pandemic crisis (worsening of poverty, GBV, students dropping out of school). This has made it possible to identify and address specific needs, including those of teachers, in terms of training and logistical and technical support for remote learning, and the creation of virtual classrooms which are accessible and adapted to the needs of all children. The association has provided support to learners who are victims of violence, and marginalised and poor populations, with a particular focus on the education of girls.

The **"Remote learning for disabled children in three specialised schools in the Gaza strip" project** implemented by **Humanity & Inclusion** is based on an assessment of the needs of children with disabilities for Internet access (not included in the Ministry of Education's intervention programme), which has made it possible to define the type of remote learning required. Also, as part of the **"Offer an inclusive education to girls and boys affected by the Covid19 pandemic in Mali" programme,** Humanity & Inclusion is working with the Ministry of Territorial and Decentralisation Administration, which identifies girls and boys who benefit from supports and social action, in close collaboration with associations of parents of students and school management committees.

20 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HVWycbkk1yDceOpvfhnRsk6mCmZje4Gz/edit?usp=drive_web&ouid=1006962904508420344328&rtpof=true

Amal Alliance, as part of its **"We Are In This Together**[21]**" project**, carried out a study of the needs of refugee children in Greece and Lebanon.

In Montenegro, it was difficult to gather information about children who needed urgent help, as no mapping was carried out. This is why **UNICEF** has contributed to the efforts of identifying the number of children whose education has been impeded by the pandemic, in order to make appropriate decisions and programme interventions. Mapping has made it possible to guarantee support which is adapted to the reality of the sites and the children's needs, and which consequently makes it possible to adjust the response.

UNICEF's project in Montenegro around the government response **UCI DOMA** was based on the data available on the EMIS system - public data. UNICEF also worked closely with the Ministry of Education and schools to collect data on the number of children from Romani communities (or who were identified as such) whose education was disturbed or interrupted by the lack of access to resources such as NICTs (smartphones or Internet). The Country Office also conducted two quick impact evaluations in April and June 2020 in order to collect data on the number of children without access to digital educational tools. In addition to administrative data, in September 2020, UNICEF conducted a study on the attitudes of parents and key informants towards the remote teaching system and the reopening of schools[22]. The objective of the study was to learn what opinions were about the reopening of schools, satisfaction about remote learning, etc. According to the rapid analysis which was carried out, 16% of households with children did not have access to a computer or to a laptop with an Internet connection.

Certain associations base the development and implementation of their initiatives on the needs identified by local associations and authorities. The **"AVANTI TUTTA AVANTI TUTTI**[23]**" initiative** implemented by the CSO **CIFA** in Moncalieri (Turin, Italy) is based on an analysis done by local associations and institutions. Amongst the needs expressed on the ground, the lack of content and tools to support children and their families in remote learning, along with connection difficulties or lack of resources, is notable. In some cases, due to a lack of resources, capacity or available data, CSOs were unable to carry out in-depth evaluations of specific needs, particularly of girls and children who are vulnerable and have disabilities. In these cases, they identified the immediate needs expressed by teachers, parents or local actors in order to provide recipients with an urgent response.

The data collection and documentation system was based in particular on dialogue between non-profit actors and local authorities and prefectoral organisations, and partnerships with social protection actors and community agents. It was also based on surveys and available statistics, existing databases, recruitment and training for data collection, evaluation of needs, weekly reports, flash reports, and local community watches (think tanks comprising teachers, parents of students, community leaders, etc.).

For the interventions, the initiators identified needs through continuous dialogue with parents, teachers and national and local education authorities.

The project **"Colours of Kindness** [24]**"**, led by **Amal Alliance** in Bangladesh, relied on an evaluation model comprising three tools that were administered to participants before, during and after the programme: a five-point questionnaire for teachers, a 10-point questionnaire for the students and a five-point assessment for family members. These were designed for use with children, programme staff and caregivers in order to assess how young people's thoughts, feelings and actions changed following their participation in the programme. A specific strength of the project is the attention paid to the user experience throughout the programme. Creating a user journal made it possible to see things through their eyes while helping the learners and teachers to identify and prepare for potential challenges they might face. The project aimed to help the teachers identify the students in their class who needed extra support.

Through the initiative **"Education cannot wait** [25]**"** in the Central African Republic, the organisation **Afrique Secours Assistance** (ASA) helped to improve the capacity of the State and the national emergency unit, and to increase equity in education. To this end, ASA set up an incident and violence alert system in schools in the five regions (Ouham Pende, Ouham, Nana-Gribizi, Bangassou and Ouaka) covered by the project. Collection and communication of information informed a functional database. Eight monitors were recruited for the collection and communication of information gathered, and training sessions for information collection and communication were carried out in the five prefectures of the project, taking into account protective measures. A process to identify and support children in administrative documentation was also used to ensure a high school attendance rate.

Within the initiative: **"Promote back-to-school for girls in six countries in the South in the post-Covid era"**, was set up by

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" THE DIRECTOR QUESTIONS FAMILIES ABOUT THE REASONS FOR THEIR CHILDREN LEAVING SCHOOL AND ENSURES MONITORING OF SCHOOLING. "

APPEL [26] and its local partners in urban or suburban areas in the Republic of Congo, Burkina Faso, Peru, El Salvador, Vietnam and the rural area in Chad. This work is carried out in close collaboration with local partners. Regular contact between school principals and families made it possible to understand the individual needs of the children and identify the evolution of needs, especially those of the individual pupils: the principal contacts the families, enquires about the reason for school dropout and follows up on school issues such as attendance, marks, and if and possible ensures continuation of schooling in the following school year. The information is then passed on to the project leaders.

It has emerged that mapping needs is essential for defining the type of learning required and the measures to be implemented, taking into account capacities and available resources. This may take the form of working with the Ministries of Social Affairs, Development and Education, effective coordination with local authorities and school directors, and regular exchanges with CSOs at the local, national and international levels. Such cooperation is essential for benchmarking and cross-referencing specific needs, doing appropriate urban planning, addressing beneficiaries' traumas, measuring fundamental achievements, and identifying risks associated with discontinuation of or dropping out of school.

● **Taking students' immediate needs into account.**

The CSOs have understood the urgent need to follow up on the courses and have worked closely with educational authorities to develop distance learning and teaching tools (radio courses, use of communication applications and social networks). It is important to note the difficulties in accessing the Internet or media or in acquiring equipment (computers or smartphones) for children from poor and vulnerable families, especially those in rural areas and remote and disadvantaged regions. Financial assistance for the poorest and most marginalised families has sometimes been provided to beneficiaries, in addition to food and/or financial

21 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aPvdraXl03jO5RjqW2ujz8enfPiYCASk/edit?usp=drive_web&ouid=100696290450842034432&rtpof=true

22 https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/study-parents-and-key-informants-attitudes-towards-distance-learning-and-school-reopening

23 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Uv7fSvHmv39DAJ5uMp8AsgxIVhxKHD_DXbbr9zLJY8I/edit

24 https://docs.google.com/document/d/19pkisusZmlN_33Yi8Gr6mkVkTn1mnbJ-/edit?rtpof=true

25 https://docs.google.com/document/d/11QNu5RsYnLN_UCMgi1tNGzEiJzfQ_3B5/edit

26 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1w_fmQANVDfa0opfTQhaNy84YAmChVAKQ/edit?usp=drive_web&ouid=100696290450842034432&rtpof=true

aid, as well as individual support for learning. Through the identification of specific needs (health and youth protection), learners have been provided with equipment and individualised support.

The **"Education and Social Inclusion during the Covid19 Period"** project was set up by **l'Association Guéra touristique** and the Centre producteur in the Province of Guéra in Chad to ensure continuity of lessons for students in their final school year. The project was based on identifying the needs of learners to ensure access to education. Radio lessons were accessible to all pupils and the teachers gave individual lessons, particularly to children with disabilities and girls in vulnerable situations, at the same time raising the parents' awareness of the importance of continuity in learning for the girls. The project was aimed at students in vulnerable situations, women, girls and children with disabilities, taking into account each individual's specific needs.

● **Specific support for children with disabilities.**

Consideration of students with disabilities has also demonstrated the complexity of issues related to intersectional vulnerabilities in ensuring continuity of education and protection of these children during pandemics.

