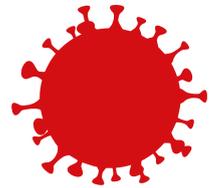


SAFE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS



WATER, SANITATION
AND HYGIENE IN SCHOOLS
VIRTUAL MINI INTERNATIONAL
LEARNING EXCHANGE

25TH JUNE 2020



REPORT



The Mini WinS ILE convened, organized and supported by:



Southeast Asian
Ministers of Education
Organization



german
cooperation
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

unicef
for every child



WaterAid

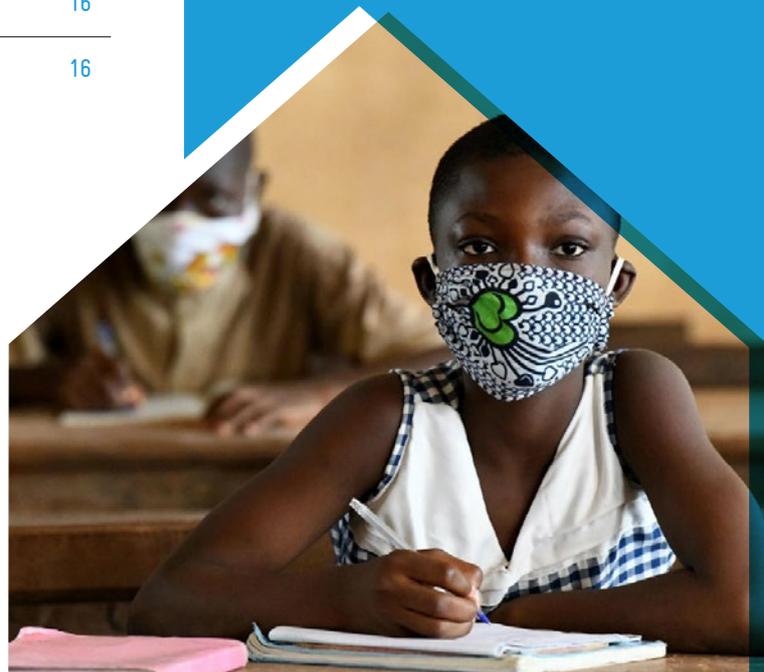
The WASH in Schools (WinS) Network (GIZ, UNICEF, Save the Children, Water Aid, and others) is a global inter-agency network of WinS practitioners from respective institutions which comprises of over 60 organizations.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASCI	Administrative Staff College of India
EAPRO	East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (UNICEF)
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross
ILEs	International Learning Exchanges
IPC	Infection, Prevention and Control
JMP	Joint Monitoring Programme
LSHTM	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOH	Ministry of Health
SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SuSanA	Sustainable Sanitation Alliance
STI	Sexual Transmitted Infections
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WinS	WASH in Schools
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization



FOREWORD

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REPRESENTATIVE

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1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our daily lives worldwide. Children suffer especially under the outbreak, as it is estimated that, globally, over one billion school children are staying home (as at June 2020) with a high number of children not continuing their education online. Nevertheless, the COVID-19 outbreak has been addressed and controlled in some countries, and gradually workplaces, public spaces and schools are reopening.

To ensure that the proper precautions continue to take place, UN organizations and their partners have developed and shared guidelines and checklists to support the reopening of schools. However, it is still of uttermost importance to support countries in the implementation of these guidelines, as previous International Learning Exchanges (ILEs) have shown. Even without a global pandemic Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) in schools is an extreme challenge. According to JMP latest figures from 2019, one third of the countries in the East Asia and Pacific area had less than 50 % of schools with basic hygiene facilities available. Since 2012 UNICEF and GIZ therefore initiated ILEs in the East Asia and Pacific region, where government representatives from different countries could exchange their experiences and learn from each other.

Under the global pandemic the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) and UNESCO co-hosted a Mini International Learning Exchange (Mini-ILE) with support from UNICEF, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), and the members of the WASH in Schools (WinS) Global Network.

