



ក្រសួងអប់រំ យុវជន និងកីឡា

CAMBODIA COVID-19 JOINT EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT



March 2021



មូលនិធិភាពជាដៃគូសម្រាប់អភិវឌ្ឍសមត្ថភាពវិស័យអប់រំ (CDPF III)

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PREFACE

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on 11 March 2020. In addition to causing widespread morbidity and mortality across the world, it has led to unprecedented global economic upheaval, impacting people's socio-economic situations and welfare.

The Royal Government of Cambodia took the decision to close all education institutions, including public and private schools, on 16 March 2020, as a preventative measure against the spread of COVID-19. The school closures have resulted in the disruption of learning in all of Cambodia's 13,482 schools, affecting 3.2 million students. In response, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), together with development partners and stakeholders, have made significant efforts to provide continuous distance learning opportunities for all students in Cambodia.

MoEYS, in collaboration with the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG), conducted the Cambodia COVID-19 Joint Education Sector Needs Assessment to better understand the impacts of COVID-19 and subsequent school closures on education stakeholders. MoEYS and ESWG developed the scope, objectives and methodology of this comprehensive education needs assessment to inform and strengthen future response and recovery efforts.

This assessment is the result of collaborative efforts from MoEYS, ESWG and local and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that were involved in administering surveys both in person and online to over 15,000 respondents consisting of students and caregivers, teachers, school directors, teacher trainees and educators, central and subnational education administrators and local authorities. It was designed to provide findings to assist with the formulation of evidence-based policy, and will support MoEYS' continued use of system-strengthening approaches to build national capacities to deliver and manage response and recovery efforts by leveraging its partnerships with national and sub-national governments, ESWG members and NGOs.

MoEYS and ESWG encourage stakeholders to utilize the findings of this assessment and further build on its recommendations. MoEYS and ESWG would like to express deep gratitude to all technical officials and development partners for providing technical and financial support to the development and implementation of this assessment, as well as to the education stakeholders who contributed to this assessment by sharing their valuable time and experiences.

Phnom Penh, March 2021

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The Cambodia COVID-19 Joint Education Needs Assessment was an ambitious and important undertaking, conducted in a collaborative and participatory way. The success of this assessment is due to the hard work and dedication of the Joint Needs Assessment Working Group, consisting of members of Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), the Education Sector Working Group and international and local non-government organizations (NGOs).

Special thanks go to MoEYS' Department of Policy and its Director, Dr. Bo Chankoulika, for their technical expertise throughout protocol development and administration; MoEYS' Department of Planning and its Director, Mr. Sivutha Onn, along with Deputy Director Mr. Naroath Muong, for their extraordinary efforts coordinating hundreds of ministry personnel, data collection teams and processes across Cambodia. The assessment working group is grateful for the efforts of MoEYS provincial and district offices of education, which made assessing the needs of over 15,000 Cambodian education stakeholders possible in a very short space of time during school closures.

The assessment working group would like to recognize Save the Children Cambodia and UNICEF Cambodia teams for their leadership. The team is particularly grateful to Elizabeth Pearce, Dr. Sithon Khun and Mr. Sarang Out from Save the Children for their leadership and invaluable experience in the Cambodian education sector, as well as the Save the Children monitoring, evaluation and learning team: Heng Kun, Hang Lida, Lim Vatha and Khe Longkeat, for their work in survey protocol and online form development, field testing, enumerator training, and supporting the coordination of NGOs during data collection in the field, quality assurance and data compiling. We acknowledge the Save the Children programme team for its great support throughout all facets of the assessment.

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We would like to express our appreciation to the parents and caregivers, students, teachers, school directors, teacher trainers and trainees, local officials and central and sub-national administrators across Cambodia. Their resilience and commitment to education during this emergency is commendable and their willingness to honestly share their experiences during a period defined by uncertainty made this assessment possible.