The initiative **"Ensuring school continuity for deaf and hearing impaired children" by Humanité et Inclusion** [27]in Senegal has set up a specific supervision system that relies on the deployment of a School Life Auxiliary (SLA) as a "supplementary human resource". This approach has made it possible to meet the specific support needs of deaf and hearing-impaired students during school closures. The individualised approach, starting with the collection of information from the families, ensures close supervision of the target children. An analysis of the needs of each beneficiary is carried out, allowing the teachers and school life auxiliaries to identify priorities for the week and strategies

to reinforce learning for these pupils. The process is a dual one: the teachers define the pedagogical strategies according to the needs of each child, follow up on implementation of individualised educational projects and provide support to school life auxiliaries, who in turn provide active, individual support (home visit, phone, WhatsApp, etc.). This initiative has made it possible to continue the child's education, despite the closure of schools, with individualised follow-up aimed at ensuring better educational remediation.

Likewise, **the Bac 2020 Action** set up by **Solidarité Laïque**[28] in Tunisia enabled final year students, particularly those with disabilities, to pass their final exams in healthy conditions.

In Montenegro, the government set up the **UCI DOMA** ("learn from home") programme - with the provision of video materials, educational television broadcasts, and course follow-up by teachers via social networks and online platforms. Although the switch to online education was done quickly and efficiently, children without access to computers or the internet, or those with disabilities, were left out. Notably, initiatives developed to support children with disabilities were insufficient and implemented on an ad hoc basis. In this context, in order to maintain continuity of learning for children with disabilities, one of **UNICEF's** programmes responded by partnering with the Special Olympics of Montenegro - which existed before the pandemic - which expanded to allow 240 children (2-9 years) with intellectual disabilities and their families to pursue the Young Athletes preschool education programme at home. The children and their parents were provided with equipment so that they could follow the programme at home, and 28 video tutorials were developed to support the process. The materials distributed helped to maintain the cognitive and motor skills of preschool and primary school children (the contents are still available although the programme has been discontinued since the reopening of preschool education facilities). Similarly, the peer-to-peer support platform for children with disabilities, which was set up in February 2020 in partnership with *Association of Youth with Disabilities* and is the largest organisation that works for children and young people with disabilities in the country, has been adapted to meet the challenges of the pandemic by offering educational, legal and social supports to more than 200 beneficiary families and children (10-14 years old).

● **Taking into account the needs of girls.**

The initiative **"Local support through the distribution and monitoring of educational notebooks" from the NGO, ESSOR** focused on the promotion of equality in education and educational continuity in response to the pandemic crisis. Inclusion and equality were addressed while targeting girls in the networked intervention areas of Brazil, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique.

" IT IS OFTEN OBSERVED THAT GIRLS DROP OUT AT THE END OF PRIMARY SCHOOL DUE TO PUBERTY. "

27 https://docs.google.com/document/d/10WIivwGC7B7wSv_-CmgQdwbv8iIsKF4H/edit

28 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Eh9nG2WdNRk4ZMEvzTsgxXObuIC2RVGH/edit?usp=drive_web&ouid=100696290450842034432&rtpof=true

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Considerations can also take the form of financial support for families identified as the poorest (by community informants), as a form of social protection.

The **Appel** project **"Promoting back-to-school for girls in six southern countries in the post-Covid era** [29]**"**has been carried out in six countries (urban or suburban areas in the Republic of Congo, Burkina Faso, Peru, El Salvador, Vietnam and in rural Chad) in order to award one- year scholarships to girls who attended school the previous year but whose families are experiencing post-Covid difficulties and can no longer pay for schooling. Schooling is monitored: attendance, marks, possible continuation of schooling in the following school year. This information is passed on to the project leaders and donors. This makes it possible to identify the children, mainly young girls, in order to offer them scholarships and reduce their risk of dropping out of school. According to the association, statistics from different countries show starkly contrasting situations for women and girls: in Vietnam, their situation is favourable; in Chad, it is the opposite. In El Salvador, gender violence is common in high-crime areas. It is often observed that girls drop out at the end of primary school due to puberty. The project also promotes access to water and sanitation to prevent the discontinuation of schooling due to menstruation.

In addition to the immediate needs identified by the CSOs and/or those expressed by children (such as gender-based violence in schools, sexual exploitation and child marriages), the pandemic crisis (like any other crisis backdrop) has compromised the rights of children and the protection of youth.

Many CSOs have considered these elements and taken action to raise awareness of children's rights among children, young people and adults, in particular by organising home visits and offering individualised follow-up for young people. Actions have been aimed at combating gender-based violence, and preventing violence and the various forms of exploitation (sexual and economic).

The project established by **Afrique Secours et Assistance** in CAR made it possible, during the crisis, to set up surveillance groups as well as to combat violence and sexual and economic exploitation.

Awareness-raising activity on sexual and reproductive rights **in Yopougon** (Ivory Coast) promoted awareness among children/youth (10 to 18 years old) and decision-makers about sexual health and reproductive rights, to make participants aware of their rights, and provide information about GBV and support services.

The **House of Education** (HOE) [30] implemented by **Futur au Present** in Ziguinchor, the regional capital of Casamance in Senegal, provides financial support, psychosocial and educational support for girls. The system is complementary to the public schools and was created to fight against forced labour and school dropout of girls in the district of Kandé. These girls, ages 6 to 14, are from vulnerable families and left the school system early in order to work and supplement their families' incomes. The project has offered distance education through the broadcasting of lessons on a local television channel. The teachers have also paid home visits to the students once or twice a week to distribute handouts and follow up on each student's work. Home-based education is carried out to raise awareness of forced child labour and school drop-out, and recreation kits were distributed to keep children occupied and safe at home. Home-based education during the health crisis has prevented girls from dropping out of school, and also contributed to literacy and empowerment in a supportive environment, and prevented girls from returning to work. This framework has contributed significantly to gender equality and the fight against inequality, and has prevented the return of aggravating conditions for girls' education in the context of a health crisis and unavailability of educational structures.

The MDE was able to reopen at the beginning of September 2020, by adapting its timetable, with reception and activities taking place in half-size groups in the mornings and afternoons.

Care's project **"Femmes dignité et travail" (Women, dignity and work)**[31] contributes to the empowerment and protection of female domestic workers (in Ecuador, Colombia and Brazil) and their organisations through continuous training in employment law. Its specific objective is to develop the technical and organisational capacities of domestic workers to enable them to provide quality services and collectively negotiate their employment contracts with dignity through the creation of social enterprises. Paid domestic workers are in one of the occupational groups most affected by the social and health consequences of the pandemic. The intervention model has kept its approach flexible by making agile technical and financial adjustments efficiently tailored to each country to meet the challenges of the pandemic: use of virtual networks (Facebook, WhatsApp), access to digital platforms (Zoom, Teams), provision of internet and mobile phone connection systems, and other strategies to ensure the participation of TDRs (paid domestic workers) in all of the activities to continue the project (virtual training device, mobile application "TDR Unidas", a methodological and educational programme adapted to virtual and distance learning).

In Brazil, connections have been made with organisations such as SENAC to create professional development courses. The development of this support has included a knowledge assessment based on the TDRs' training requests. The Laudelina mobile application was launched and distributed and the results of the online CAP studies (bilingual e-book) were shared with different actors: academic centres, trade union organisations, and other partners.

In the same vein, **in Madagascar** the organisation **Un Enfant par la Main**[32] has implemented a training process for all community workers - responsible for distributing hygiene kits (soap, hydro-alcoholic gel, etc.) to families - to identify cases of child abuse, in particular of girls. This community-based training allows for an assessment of participants' knowledge about violence against children and cultural child-rearing practices.

29 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1T815HhAW-5MHlCkWAluio5L9AkD-rk01/edit

30 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VU6r9fWKJwPQSpMj1g_zCY5fN-WY9sKjc/edit

31 https://drive.google.com/file/d/10812EM4w0zklsFztcQA6R4YVGoJlbluB/view?usp=sharing
32 https://docs.google.com/document/d/19INUqV_TuTNxpHT_kZaMjKuQp4Za4-R_/edit

B PROVIDING PERSONALISED SUPPORT

Ensuring personalised follow-up in the context of Covid19 translated - in all of the CSO projects looked at and the UNICEF-supported government initiatives analysed - into coordination of several actions involving target audiences and various community and individual actors.