WASH in Schools VIRTUAL MINI INTERNATIONAL LEARNING EXCHANGE
WinS MINI-ILE // 25 JUNE 2020
2 TO 5 PM BKK TIME (+7 GMT)

SAFE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

AGENDA: ONLINE SESSIONS

PLENARY (60 MIN):

1. Introduction
 - > SEAMEO, UNESCO
2. Keynote from education sector
 - > UNESCO
3. Evidence/science on safe reopening of schools
 - > London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine – Hygiene Hub
4. WASH interventions – guidance and criteria for reopening of schools
 - > WASH in Schools Network recommendations:
 - a. Knowledge map: WASH in Schools & coronavirus
 - b. 10 immediate WASH in Schools (WinS) actions for school heads to manage the response to COVID-19 and supportive checklists
5. Cost estimation of WASH interventions for reopening of schools
 - > Vietnam (GIZ/UNICEF/EPAPD)

BREAKOUT GROUPS (60 MIN):

EAPO COUNTRY BREAKOUT GROUPS (3 TO 4 COUNTRIES PER GROUP)

- > Country presentations
- > Discussion of country experiences

BREAKOUT GROUP FOR OBSERVERS

- > Global challenges to support reopening of schools
- > Experiences on reopening of schools
- > Information on trends in the region
- > DSA

PLENARY (45 MIN)

- > Presentation of key points from the breakout groups
- > Capacity building for WASH interventions for reopening of schools
- > Sharing of existing platforms for data on WinS COVID-19

PLENARY (15 MIN)

- > Announcement and mechanics of follow up workshop for country action planning

CLOSING

10th June 2020 © The WinS in Schools/UNICEF Network, UNICEF, Save the Children, UNICEF, SEAMEO, and GIZ. A global inter-agency network of WASH practitioners from respective organizations which comprises of over 60 organizations.

THE EVENT'S GOAL:

Support countries to prepare for the reopening of schools, with a focus on WASH and infection, prevention and control (IPC) interventions.

THE EVENT'S PARTICIPANTS:

The Mini-ILE was conducted as a three hour session, gathering participants from all the 14 countries in the East Asia and Pacific region including government partners and their development partners, civil society organizations, academia and different partners including the private sector. Overall more than 300 participants also from other regions joined the conference.



2. OPENING REMARKS AND KEY NOTE

DR. ETHEL VALENZUELA, Director from the South East Asian Ministers of Education Organization Secretariat, welcomed participants and emphasized the great impact of the Coronavirus on our daily lives, especially our educational systems. She reflected on the discussions among the South East Asian Ministers of Education in terms of reopening schools during the 1st Ministerial Forum in June. As ministers noted, most children only get access to education through remote learning, which on the one hand offers new ways of teaching like blended digital learning or even educational television and radio. On the other hand, it is resulting in higher inequality among children, as most people are still living in low-cost areas with no access to digital learning solutions. Therefore, ministers recognized the need to reopen schools under the condition that learners, teachers and staff go back to school safely.

MAKI HAYASHIKAWA, Chief Inclusive Quality Education UNESCO Bangkok, Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, thanked SEAMEO and the WinS Network for the organization of the Mini-ILE on “Safe reopening of schools”. She emphasized that UNESCO’s mandate also underscores the interrelationship between education and health. She noted schools as unique places to reach a massive number of children with health education that develops their knowledge and skills to practice healthier behaviors and to lead healthier lives. She highlighted that schools also have the responsibility to provide inclusive, safe and effective learning environments. Before COVID-19, many countries were already making impressive strides in institutionalizing health and well-being initiatives in school (i.e. determination of health needs of children; provision of water and sanitation facilities, basic health services such as vaccinations, social support systems etc.). Now, more than ever, Hayashikawa emphasized, it is important to not lose ground on these gains.

KELLY ANN NAYLOR, the Global WASH Chief from UNICEF recognized that the East Asia and Pacific was the first region to face the outbreak of COVID-19. It is now also among the first regions to address the reopening of schools and is therefore at the forefront of the pandemic. Naylor highlighted the role of WASH in reopening schools, which was also a determining factor during the Ebola crisis. She emphasized that on global level it is promising that WASH components are well integrated and multi-sectoral collaboration between education and health sectors takes place. Naylor also drew the attention to the new initiative “Hand Hygiene for All” of UNICEF and WHO, which is an initiative to scale-up hand hygiene especially in vulnerable communities and involves a whole-of-society approach.