1 A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH AND LOCAL ISSUES THROUGH CO-CONSTRUCTION

Community involvement emerges as a fundamental criterion for effectiveness in most initiatives. It can be ensured through different approaches: participatory, staff involvement as close as possible to the communities (project team, community members), community groups to facilitate dialogue within the schools (organisation of educational games, children's rights, training, raising awareness of gender and domestic violence and health, hygiene, etc.).

To address the shortcomings of the education system, it has proved necessary to have peer educators present within communities, who have the crucial role of working on maintaining continuity of education. For example, in order to overcome the movement restrictions linked to the containment measures, **the NGO Aide et Action** recruited members of the community and trained them to provide help and support to the most vulnerable populations. In particular, community members were trained to ensure continuity of education for pupils living in remote areas. Coming from the same village as the communities, the volunteers enabled pupils to continue their education while limiting the risk of spreading the virus.

CSOs have retained and even enhanced the concept of a participatory community approach. Communities have thus have also been jointly responsible for implementing and sustaining actions. **The initiative "Accompagnement péda-gogique à distance** de 1500 élèves de CM2 des Écoles Publiques Primaires du Nyumakele"** (Distance learning support for 1500 CM2 pupils from Nyumakele Public Primary Schools) led by **the Maeecha organisation in Comoros**[33] was based on a participatory approach, developing and broadcasting TV programmes for pupils. To support students in exam classes (Brevet du premier cycle and Baccalauréat), the Ministry of Education has offered distance learning via television, but many Comorian families do not have a television or simply have no electricity at all in the home. This initiative

was launched to complement the Ministry of Education's approach, which has not designed tools specifically for the CM2 level, where the educational needs are also important (end-of-cycle exam). Within this framework, an educational programme entitled "Msomo na wakati" was developed and broadcast via three local radio stations by a team of four educational supervisors, ten teachers and educational coordination by MAEECHA. Three school subjects were offered: French, mathematics and early learning (science, history and geography, etc.). All actors contributed to programme development and broadcasting, i.e. educational supervisors, teachers, headteachers, the media and parents, who were also heavily involved as they were responsible for telling the children about the broadcast, supervising the children at home during the programme and bringing their exercise books back to school to check that the homework was done. The association notes that the culture of learning requires robust awareness-raising in order for communities to take ownership of the project.

In this same vein, "Operation Special Covid School Kit" led **Planète Urgence** relied on local community associations with which the association has a close relationship. School and hygiene kits were assembled jointly with the latter organisation and adapted to the specific health needs of the locality, in line with government recommendations, communities' perceptions and local school drop-out issues. Distribution of the kits was a joint responsibility, fostering sustainability. In addition, the initiative relied on tools shared by the government, to ensure consistent messaging on raising awareness of preventive measures .

Afrique Secours Assistance (ASA) worked to raise community awareness of the disease and ensure compliance with protective measures, also ensuring children weren't used on plantations due to the closure of schools in the Nawa and Indénié-Djuablin regions of the Ivory Coast. ASA involved community members in awareness-raising sessions and aired sketches in local languages (Baoulé, Malinké, Bété) via radio commercials. The teaching staff contributed to raising awareness in order to prevent disruption of education and to combat school drop-out. Involvement of community leaders and community members in the various activities was the main factor in the success of this initiative.

The programme, **"L'éducation ne peut pas attendre"** ("Education cannot wait") led by the same NGO in CAR also raised awareness and educated people to actively combat violence

> TO ADDRESS THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, IT HAS PROVED NECESSARY TO HAVE PEER EDUCATORS PRESENT WITHIN COMMUNITIES, WITH THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF WORKING TOWARDS MAINTAINING CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION.

by setting up community groups against school violence: creation of "Ndou nda mbeti ti mbi pépé" clubs made up of pupils, teachers, headteachers and parents in the 40 schools in the project, setting up prefectural coordinators to support the clubs in the Préfectures, holding awareness-raising days, organising educational and artistic games on children's rights, providing training sessions for members of school clubs on the importance of safety in schools and protection incidents, training on an incident alert system and violence in schools, raising awareness of violence against minors, etc.

In Ivory Coast, the government's UNICEF-supported **"Mon école à la maison"** ("My school at home") programme was based on community and teacher involvement. It has helped disseminate information to families on how to continue their children's educations. The establishment of a community watch drew on pre-existing schemes and worked in partnership with the Ivory Coast office of Caritas. This CSO has been an important asset due to its extensive presence in the country. **Civil society has been particularly involved in this monitoring process through the establishment of emergency units for the prevention of gender-based violence and teenage pregnancy.** In some regions teachers have also organised themselves. Although in practice the impact of this participation has not yet been evaluated in detail, the number of teenage

pregnancies does not seem to have increased significantly during the school closure period.

2 PROXIMITY MONITORING PROCESS AND OUTREACH PROGRAMMES: WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON THE MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

The "proximity monitoring" approach translates into the implementation of personalised and individualised monitoring of local issues that populations may face, such as school drop-out, violence, lack of access to (or ownership of) health information, hygiene awareness, etc.

The proximity monitoring process involves an "outreach" approach to assist and pay special attention to the most vulnerable families, children and young people and to have a more specific understanding of the challenges and needs that the populations face. This monitoring can be done individually or collectively.

33 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KZ3RWY7KtMeOi-eCQUQkbHc2YbSHsvzi/edit

As part of ESSOR's initiative **"Accompagnement de proximité grâce à la distribution et au suivi de cahiers pédagogique"** (Outreach support through distribution and monitoring of educational materials) mentioned above, local teams have offered educational materials to provide social and educational support to children during the pandemic, from one-to-one support sessions to formal learning at home.

The socio-educational monitoring is individualised by the teaching teams' use of WhatsApp, training in preventive measures by health professionals, and the distribution of exercise books and equipment, masks, hydro-alcoholic gel, soap, etc. Through home visits, the proximity monitoring has facilitated the support of those children with the greatest difficulties and little or no parental support. Proximity monitoring particularly helps to strengthen family resilience and community capacity.

Based on data collected to assess the needs of the most vulnerable children, and in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Red Cross of Montenegro, UNICEF, as part of its programme response in support of the Government's education response, **UCI DOMA,** distributed printed educational materials on a weekly basis to more than 500 Roma (or identified as Roma) children across the country to support children from Roma (or identified as Roma) communities without access to internet or television (distribution has now stopped since the reopening of schools - October 2020 or January 2021 depending on the school level).

In a further outreach approach **Busca Activa Escolar** (Système de recherche active (Active Research System) in schools – here SRA), which is a social mobilisation methodology implemented since 2017 in Brazil, developed by UNICEF in collaboration with *Undime* - which is the national association of local education departments, and which includes the use of a free data platform, has supported governments at national and sub-national levels in the identification, registration, monitoring and follow-up of children and young people ages 4 to 17 who are out of school or at risk of leaving school. In partnership with local education, health and social care officials, the data platform enables local authorities (or anyone authorised as a community worker) to jointly identify out-of-school children, understand the reasons why and ensure a pathway to re-enrolment. **Referral mechanisms** are initiated as soon as children at risk are identified by community workers. Almost 80,000 children and young people have been (re) enrolled in school through this initiative.

> ❝
> PRINTED EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS WERE DISTRIBUTED EVERY WEEK TO MORE THAN 500 ROMA CHILDREN. ❞

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3 ENCOURAGE SUPPORT FROM PARENTS: PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE ROLE OF FAMILIES.

Some projects supplement academic programmes with additional supports, through training in learning styles and stress management, in order to strengthen parental involvement and support for children by developing close contacts between parents and the education team.

The **Humanity and Inclusion in Palestine (Gaza Strip)** programme ensured personalised follow-up with children, through the offer of individual psychosocial and mental supports, reading materials and the creation of a unique, reassuring story for children. Produced in video format and translated into sign language, this work helped nurture the bond between children, parents and the educational team despite the distancing, and potentially reduced the accumulated stress.

Likewise, **Enfant d'Asie in Cebu, Philippines** hoped to improve the psychosocial and psychomotor skills of children in their reactions to the pandemic through educational, psychosocial, recreational and festive activities at home and with their families. To this end, an individualised passport of activities done by the child and their family is in progress. It will therefore be possible to monitor parent training, in particular on positive parenting and training needs, and will identify and benchmark specific needs (health, nutrition, child protection). Children's development and physical integrity will thus be strengthened by supporting the resumption of basic health care, routine vaccination, nutrition monitoring and education about social distancing and safety measures. Other projects have also targeted the link between parents, children and health education, in order to address a lack of information and ensure that children and their parents are supported in times of uncertainty. In the context of the **Amal Alliance** project, it specifically addressed refugee and displaced populations.