JENELLE BABB, UNESCO Regional Advisor, Education for Health and Wellbeing, emphasized in her keynote, that one of the most tangible outcomes of COVID-19 is the ever-increasing socio-economic gap between learners, with some of the most vulnerable children bearing the greatest impacts. A key risk is that the longer learners are out of school, the less likely they are to return to school when these are reopened. She noted the lessons of past experience of extended school closures resulting in heightened sexual and reproductive health vulnerabilities, particularly among the most disadvantaged – including girls. With more and more families under financial stress and many falling into poverty, rates of early and forced marriage and early and unintended pregnancy among adolescent girls may increase, as do incidents of unplanned or forced sexual activity among adolescents and young people. These present risks such as sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV. School closures also take away from vulnerable children, protective and essential services, such as school meals.



SCHOOL REOPENING: HEALTH AND EDUCATION CONSIDERATIONS

- 1 PROTECT FROM INFECTION
- 2 CARE FOR MENTAL AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL WELLBEING
- 3 SUPPORT QUALITY AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING
- 4 PREPARE FOR RESURGENCE AND FUTURE CRISIS

According to Jenelle Babb, the COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the links between health, nutrition, well-being and learning. Investing in learner health, nutrition and education is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda and contributes to at least ten SDGs. “Building back better” is therefore crucial for schools which often are far more than learning platforms. They need to integrate basic WASH services, like handwashing facilities, drinking water access and sanitation services in order to better respond to future crises.

3. TECHNICAL SESSIONS

3.1 COVID-19 CONTROL STRATEGIES FOR OPENING SCHOOLS

PRESENTER:

› Dr Robert Dreibelbis / Associate Professor,
Disease Control Department,
London School of Hygiene and Tropical

The transmission of COVID-19 from one infected individual to another occurs through multiple ways. This includes through droplets in the air released from an infected individual. Another is through direct contact with infected individuals hands that are inhaled directly. Transmission may also occur through contact with infected surfaces which have previously been touched by infected individuals. In order to prevent transmission, schools therefore need to reduce person-to-person transmission, reduce contact exposures and support local policies for contact tracing, isolation and testing.

Person-to-person transmission in schools can be reduced in multiple ways. The first one is physical distancing. It can be achieved by adding visual cues in the school environment, limiting gatherings and staggering schedules or times in schools. The second essential way is respiratory hygiene. Children need to be encouraged to cough and sneeze in their elbow and wear masks in accordance with local guidelines. Ensuring adequate and appropriate ventilation is important for any indoor space. Another way of preventing person-to-person transmission is proper handwashing with soap.

TO ACHIEVE EFFECTIVE HANDWASHING WITH SOAP SCHOOLS NEED TO MEET FOUR PRE-CONDITIONS:

1. Handwashing facilities need to be in place and designed according to national or global guidelines:
 - › This includes sufficient water, soap and alcohol-based hand rubs where appropriate.
 - › Handwashing facilities need to be accessible, inclusive (for different ages, disabilities and gender) and convenient.
2. Schools and NGOs need to provide age-appropriate COVID-19 messages, instead of one-size-fits-all approaches.
 - › Different age groups need to learn about handwashing differently, e.g. messages for pre-primary children should be based on exploratory learning, while messages for primary school children should focus on play-based learning.
3. Handwashing should be encouraged through cues:
 - › Many students know when and how to wash their hands. This knowledge needs to be triggered by small reminders (nudges) in key moments (e.g. using brightly colored footprints leading to the handwashing facilities).
4. Schedules and routines around handwashing must be created:
 - › Besides the more obvious occasions e.g. before eating and after using the toilet, the Corona virus reminds us that there are other critical moments in which handwashing is important, like at the entrance/exits of schools, in dormitories, in each classroom (if possible), and in areas where food is prepared.

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION:

› <https://bit.ly/2NlqMzC>

COVID-19 Hygiene Hub

A reliable, science-based global source for practitioners is the COVID-19 Hygiene Hub, hosted by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM).

› <https://hygienehub.info/en/covid-19>



3.2 WASH IN SCHOOLS (WinS) INTERVENTIONS – GUIDANCE FOR REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

PRESENTER:

› Dr Bella Monse / Senior Advisor WASH in Schools, GIZ

The WinS Global Network is an intersectoral, inter-agency network of different development partners, NGOs and universities.