A podcast series was created that responded to the needs of all age groups and abilities and allowed parents to stay connected in times of social distancing, participate in activities, keep families informed and empowered, and help them cope. The podcasts included a variety of activities that supported the protection, development and well-being of children during the crisis, and highlighted related topics for reintegration into schools by ensuring access to concrete information which was previously inaccessible to these populations. In addition, the CSO notes that the method works outside connected zones and includes host communities.

The UNICEF program in support of the **Montenegro government's educational response "UCI DOMA"** was also designed to help parents, in particular Roma parents (or identified as such), by raising their awareness of the importance of preschool education. Instead of the awareness sessions organised before the pandemic in preschools, parents received educational materials for the first time and individual follow-up phone calls from professionals. Through these individual meetings, Roma parents (or identified as such) received advice about how they could support and motivate their children at home as parents when the preschools were closed. In a campaign, UNICEF Montenegro, the Ministry of Education and an NGO of preschool teachers joined the #PlayAtHome initiative to support parents of preschool children on how to spend quality time with their children and stimulate their development. Videos with suggestions for activities were published on the UNICEF and Ministry of Education websites. Nearly two-thirds of parents (64%) of children ages 4 to 17 had heard about the #PlayAtHome campaign, and most of them found it helpful and engaging (according to the results of a national study led by IPSOS, with support from UNICEF, during the last week of April 2020 on a nationally representative sample of parents of children ages 4 to 17).

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III ESTABLISHING A HOLISTIC APPROACH

A AN INTEGRATED APPROACH BASED ON RIGHTS

1 A HOLISTIC APPROACH

With the sudden closing of school buildings, learners, especially children, lost, overnight, not only access to learning and knowledge, they also lost the only hot meal they had each day, access to care, to a protected and safe environment - a barrier against early marriage and pregnancy, child labour and dropping out of school. In this context, the CSOs (and UNICEF's support initiatives supplementary to government responses) considered the beneficiaries as a "whole", and considered their general well-being. They adopted an inter-sectoral approach and organically formed strong partnerships/ alliances upstream from projects with the CSOs or institutions from various sectors, thus strengthening interdisciplinary and intersectoral work at all levels of project implementation in order to enhance the efficiency of the activities.

The project driven by **Care "Women, dignity and work" and its partners in Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador** [34] was thus entirely designed with the local, decentralised and national authorities of the three countries of intervention and certain educational sector actors, including public vocational training centres in the three countries of intervention. The project, which aimed to empower and protect female domestic workers and their organisations, in order to have an impact on respect for human and labour rights, had to be adapted for virtual operation, due to the pandemic. This forced the teams in each country to have a certain flexibility to create technical and budgetary adjustments in the face of new needs arising from isolation, by promoting above all autonomy, innovation and solidarity, and taking each beneficiary's context into account.

Likewise, **the AVENIR project - empowerment of the most vulnerable through inclusive education and reintegration** [35], set up by Plan International, shows that the engagement of various actors has made it possible to increase the capacity to resolve social, educational or complex health problems,

thus going beyond the competence of a single sector. The implementation of the AVENIR project relied heavily on continuous consultation with local and national stakeholders (Ministries, local authorities, local associations, specialists, school directors, parents of students), making possible very early diagnosis of needs and determining the role of each relevant and effective structure. New partners were mobilized as part of the response to Covid19 (associations, school principals, parents' associations, school councils, Yaoundé Basic Education District Inspectorate). This pooling of resources, knowledge and expertise has resulted in new ways of collaborating, working and finding solutions together despite differences of opinion, so as to improve social cohesion and provide more opportunities for human development.

● Based on a human rights approach (ABDH) and a child rights approach (ABDE)

This vision of development projects and practices is based on the human rights-based approach (ABDH) and more specifically, in the context of projects carried out with young people under the age of 18, on an approach based on children's' rights (ABDE).

The ABDH and the ABDE, are conceptual frameworks for developing programs that integrate the protection and promotion of human rights. They are not intended to solve sectoral problems, but rather to address the root causes of rights violations and inequalities. From the outset of the crisis, the CSOs underlined the extreme vulnerability of the most marginalised populations and immediately developed strategies "to leave no one behind".

Within the framework of projects carried out specifically with vulnerable children, the CSOs have sought to realise children's rights by applying, in addition to human rights principles, the guiding principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
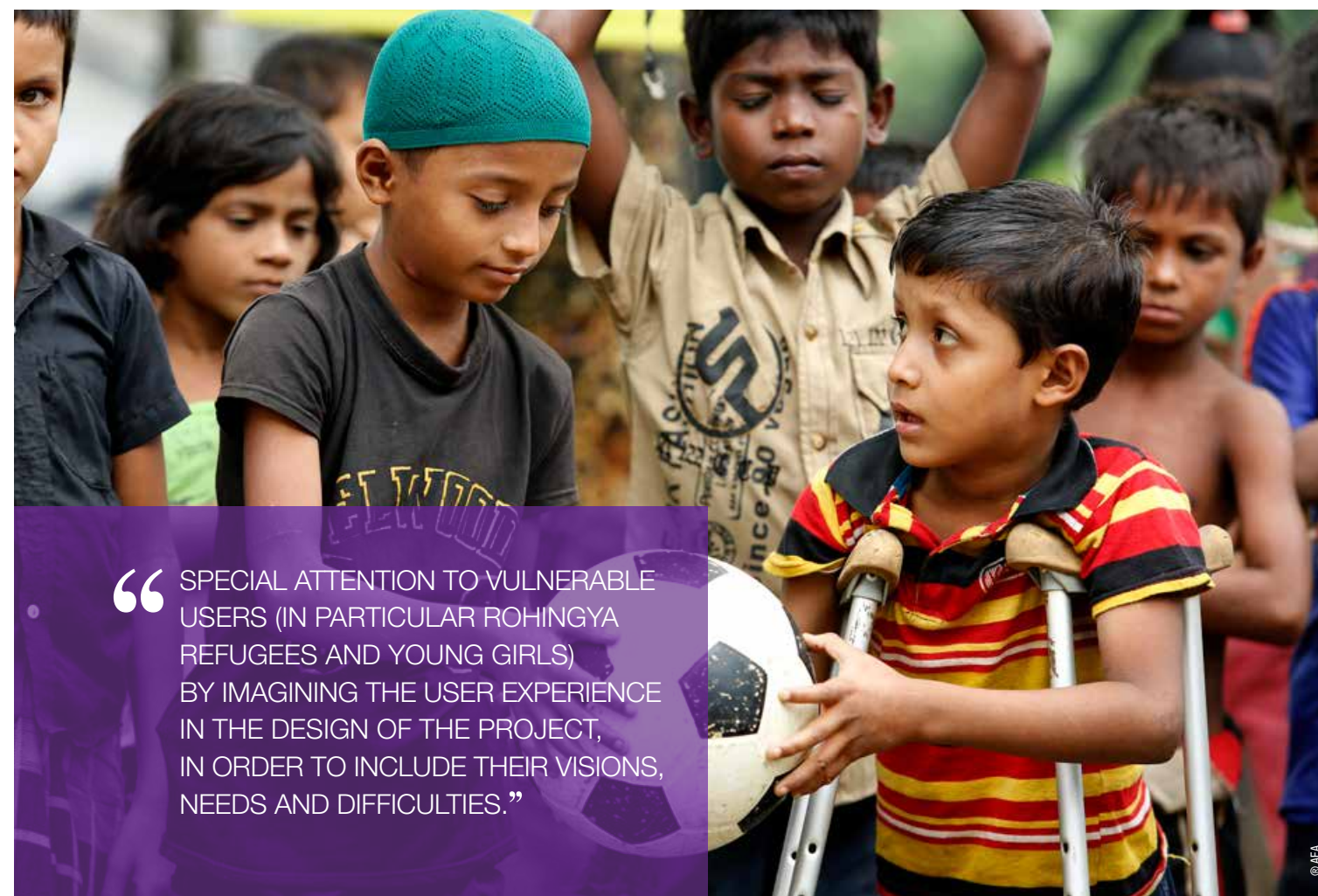
> ❝ SPECIAL ATTENTION TO VULNERABLE USERS (IN PARTICULAR ROHINGYA REFUGEES AND YOUNG GIRLS) BY IMAGINING THE USER EXPERIENCE IN THE DESIGN OF THE PROJECT, IN ORDER TO INCLUDE THEIR VISIONS, NEEDS AND DIFFICULTIES. ❞

The **"Colors of Kindness** [36]**" project in Bangladesh** paid particular attention to vulnerable users (specifically Rohingya refugees and young girls) by designing a user path in order to integrate their visions, needs and problems. The design enabled them to identify the needs of users (students and teachers) and support them with appropriate responses to their challenges.