The Global WinS Network works on alighting and harmonization of different development partners and NGOs to support partner Governments to improve access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene and reach the SDGs for WASH in Schools.

During the Corona pandemic the WinS Network started to develop various hands-on practical materials for the education sector, which are presented below.



Knowledge Map: WASH in Schools and Coronavirus (latest version 20th of May 2020)

- › The knowledge map contains links to relevant materials about COVID-19 for learners, their families and the education system. The map is intended for the time when schools are closed and in preparation for reopening of schools.
- › <https://bit.ly/2JDvM39>



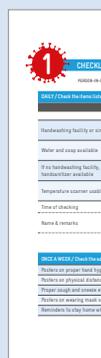
10 immediate WASH in Schools Actions – For School Heads to Manage the Response to COVID-19 (latest version 20th of May 2020)

- › One page with practical information for school heads to implement actions on handwashing, water availability, supplies, cleaning and disinfecting, waste management, physical distancing, monitoring, operation and training, checklists and hygiene culture.
- › Available in various languages.
- › <https://bit.ly/367F7ur>



Checklists for school entrances, classrooms and toilets.

- › Practical checklists for schools to ensure that important rules on WASH are followed on a daily basis.
- › <http://bit.ly/2L84DJX>



3.3 COST ESTIMATION WinS INTERVENTIONS FOR REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

PRESENTER:

> Tran Thu An / Consultant, UNICEF Vietnam

Costs to combat COVID-19 vary between countries significantly. UNICEF Vietnam, for example, implemented a WASH plan with a total cost of 419,000 USD. The WASH plan was based on three activities reaching about 294,000 students and 22,000 teachers in specific areas.

1. It involved creating an enabling environment, by e.g. online capacity trainings for teachers.
2. The activities also included the improvement of WASH infrastructure in schools, by distributing soap and hand sanitizers or installing water storage tanks.
3. UNICEF also facilitated social activities like the distribution of communication materials and interpersonal communication events on school WASH.



WASH communication materials – for schools from the Vietnamese government, supported by UNICEF > <http://bit.ly/3cRuA0T>



However, Vietnam only has a limited number of COVID-19 cases (349 cases as at June 2020). The government reacted with proactive and comprehensive measures to combat the spread of the virus, which also included school closures for three months. Schools reopened starting from May 2020 with guidance from the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and Ministry of Health (MOH) and support from UNICEF Vietnam. UNICEF Vietnam recognized positively the collaboration with MOET and MOH and their clear instructions for schools. Lessons Learnt focused on the challenge of lengthy procurement procedures of WASH supplies and the lack of WASH IPC tools as around 30% of schools in Vietnam still lack soap and water.

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION:

> <https://bit.ly/3qDjWdh>

DISCUSSION POINTS FROM THE CHATBOX

GROWING GENDER DISPARITIES DURING COVID-19

Participants raised concerns about the growing gender disparities during the pandemic. During the last years education sectors in many countries had taken steps on e.g. integrating menstrual health and hygiene which are now at risk of being rolled back.

PARTICIPANTS ASKED FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CLEANING AND DISINFECTING OF THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT.



Helpful resource for cleaning and disinfecting: [Hygiene Hub](#) housed by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM).



Practical checklists with easy to understand instructions for school entrances, toilets and classrooms: [WASH in Schools Checklists to Manage COVID-19 Response – Checklists for school entrances, classrooms & toilets](#)

4. BREAKOUT SESSIONS FOR COUNTRY CONSULTATIONS

Country consultations were conducted in groups of two to three countries. Each country presented a short presentation on their specific WinS situation during COVID-19. Afterwards there was a short period of discussion.