At the centre of these two approaches: the State has the obligation to implement the right to education for all. In their responses to Covid19, some CSOs have emphasised the importance of respecting national education strategies and establishing a strong partnership with States, relevant ministries or local authorities. Thus, the project led in Senegal by **Humanity and Inclusion** [37] supplements the "Learn at Home" initiative launched by the MEN for the provision of digital resources online on its website and the development of education offered through new television and radio platforms. HI offers a specific support system intended to guarantee hearing-impaired and deaf children access to learning during the closure of schools in Senegal (making AVS and tablets available). This is only possible with the involvement of technicians from the Ministry of National Education and the political decision to continue supporting deaf children. CSOs have therefore made capacity-building a major component

of their actions, with projects aimed at strengthening national laws, regulatory frameworks, good governance and support for local actors.

2 INTEGRATED MULTI-SECTORAL ACTION

Faced with Covid19, most of the **CSOs consulted as part of the study took an integrated, multi-sectoral approach.** Notably, they have developed actions related to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, as it has become essential, for obvious health reasons, to ensure that populations can access fixed and mobile hand washing facilities, soap or alcohol-based cleaning products, a reliable water supply and awareness of the dangers of the virus and the importance of protective measures. CSOs have also provided comprehensive support for food aid and for monitoring nutrition, and for the reintroduction of primary health care and immunisation.

Covid19 has disrupted vaccination programs, primary health services and community-based care for children in the Ermita slum district in the Philippines. **The DICE (Drop-In Center of Ermita) against Covid** [38] **is a space dedicated to the care of vulnerable children run by Enfants d'Asie.** The centre has

34 https://docs.google.com/document/d/10812EM4w0zklsFztcQA6R4YVGoJIbluB/edit

35 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rTME8DAPQmu-Uk5w6-ZD3Fp-4TR5H5fP/edit

36 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SclNqQxOJvDEP-Iw0XHG6KQd0kUmJ6s/edit#heading=h.gjdgxs

37 https://docs.google.com/document/d/10WlivwGC7B7wSv_-CmgQdwbv8ilsKF4H/edit
38 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kWk72ourFXJJq1G-PG2XgFUwrHituJ1o/edit

> ENSURING THAT POPULATIONS CAN ACCESS STATIONARY AND MOBILE HAND WASHING FACILITIES HAS PROVED TO BE ESSENTIAL. "

been open for three years, and during the Covid19 pandemic its focus has been the development of the youngest children's psychosocial and psychomotor skills through educational, recreational and fun activities. The centre has also supported their physiological well-being (primary health, including nutrition) and basic health needs by ensuring the restoration of primary health services, food aid, vitamin supplementation and hygiene awareness, including health education and raising awareness of Covid19.

Another example is **India and Sri Lanka, where the NGO Aide et Action** [39] has been working to re-establish access to essential services as quickly as possible by raising awareness of the importance of barrier measures and social distancing, distributing health, nutrition and menstrual hygiene kits, guaranteeing a minimum level of income to families who have lost everything, facilitating administrative procedures and also by helping the most vulnerable people to find work. The outcome of the project in India demonstrates the importance and effectiveness of this cross-sectoral approach: 380,000 people have been made aware of barrier measures, 6,615 people have received psychological and social support, more than 197,943 people experiencing internal migration have received food, 96647 people have received hygiene kits and 713 people have received supports to return to work.

Similarly, **Un Enfant par la Main** has established a multi-sectoral approach in its initiative **"Reconciling continuity of education and healthcare provision in times of epidemics in Madagascar** [40]**".** The aim is to support the education sector and encourage continuity of education, safeguard the health of the most marginalised children and their families, and

ensure that children, particularly girls, are not at risk of violence during lockdown.

HI's intervention in Mali is also based on a multi-sectoral approach involving institutional partners through the Ministries of National Education (MEN), Territorial Administration and Decentralisation (MATD) and Social Development, as well as civil society partners (COSC-EPT and the Malian Federation of Associations of Disabled People -FEMAPH-). The project uses the emergency-development approach.

During the implementation of e-learning and distance learning in Pursat and Siem Reap provinces in Cambodia, **Bandos Komar** invited key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to see the actual distance learning practices of the community kindergarten, the parenting programme and the primary school. The aim of these visits was to gain the support of stakeholders and encourage them to replicate the project in other schools.

In Brazil, as part of the **Busca Activa Escolar** initiative developed by **UNICEF** in collaboration with **Undime** (the national association of municipal education departments) and other municipal education, health and social welfare officials, a data platform is used to enable local authorities (or anyone empowered as a community agent) to search for out-of-school children, to understand why they are out of school and ensure re-enrolment based on the information. Social mobilisation through a data platform has promoted cross-sectoral collaboration, public engagement, dialogue with families and the exchange of experiences between participating municipalities and (federal) states in order to conduct a joint search for out-of-school

children, to understand why they are out of school and ensure that there is a way for them to re-enrol. Benchmarking mechanisms have thus been initiated as soon as at-risk children have been identified by community workers.

The Covid19 crisis has also led to a genuine crisis in the rights of children. Children and young people, especially young girls are considered to be "transmission agents". They have been confined and thus exposed to increased rates of neglect, abandonment, violence (recruitment into military groups and criminality) and exploitation (including online sexual exploitation, early marriages, etc.). The project carried out in 32 districts of Tanzania by **CAMFED**[41] therefore has had the dual aim of preventing vulnerable girls from dropping out of school during the Covid19 pandemic and ensuring their protection and safety. The project also includes the use of e-learning platforms, home-based educational follow-up, provision of school materials and the use of applications such as WhatsApp to allow girls to share their problems and potential abuses, as well as to broadcast radio programmes on the importance of education, welfare and child protection issues. In conjunction with this, the project has distributed masks and raised awareness of social distancing measures to facilitate a return to school.

Many of the CSOs consulted are committed to dedicating all or part of their projects to raising awareness of children's rights among young people and adults, and to the protection of younger children, in particular by organising home visits and offering individualised follow-up to young people.

The aim of the **"Community outreach activity "** project,- carried out in Yopougon in Ivory Coast by **Afrique Secours Assistance**[42] was to raise awareness among children and young people under 18 of their sexual and reproductive health rights in relation to gender-based violence during the Covid19 period (March to September 2020). Further aims were to encourage them to know their rights and be actors in the promotion of sexual and reproductive rights, and to encourage them to go to health centres for contraceptive services. After the screening of a documentary, the trainers organised "meetup" sessions during which the girls could share their experiences. They also informed the girls about the national, regional and international legal framework on SRHR and in particular the Maputo agreements. A total of 150 young people under 18 have been affected, including 95 girls.

In line with the guiding principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, CSOs acted in the best interests of children by restoring access to recreational activities, which are essential for child development. Deprived of school and living in precarious housing, the only way for the children to escape has been to go out to play with other children in the neighbourhood. In order to limit these gatherings, which would expose them to the virus, the Maison de l'Éducation teams in Senegal[43] distributed 500 kits to the families of the children in their care containing board games, marbles, a radio, etc. These small items allowed them to entertain themselves at home and do something different while being safe.

B INITIATING A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

According to CRES research between March and April 2021, "the responses of state officials appear to be in line with the complexity and multidimensional nature of the impact of Covid19 on education systems. They include a post-Covid19 future for education systems, through controlled structural transformation."

1 DIVERSIFY, STRENGTHEN AND DEVELOP RELEVANT PARTNERSHIPS BASED ON NEEDS

With international cooperation and solidarity, partnerships and teamwork are at the heart of interventions and processes in order to ensure appropriate contextualisation of approaches, methodologies, combined expertise and coherent resources.

The reconfiguration of spaces for action, dialogue, collaboration and learning - in the context of a global pandemic - requires all participants to rethink their interactions and interventions.

It has been necessary to rethink needs, networks and alliances, encouraging collaborators to clarify their expertise and diversify their partnerships in order to better organise the whole and thus guarantee the effectiveness of the measures implemented. This has forced stakeholders who influence educational practices to rethink systems and strategies for sustainable structural transformation.

It has been necessary to rely more heavily on existing stakeholder networks and multi-stakeholder partnerships to respond to the educational challenges and specific needs of vulnerable people, particularly girls and adolescents, who are more affected by this crisis.

39 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kJcYdr7RuJfEuBjXTddi9FoCLMeOhZAG/edit

40 https://docs.google.com/document/d/19lNUqV_TuTNxpHT_kZaMjKuQp4Za4-R_/edit

41 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rBC4ViUI5E6VPA1CSAbA7vpa-uPAYsAL/edit

42 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UmglQVkvtAy-zCHPp2niR7zY4qkbWPeG/edit

43 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1M0nMYpdbyGz9b2-GFKMzhQNU3TZNQdU8/edit

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Roles and responsibilities have also had to be reconsidered in light of the new forms of intervention and the possibilities for interaction, both during the lockdown phase and during the reopening of schools in contexts as diverse as the multiple crises we are experiencing, which makes the numerous intervention contexts more complex.

Thus, partnerships have been transformed and reviewed through three complementary approaches:

● **A partnership approach:** requiring more stakeholders (public - private - civil society - community, girls and boys, adolescents, etc.) to bring together a range of practices and expertise with the common objective of avoiding and/or mitigating the educational disruption of the most **vulnerable girls and boys at risk of exclusion from school, with a view to working towards inclusion for all.**

For example, the development of partnerships between UNICEF and the Puntland State Government has been critical to the operational success of the **Learning Passport** in Somalia, as well as to its longevity. The need to produce teaching materials for all curricula and convert them to digital format has led to a partnership between UNICEF and the Global Partnership for Education, and the **Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE)**. This partnership has benefited from the shared experience of the Technology for Development (T4D) and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) sections of the UNICEF office in the creation of educational resources in the form of audiovisual lessons. The partnership has also involved the Puntland Development Research Centre (PDRC), a community-based research institute. It was selected by the Ministry to be responsible for overall organisation, video production, editing and quality assurance.

In Brazil, **multi-level partnerships** and collaboration with all stakeholders have been crucial to the success of the programme. The social mobilisation project **"Busca Activa Escolar", which includes a data platform**, developed by UNICEF with *Undime* (the national association of municipal education departments) was implemented with national institutional partners: the National Council of Municipal Health Departments *(Conasems)* and the National College of Municipal Social Assistance Departments *(Congemas)*. At the local level, each municipality or state has been free to partner with any civil society organisation (CSO), which could join the local cross-sectoral management committee and, within the platform, act as a community agent, issuing alerts when a potential child dropout or child at risk of dropout is identified. From 1 April to 31 December 2020: 35,579 children and young people were re-enrolled in school as a result of the SRA (System of Active Search in Schools) strategy. It should also be noted that the State of Sergipe, as well as 23 other Brazilian states and 1164 municipalities (which have joined the initiative since January 2021) are actively using the platform, a tool **that can be adjusted to all situations and adapted to different contexts**. By December 2020, 3,214 municipalities (57% of municipalities in Brazil) and 21 states had joined the SRA strategy. Using this social mobilisation tool to combat school dropout, **UNICEF** conducted several online training events in Amazonas, semi-arid and urban regions, to improve the capacity of municipal education, social assistance and health officials to introduce the active search tool locally.

In Benin, **the Atacora Local Water Partnership** contributed to educational continuity and provided a system of hand washing facilities and equipment in over 50 rural primary schools. Support was provided by the **International Secretariat for Water** (ISW) of Canada to mitigate the spread of the virus in schools.

In addition to partnerships with governments, other organisations from outside the field of international are also involved. In the **Amal Alliance's "Colors of Kindness"** initiative, private sector organisations were involved in supporting CSOs through a start-up company focusing on digital skills, which provided computers and organised creative workshops to teach the use of different ICT tools.

Partnerships may also be between governments and communities. In the provision of school and hygiene kits, **Planète Urgence** brought together public authorities and local community associations, the latter supporting and adapting government recommendations to carry school and hygiene kits to the local health context.

In a great majority of the initiatives reviewed, coordination with public authorities has occurred throughout the project. The **Guera Touristique** project, "Education and social inclusion in the period of Covid19", and the **Association ASA** program, "Education Cannot Wait", involved educational authorities. This notably resulted in courses provided by teachers with the support of education officials for educational monitoring and guidance, and facilitation by the military authorities for teachers' travel (curfew, lockdown, etc.). Within communities, the leaders of districts and the commune of Mongo have facilitated radio programmes and courses. international partners also played an important role, including UNICEF and the Association Foi et Joie, by financially supporting the printing of courses in Chad in the Guera Touristique **initiative.**

● **An intersectoral** multiple-response approach (nutrition, social protection, health) made it possible to raise awareness on the impact of education and the educational system as a central pillar of access to children's rights, particularly for girls, and as a key vehicle of child protection, especially against domestic and gender-based violence (GBV). This becomes more complex as the various crises accumulate: for example, the management of educational continuity for internally displaced persons, refugees/migrants, highly marginalised people, persons with disabilities, in pandemic contexts requiring the implementation of health measures and protective barriers, while ensuring the protection of girls, adolescents and boys.

The initiative developed by **Solidarité Laïque**, as part of the multi-stakeholder program **"Together for a resilient public education in the face of crises [44]"**, particularly targets mothers of families who have suffered violence and have many dependent children, in order to allow them to reintegrate into

society. The activities established (support for additional school materials for vulnerable children, payment of school fees, preschool, infant nutrition, food for 15 displaced people facing the dual crises of security and health related to the Covid19 pandemic; support to enhance the economic activities of the most vulnerable households) have enabled the schooling of very vulnerable children who had dropped out of school and the development of income-generating activities for women.

In Ghana, **the organisation Savana Signatures** [45] implemented the project **"School are closed but it's not a holiday!"** which facilitated daily discussion sessions via radio (with the directives of the Ghana educational service) for adolescents on subjects selected and discussed by the young people. The project targeted pupils, especially girls from disadvantaged communities, providing them with information on pregnancy prevention, the consequences of child marriage, home schooling methods and liaison with teachers.

This multi-stakeholder initiative used a peer-to-peer approach for the radio programmes, with young people talking to other young people.

Overall, equality and protection from gender-based violence in particular have been central to the initiatives established in response to the pandemic.

The Humanity and Inclusion project, "Providing inclusive education to girls and boys affected by the Covid19 pandemic in Mali" incorporated an interesting multi-actor approach, although it specific to the Malian context, since it involved the decentralised management of education through the empowerment of municipalities via the municipal commissions already in place, for the education of disabled children and internally displaced/returned/refugee children.

The restrictions caused by the pandemic and the confinement and isolation solutions widely used by the States highlighted the role and diversity of stakeholders who had to work together in order to provide coordinated, multidimensional responses.

In addition, the intersectionality allowed by the education system also makes it possible to transcend its primary objective of teaching and support for children into adulthood - to raise awareness and knowledge about other rights and needs: equality, health, rights, inclusion, etc., and, therefore, all parties involved have a role to play.

44 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pKs_RCmMOXaFMCZRD3ObYxSs5osszzqT/edit

45 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sEDRUHTd6lmE-3n0InpyAJ-6qz0i39VC/edit

● **Public and state** authorities have proved to be very efficient in coordinating the participation and actions of all stakeholders. For countries like Burkina Faso that already have education clusters, which facilitate coordination of the educational humanitarian response, the results have been the fastest and most visible, since these clusters have served as information and capitalisation outlets, and as very effective multi-stakeholder coalitions.

Not only nationally and locally, but also regionally and globally, coordination has proved essential. In several of its areas of intervention, **Planète Urgence** has been able to coordinate responses with ministries, and prefectural coordination for support in prefectures made up of teachers, members of the Academic Inspectorate, directors of schools, communities, neighbourhoods, municipalities, etc.