4.1 PHILIPPINES AND TIMOR LESTE

FACILITATOR:

> **Alexander Winkscha** / Regional Coordinator for Cambodia and Lao PDR, Fit for School Programme, GIZ

The Philippines and Timor Leste are currently in very different situations in terms of school reopenings. The Philippines decided to not reopen schools until a vaccine has been found. It was noticed positively that in the past important ground work for WinS has been laid, like a comprehensive WinS policy and various implementation and monitoring instruments that enabled schools to instruct students on better hygiene. Current efforts focus on capacity building of teachers by using Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) and by adapting the WinS program to COVID-19 by adapting handwashing facilities and including nudges to trigger handwashing among learners. Efforts are underway to prepare all schools to be ready for future reopening to be able to implement hygiene measures according to COVID-19 guidelines.

In Timor Leste schools reopened already. Two main factors were emphasized as crucial for the reopening: the involvement of the Parents and Teacher Association (PTA), supporting schools in carrying out safety measures to prevent potential infection, as well as the good intersectoral collaboration between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education. Emphasis has been placed on equipping schools with necessary materials for daily hygiene requirements and an awareness campaign has supported the spread of messages around hygiene and prevention.

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION OF THE PHILIPPINES:

> <https://bit.ly/3s3Sfui>

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION OF TIMOR LESTE:

> <https://bit.ly/2M7xSx9>

Presentation by the
Department of Education
of the Philippines

4.2 MYANMAR AND LAO PDR

FACILITATOR:

> **Bishnu Pokhrel** / UNICEF

In Lao PDR the situation for learners was very different according to their location. While some schools were able to teach online, especially children in rural areas depended on home-learning materials distributed by schools. During school closure, a school-reopening framework and school-guidance on COVID-19 were developed for the Lao context based on global guidelines. Challenges for schools focus on access to water, access to online learning platforms and the ability to implement physical distancing and the wearing of masks. It was emphasized for the Lao context as well, that the involvement of parents in the teaching-learning process during the lockdown and for school reopening was crucial. Both, traditional and social media played an important role in communicating with the communities.

Myanmar was in the lucky position that the annual school break had started already during the Corona outbreak. School reopening was postponed for a few weeks until third week of July and the beginning of classes staggered. A Technical Working Group was formed on national level, which included the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education as well as WHO and UNICEF. Guidelines were formulated in a consultative process and checklists developed in line with existing national guidelines. Key aspects of the guidelines included the assessment of WASH facilities using (online) checklists by local authorities, improvement of basic WASH infrastructure and the distribution of WASH kits in high risk schools. The goal was to create at least "one-star level" schools.

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION OF MYANMAR:

> <https://bit.ly/2NLWxrh>

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION OF TIMOR LESTE:

> <https://bit.ly/3bkxx2A>


Innovation in WASH for School Re-opening

- Adapting the WinS Program to COVID-19
 - ✓ New handwashing facility designs
 - ✓ Nudges intervention for handwashing practice
- Development of Capability Building for School Leaders, Teachers and other Stakeholders
 - ✓ WinS webinar series
 - ✓ Leading WinS MOOC
 - ✓ Accelerating WinS MOOC for Divisions



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 3

4.3 CHINA AND CAMBODIA

PRESENTER:

› Santepheap Heng / WASH Specialist, UNICEF Cambodia

On 9th of June over 70% of schools had already reopened in China. The government formulated the following three preconditions:

1. the school is in a low epidemic risk region,
2. the epidemic prevention and control measures are in place in schools, and
3. the public health safety is guaranteed.

The importance of effective low-cost WASH facilities was realized during the pandemic. Currently, no new standards for e.g. the handwashing ratio (currently 1:50) were formulated, but there needs to be a discussion in the future. Presenters recommended to reopen schools as soon as possible to avoid raising inequality among children.

In Cambodia schools are still closed since mid-March and so far there is no timeframe for schools to reopen. However, there is a draft of a school reopening guideline currently under review by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. It includes the procurement of WASH consumables and equipment like temporary handwashing facility and soap and cleaning and disinfecting materials and a "Back to Safe and Healthy Schools" media campaign (including Social and traditional media) which will be realized for a total of five weeks before and after school reopening.