In RCA, **the ASA association** worked closely with the Emergency Unit, which was set up in response to the pandemic, in particular to help strengthen the organisational and material capacities of the members of the Unit.

Enfants d'Asie [46] **, in its DICE programme in the Philippines** , promoted the creation of a manager to adapt the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in charge of local response: through cooperation between Barangay authorities (child protection), the community health centre (monitoring and primary health care, nutrition and vaccination), the owners' association of Barangay (physical space for DICE), the Barangay reading centre (educational and recreational activities, logistical support) and the Ministry of Social Affairs.

In Cambodia, the Bandos Komar [47] association is fully on board with the response plan established by the authorities, which has resulted in strong consultation not only at the national level, but also locally with the authorities and school governance, teachers and various stakeholders. Once discussions began with these stakeholders and the links were established, the association worked directly with schools/principals and teachers to support existing school committees, children and parents.

● **The educational actors** in charge of schools, as well as the teaching staff, have been hit hard by the consequences of the crisis, forcing each party to rethink its means and methodologies to ensure educational continuity, often by using new digital tools that are neither mastered/shared nor adapted. In particular, they have had to rely on **the communities and families** closest to their pupils in order to jointly ensure educational continuity, battle school drop-out and adapt tools and teaching methods to the means, contexts and capacities of the educational facilities that the parents, families and communities have now become (as detailed above) (although without basic or sufficient training or support, if any at all). Likewise, many stakeholders of the educational system impacted by the Covid19 crisis have also had to play a role in prevention and direct health response by becoming vehicles of messages on the awareness of government measures and protective barriers, and also by implementing the health resources and provisions necessary to deal with the crisis.

Finally, the main stakeholders often forgotten in the educational response have been the girls and boys, themselves, being first the victims of this crisis, but nevertheless stakeholders in the educational response, who, despite the squalid conditions or violence and neglect they have experienced, and the loss of the social bond represented by school and psychosocial support, have tried to pursue their educations and adapt to new expectations, requirements and arrangements. The significant impact of peer-to-peer approaches has also demonstrated its relevance and capacity for innovation in the distribution of roles, particularly with regard to psychosocial support.

In its initiative in Brazil, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, **ESSOR** innovated by having children produce part of the booklet, thereby becoming stakeholders in their education.

In Montenegro, the **UNICEF** program supporting the government's educational response "UCI DOMA" also aimed to establish peer-to-peer support through the *Study Buddy* programme, in order to allow young people who have learning difficulties or wish to help, to become tutors or benefit from a tutor, as well as to socialise.

In crisis, needs assessment is also a partnership: the Plan International association in its **AVENIR** [48] project continuously consulted with the main stakeholders and networks already consolidated at the local and national levels for education and socio-professional integration, and identified needs linked with project stakeholders - ministries, school principals, parents of pupils - particularly addressing the needs identified by the children themselves and girls in particular).

● **Recommendations for partnership and multi-sectorality:**
In the same way that the crisis has highlighted the central role of education in ensuring access to children's rights, it has also highlighted its central role in protecting girls and adolescent girls from gender-based inequality and sexual violence.

In order to ensure genuine structural change and a lasting impact that will make it possible to think beyond the Covid19 crisis, it is essential to diversify partnerships and work with multiple stakeholders.

However, in order to ensure the coherence of actions and all stakeholders, it is important that the actions are components of national crisis response plans, influencing them, allowing them to address the specific needs of vulnerable people, especially girls, adolescent girls and women, and then coordinating actions in appropriate, existing consultation groups, so as to ensure that information is properly disseminated and that actions are complementary.

Strengthening coordination and coordinated activities between the various stakeholders on the humanitarian action model (cluster and task forces), which bring together stakeholders around a thematic area of intervention and common ambitions, is central, especially for education. This makes it possible to align with the State's strategy and ensures all types of expertise are available and roles are coherently assigned. States must carry out the responsibilities incumbent upon them in terms of education, equality between girls and boys and child protection (CF ODD).

Coordination must, therefore, take place at different levels: at the national level, but also at the regional and global levels. Governments must support global and regional institutions and mechanisms, as well as the international humanitarian system, in order to lead coherent and effective global action. This means working in close and open collaboration with civil society organisations, essential hubs for ensuring the inclusive and equitable character of public policies, direction and global action. Further to coordination, systematic integration of civil society organisations and communities is required. This allows for longer-term engagement of communities, including local leaders, families and caregivers, and especially girls and women, in all stages of the overall response.

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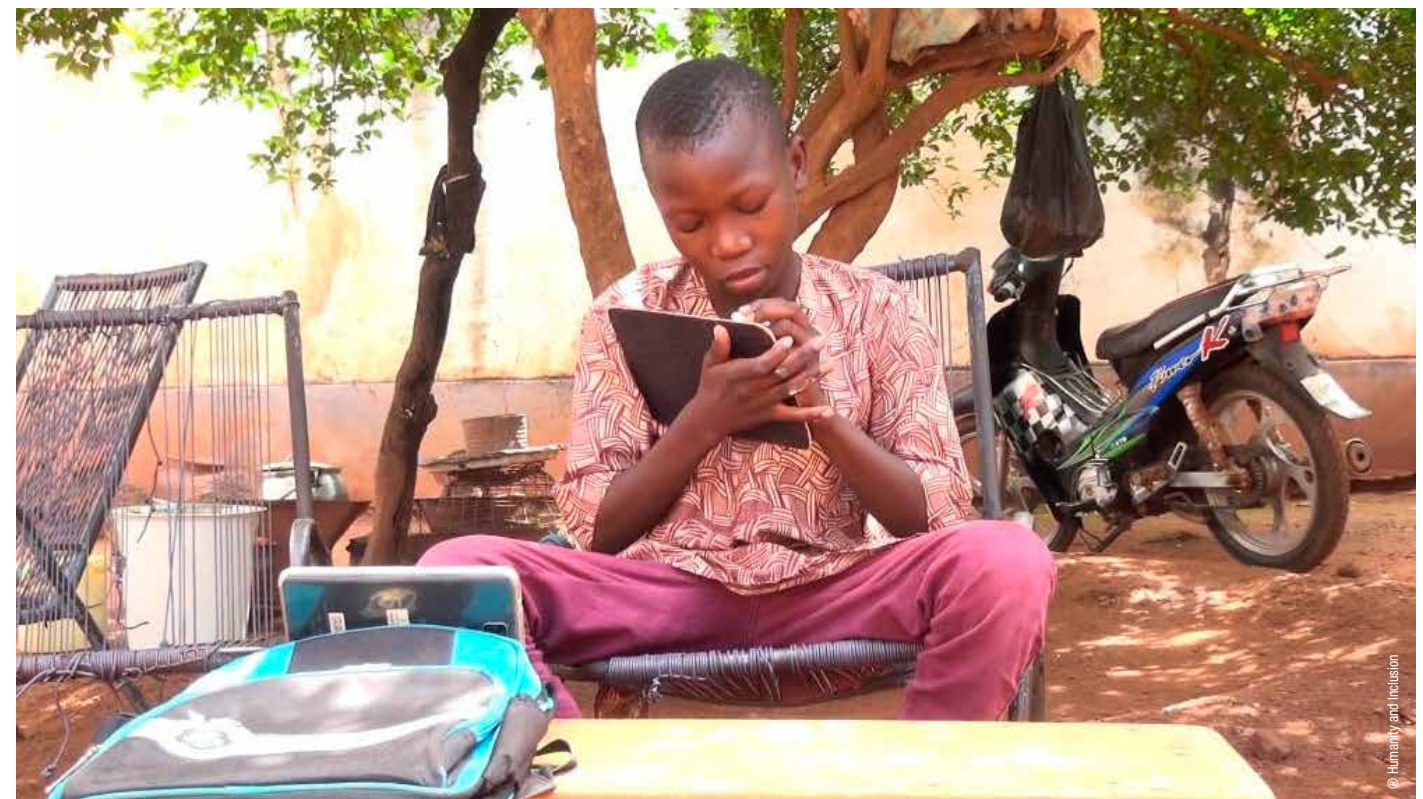
46 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1x5mSMl2styj4iHp8QHAalliMYOXh60nl/edit?usp=drive_ web&ouid=100696290450842034432&rtpof=true

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48 https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qs0Vf7Yh_nutyHpcrDtxMLls4td0OvWb/edit

IV CONCLUSION

Civil society organisations are, in many local contexts, the major and sometimes the only stakeholders managing the direct and indirect effects of Covid19 on education systems, pupils and communities.

The responses implemented have incorporated quality criteria. They have been adapted and appropriate, effective and delivered on time, and, finally, they have increased local capacity.

Specifically, CSO responses have integrated the emergency – rehabilitation – development continuum and emergency management in addressing the recovery of education systems and furthering their resilience.

Some of the civil society responses may serve as frameworks for best practices in management of disaster risks, in terms of:

- Adaption of education to crisis and context;
- Diversification of content and remote learning tools and ensuring their complementarity and adaptation to the needs of different populations;
- Taking into account vulnerabilities in order to ensure an inclusive, equitable and egalitarian approach;

- Identification and mapping of learners' specific needs
- Personalised monitoring;
- Integrated rights-based approach;
- Diversification, strengthening and implementation of relevant partnerships as needed.

In the UEMOA [49] region, development plans in education still do not include sufficient disaster risk prevention and management. This undoubtedly explains the direct and indirect impacts of Covid19 in this zone and the deficiencies in the interventions of the States for the management of pandemic effects.

The Covid19 pandemic involves rethinking how quality education can be effectively delivered in an inclusive and equitable way, and the role of technology as one of the main tools in disaster situations.

Many countries around the world need to develop a comprehensive remote education policy. Strategic partnerships remain essential for launching effective remote education projects.

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49 West African Economy and Monetary Union (UEMOA) comprises, to date, eight member states. These are Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

V RECOMMENDATIONS

Quality education - formal, non-formal and training - must be integrated in collaboration with all stakeholders in crisis response and prevention policy, protecting the progress made for the most marginalized families, and based on lessons learned from previous crises to address the specific challenges faced by the most excluded populations.

IN THE SHORT TERM, THIS MEANS

- **Adopting quality remote education practices that are appropriate, accessible, free - educational material at no additional cost - and safe:**

1 Ensuring that, in contexts where digital remote learning solutions are accessible to all, the most marginalized families are trained in the necessary digital skills, including the knowledge and skills they need to stay safe online (safeguards). Addressing the digital gender divide and the specific difficulties faced by the most marginalized families in accessing and using technology. Ensuring that social support networks, together with colleagues and tutors, are maintained through digital or other platforms in order to facilitate interconnection and empowerment.

2 Considering low-tech, non-technical and gender-sensitive approaches in contexts with few or inaccessible digital solutions. This may include radio and television broadcasts, which have been used effectively in humanitarian settings, or reading and writing materials for home use.

3 Ensuring that all distance learning materials meet individual needs and capacities by making them available in local languages, culturally appropriate, and accessible to students with disabilities. Ensuring that educational programmes and plans are flexible and allow for self-paced learning, so as not to discourage the most marginalized, especially girls, on whom the burden of care often falls disproportionately.

- **Strengthening support for teachers and educational communities:** protecting teachers and educational staff by providing the necessary training in remote learning methods and by maintaining teachers' salaries, especially in the contexts of crises and informal and community education. Ensuring clear and regular communication about inclusive, safe remote education for families and communities, in order to guarantee continuous investment in the support of the most marginalized populations, including girls.

- **Ensuring the return to school for all:** providing flexible learning approaches so that the most marginalized children are not dissuaded or prevented from returning to schools when they reopen. This includes remedial and accelerated learning, and communication and social mobilization campaigns to ensure that children return to school, especially children and youth facing stigma and discriminatory school entry laws. Enabling automatic promotion and suitable opportunities in admissions processes that recognize the particular challenges faced by the most excluded populations.

- **Safely reopening schools and rebuilding better:** mitigating school exclusion going forward by prioritizing groups at risk of not returning to school and strengthening health education. Adopting all necessary precautions, including health measures, accounting for gender specificities and specific advice to guard against the resurgence of Covid19.

- **Involving children and young people throughout the crisis response cycle, in the short and medium term,** taking into account their specific needs and contributions, and recognizing and supporting their roles as participants alongside local and national authorities, in response to the educational crisis (role in community awareness and prevention, in the definition and monitoring of public education policies for prevention and crisis response).

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LONG-TERM

● **Dedicating appropriate financial resources** to ensure the right to free, quality public education for all during and after the Covid19 crisis: protecting education funding in crisis situations as part of ODA and allocating more long-term resources for humanitarian aid, to the Global Fund for Education in Emergencies "Education Cannot Wait" and to the Global Partnership for Education.

● **Strengthening and prioritizing basic social services:** the crisis has revealed the importance of supporting strong public services and the ongoing links between health, hygiene, prevention, sexual and reproductive health rights, education and social protection. It also must be ensured that these responses are intersectoral and well-coordinated with the operators concerned (access to food, housing, water, sanitation, social security). For example: making schools access points for psychosocial support and food distribution, working across sectors to guarantee alternative social services and providing support by phone, SMS or other media.

● **Systemically thinking about crises and the post-crisis period:** continuously evaluating, analysing the actions and education policies implemented in the context of Covid19 in order to prevent future crises and avoid disruptions in learning, and involving children and youth in the process. The key is promoting innovative and effective alternative learning models that ensure continuity of education for the most marginalized ·during and after crises. We must also rethink education systems and construct them in anticipation of future crises (conflicts, climate change, etc.) in order to increase resilience. This includes:

1 Strategic planning for the development of a culture of disaster risk prevention and management;

2 Chains of institutional and community educational system actors for the prevention and management of disaster risks at national, regional and local levels;

3 Establishment of capacity-building mechanisms for non-state participants at national and local levels in terms of disaster risk prevention and management;

4 Local, regional and national platforms for state and non-state participants for educational system disaster risk resilience;

5 Collaborative intervention plans for the prevention and management of disaster risks in the education system;

6 Training for local disaster risks;

7 Means of access to information and knowledge for the prevention and management of disaster risks;

8 Scientific and technical partnerships to support recovery in the education sector.

APPENDICES

VULNERABILITY TRACKING DEVELOPED BY THE CRES

From the perspective of greater efficiency and sharing of best practices for local intervention and disaster risk management in the education sector, a benchmark system can be used for tracking vulnerabilities based on local or contextual education characteristics. Each group or aspect of an educational system (defined below), has characteristics and situations that may be defined which make them sensitive to the damaging effects of potential disasters. These characteristics are the basis, in different contexts, for responses to disaster risks.

● **Stakeholder categories**

Categories of education sector stakeholders that may be considered in tracking vulnerability factors to ensure specific responses to disaster risk include:

Learners (specific groups of learners - girls, people with disabilities, children in precarious situations); parents of students; teachers; school management committees; education ministry officials.

● **Education systems**

Tracking of education systems may take into account the following aspects of education systems: educational opportunity, demand for educational services, quality, funding and governance.

● **Types of contextual vulnerability**

Contextual vulnerability includes several vulnerability factors:

-social vulnerability;
-human vulnerability;
-economic vulnerability;
-environmental vulnerability;
-technological vulnerability;

By using vulnerability benchmarks (as mentioned above) relating to stakeholders, education systems and contexts, non-state participants have a common framework for language, action, sharing of experiences and best practices. Benchmarks allow for the development of shared monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and disaster risk response initiatives.

GLOSSARY

ABDH	Human rights-based approach
ABDE	Child rights-based approach
AVS	Special needs assistants
SES	Socio-emotional learning
CIDE	Convention on the rights of the child
CRES	African Centre for scientific and educational research
DSSR	Right to sexual and reproductive health
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
ICT	Information and communication technologies
MATD	Ministry of territorial administration and decentralisation
MOEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MOEYS	Ministry of education, youth and sport
MEN	Ministry of National Education
NTIC	New Information and Communication Technologies
ODD	Sustainable Development objective
ONG	Non-governmental organisation
OSC	Civil society organisations
PEI	Individual educational programmes
PLE	Local water partnership
PRODEC	Ten-year programme for the development of educational and professional training
RCA	Republic of Central Africa
SENAC	Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Comercial
SRA	Active research system
TDR	Remunerated domestic service female workers
UEMOA	West African Economic and Monetary Union
VBG	Gender-based violence

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