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION OF CHINA:

› <https://bit.ly/3qDRAPR>

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION OF CAMBODIA:

› <https://bit.ly/3qFSeMM>

4.4 VIETNAM AND INDONESIA

FACILITATOR:

› Evariste Kouassi Komlan / Regional WASH Advisor, UNICEF, East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO)

LEADERSHIP

Indonesia and Vietnam have both shown a strong leadership from the government in handling COVID-19. In Indonesia, for example, there was a government decree to redirect some of the existing school funds to WASH interventions such as disinfection, cleaning and the availability of soap and handwashing stations. In Vietnam, the Government has tackled the situation by developing guidance, advocacy materials and school opening criteria. Among the 15 criteria for the reopening of schools six are WASH related. The governments benefitted in both countries from the engagement of the private sector.

MONITORING

In Indonesia, an important monitoring tool is a WinS dashboard with real-time data about the current WinS situation in the country. It serves as a good basis for decision making and helps to identify high-risk schools for WASH interventions. This dashboard could be used as an example for other Country offices.

The 15 criteria for school opening in Vietnam were instrumental to classify schools and assess their status and costs related to school opening. Schools were closed for three months and reopened in early May.

INNOVATION

The "Green Zone approach" developed in Indonesia was identified to describe zones with high and low infection rates. Green zones present low risk, red zones high risk. This approach was quite similar to the criteria developed in Vietnam for school opening and the two countries agreed to share more lessons on their respective approaches.

CHALLENGES

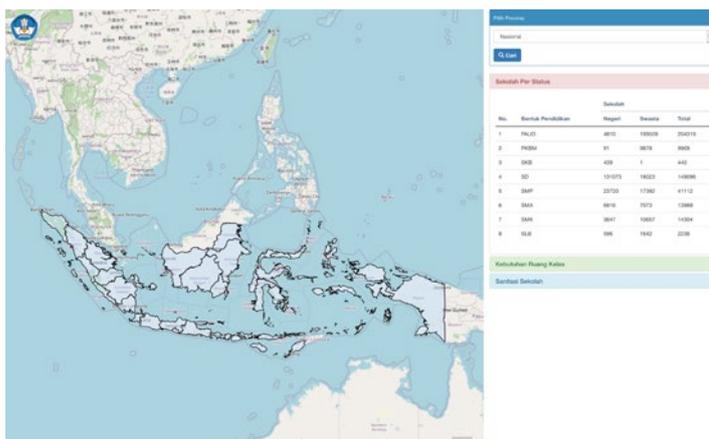
Coordination between different ministries was identified as a challenge, which improved as close collaboration was of the essence to address the pandemic.

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION OF VIETNAM:

› <https://bit.ly/2NdQ4FZ>

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION OF INDONESIA:

› <https://bit.ly/3snjRx>



WinS dashboard in Indonesia

› <https://sarpras.dikdasmen.kemdikbud.go.id>



BREAKOUT
SESSIONSFOR OBSERVERS
FROM NON-EAPRO
COUNTRIES4.5 STATUS OF EDUCATION
UNDER COVID-19

PRESENTER:

> **Erin Tanner** / Education Specialist in the
UNICEF Regional Office for East Asia and Pacific, EAPRO

The countries in the East Asia and Pacific region were the first to be impacted by COVID-19 and the ensuing major public health emergency caused by the pandemic. This situation has affected education provision in all of the 27 countries supported by UNICEF programmes since late January 2020. The rapidity and global scale of the educational disruption was unparalleled.

By the end of March 2020, all countries in the region have closed schools, affecting the education of over 325 million children. As of June 2020, the situation in the region is very diverse. Some countries reopened their schools again (e.g. Lao PDR and Vietnam), other countries plan to not reopen their schools during the ongoing school year (e.g. Philippines and Cambodia).

To support countries during the pandemic UNICEF in cooperation with other international organizations developed and published guidance on COVID-19 prevention and control in schools from the very beginning of the pandemic. Major publications that governments can consult in developing their national school reopening guidelines include the following on the next page.

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION:

> <https://bit.ly/3azoDip>



26 countries in the East Asia and Pacific Region



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



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

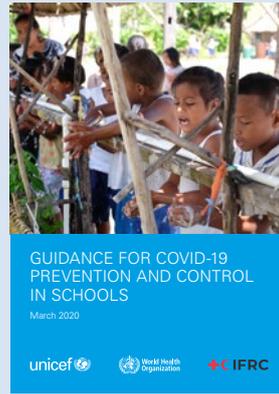


50% (189m) of enrolled children currently not attending classes face-to-face

Overview on school closures and reopening.
Presentation by Erin Tanner, UNICEF

Guidance for COVID-19 prevention and control in schools (UNICEF, WHO, IFRC, March 2020)

- > Clear and actionable guidance for safe operations through the prevention, early detection and control of COVID-19 in schools and other educational facilities.
- > The Guidance is applicable during school closures, planning stages and when schools are open.
- > It needs to be contextualized to the country context and provides guidance on the contextualization process.
- > Additional guidance can be found in annexes and supplemental content on WASH, MHPSS, Protection and Accelerated Learning.
- > <https://uni.cf/3bM6a0d>



Framework for Reopening of Schools (UNESCO, WFP, and World Bank, April 2020):

- > The Framework informs the decision-making process regarding school reopening, support national preparations and guide the implementation process, as part of overall public health and education planning processes.
- > The Framework is designed to be a flexible tool that can be adapted to each context and updated as the situation changes. The guidelines outline six key priorities to assess the readiness of those schools and inform planning.
- > The Framework aims to reach the most marginalized children and to open better schools that will have improved quality but also provide a range of services to children.
- > The Framework identifies key issues and considerations for the different phases (prior, during and after) of the school reopening process.
- > <https://uni.cf/2yX93gi>



Supporting teachers in back to school efforts – A toolkit for school leaders (UNESCO/ILO)

- > This Toolkit provides guidance to school leaders to support and protect teachers and education support staff in the return to school following COVID-19 related closures.
- > <http://bit.ly/3cjNH8B>



Considerations for school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19 (WHO, May 2020)

- > The guide is oriented towards health audience whereas other documents are more aimed at education decision makers.
- > <http://bit.ly/3psuZp1>



Safe Back to School: A practitioner's guide (Global Education Cluster, Save the Children, May 2020)

- > The guide aims to be a user-friendly, practitioner-focused tool that outlines the key steps needed for a coordinated, inclusive, all-hazards approach to school reopening and links to further guidance where appropriate (including WASH).
- > The guide is accompanied by checklists and eight technical Annexes covering topics including MHPSS, advocacy and school reopening in camp settings.
- > <http://bit.ly/2VA06SN>



4.6 THE ROLE OF NGOs TO SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT

PRESENTER:

› Rosianto Hamid / Save the Children & Hemalatha Patil, WaterAid

International NGOs like Save the Children and WaterAid work in various countries and settings to support governments during the COVID-19 pandemic. One focus is on mass promotion of hygiene behaviours critical to prevent the spread of COVID-19 like handwashing with soap in schools and at home. This includes mass media, community and school campaigns as well as the integration of COVID-19 messages in distance learning materials for children. On the Thai-Myanmar border, for example, Save the Children provided support to nine schools in refugee camps through teacher trainings and the distribution of low-cost handwashing facilities. Existing facilities were adapted to the needs of physical distancing.

The participation in Technical Working Groups on national level helps NGOs to align their strategies with national guidelines and feedback their experiences on local level into the elaboration of COVID-19 related guidelines.

One practical example of a hygiene campaign on different levels was presented by WaterAid India. The goal of the campaign is to increase hygiene behaviours among school children and school-related stakeholders in the context of COVID-19. Before the reopening of schools WaterAid targeted parents and SMC members using a digital WhatsApp campaign. A second phase of the campaign targeting students, teachers and school staff is planned for when schools reopen. A cascade model has been developed to roll out the campaign. WaterAid trains partner staff and volunteers who will then train teachers to teach children in key behaviours like handwashing with soap and respiratory hygiene. WaterAid plans to scale-up their activities to district and state level, by sharing campaign resources, supporting education departments and advocating for handwashing facilities with soap and water in schools.

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION FROM SAVE THE CHILDREN:

› <https://bit.ly/3pBBrcr>

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION FROM WATERAID:

› <https://bit.ly/3s9ZEZg>



Handwashing facilities in an Indian school, supported by WaterAid

4.7 WinS CHALLENGES ON REOPENING OF SCHOOLS AND WAYS TO ADDRESS THEM

PRESENTER::

> Dr. Malini Reddy / Administrative Staff College of India, ASCI, India

Schools all over the world face similar challenges regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Many children need to adhere to new rules to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. At the same time schools need to put the right WASH infrastructure in place and make sure cleaning and disinfecting routines are established. This is especially challenging, when there was not enough funding for WinS before the pandemic.

One of the biggest identified challenges is the practice of the newly established physical distancing norms in schools. There are some options to facilitate physical distancing: According to national guidelines schools can alternate days for different classes, or stagger timing of the beginning and end of school days. Other options can be to expand facilities and create outdoor classes with sheds. It might also be a possibility to identify other rooms/locations that can be used as additional classrooms.

Access to WASH infrastructure is another obstacle for schools and requires additional knowledge from school staff. However, there are some simple solutions for handwashing facilities like



Challenge: Sustaining Cleanliness and Hygiene Practices

tippy taps that can be used as interim solutions. In water-scarce areas knowledge about water conservation and reuse might be additionally important.

Another challenge in schools is to sustain the cleanliness and hygiene practices in schools. Due to missing staff in many settings, it might be important to involve older children in the monitoring of cleaning and disinfecting. Easy-to-understand checklists for cleaning staff and/or children and parents will give orientation and step-by-step advice. Additionally important for day-to-day habits can be visual cues (e.g. colourful footsteps from toilets to handwashing stations) in schools that remind children of their hygiene habits.

Schools need to put strict protocols and schedules into place to avoid frequent movement of visitors, parents and vendors. Schools also need to establish good practices for infected teachers or children, like paid leave or re-examination of assignments.

LINK TO THE PRESENTATION::

> <https://bit.ly/3k7fhgY>

DISCUSSION POINTS FROM THE CHATBOX

REOPENING OF SCHOOLS: SHOULD STUDENTS NOT BE ENGAGED IN AN ONLINE MODE OF EDUCATION?

Very difficult to find the right time to reopen schools, however, previous presentations highlighted the increasing socio-economic gap the longer schools are closed.

WEARING OF MASKS!

There are country-specific guidelines about wearing masks. Scientific facts about different masks and their impact on reducing the spread of CORONA-19 is summarized in an article of the Hygiene Hub:

> <http://bit.ly/36mKg31>

HANDWASHING FACILITIES: ARE HAND OPERATED HANDWASHING SYSTEMS SAFE?

There is a huge number of different handwashing facilities and depending on the context different solutions might be appropriate. Resources for different handwashing facilities:

- > UNICEF produced a fact sheet and a compendium of handwashing facilities
- > There is a technical brief for contactless handwashing facilities from WaterAid Nepal.
- > <https://bit.ly/2VE8vEW>

IS COCONUTOIL SOAP MORE EFFECTIVE THAN OTHER TYPE OF SOAPS?

There is no scientific evidence that coconut oil soap is more effective than normal soap.

OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES:

> <https://wins.asci.org.in/webinars/upcoming-webinars>

5. CONCLUSION

Wrap-up presentation, ANU PAUDYAL GAUTAM, WASH Specialist, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Region
Times of crisis like COVID-19 show how important it is to adhere to the building blocks of an enabling environment for WASH in Schools. These are: Policy and Planning, Budget & Expenditure, Monitoring & Evaluation, Implementation Arrangements and Capacity Development. Once countries get the foundations in place they are able to respond much faster to crisis situations. WinS needs to be a habitual practice of children in schools and the pandemic shows that we need to reimagine better systems than we worked on in the past.

EVARISTE KOUASSI KOMLAN, WASH Specialist from UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Region emphasized the need to link school reopenings to WASH. He noted WinS as a key pillar to make schools healthy and safe places. Additionally, he suggested international organizations to provide more scientific evidence on WinS to support countries in additional investments in schools. He emphasized WASH not only as a key pillar for schools, but for development in general.

NICOLE SIEGMUND, principal advisor of the regional Fit For School Programme, reminded participants that countries are currently in very different stages of the pandemic. She noted that it is evident that those countries with strong WinS policies in place, benefit during the crisis from their strong systems. Nicole Siegmund underlined the importance to share experiences and learnings from different countries like in this virtual conference in order to "build forward better". She highlighted that this crisis should not be wasted and WASH should be an integral part of education!



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RESOURCES AND LINKS

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