Acronyms

COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
ESWG	Education Sector Working Group
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non-Government Organization
TEI	Teacher Education Institution
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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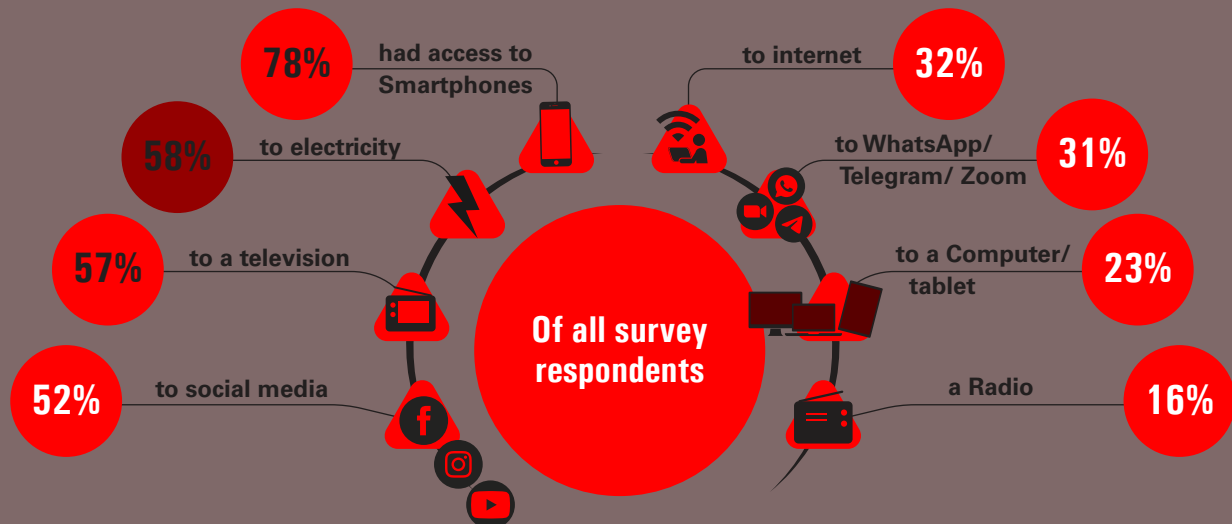
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RAPID ASSESSMENT AT A GLANCE

Distance Learning During School Closures

Access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Infrastructure at home:



40%

of all students have access to a proper learning and workplace that is well lit and equipped with a desk and chair at home

Basic learning Materials

77% of all students have access to at least one type of basic learning material

44% have access to additional reading and reference materials

34% have access to school textbooks

Alternative distance learning access, preferences and barriers

70%

of the students have utilized at least one alternative distance learning method since the school closures

Of the 70% engaged in distance learning

Top 4 distance learning methods for students:

45% Worksheets and other paper-based learning materials

42% Online free e-learning videos posted on official MoEYS social media and other platforms

35% Online learning modules prepared by the school they attend

30% National TV education broadcasts

Of the ones who used distance learning

35%

studied 4-5 days a week

30%

studied 2-3 days a week



studied everyday

22%

studied only once a week

13%

Level of effort for distance learning was low among students

37%

30^{min} to 1^{hour} per week



26%

1^{hour} to 3^{hours} per week



12%

3^{hours} to 5^{hours} per week



8%

less than 30^{min} per week



The 4 most frequently reported barriers to access:



Financial barriers



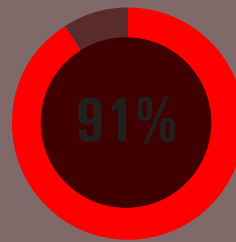
Internet connectivity issues



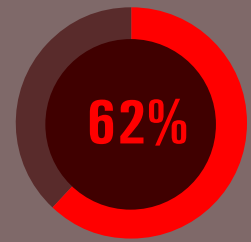
Lack of content knowledge of caregivers



Lack of caregivers' time to support learning at home



of caregivers in Cambodia seem to spend at least some time supporting home-based learning



of students, caregivers and teachers find the support they have received to access and engage in distance learning as either completely inadequate or inadequate

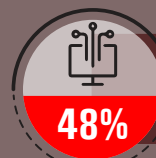
TOP 3 barriers to caregiver/parental engagement for those never able to support students:



Lack of knowledge of learning content and materials

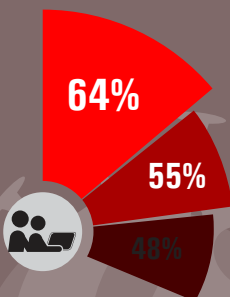


Lack of time due to work and other responsibilities



Lack of knowledge or inability to use different technologies

Top 3 Areas of Support Prioritized by Students and Caregivers

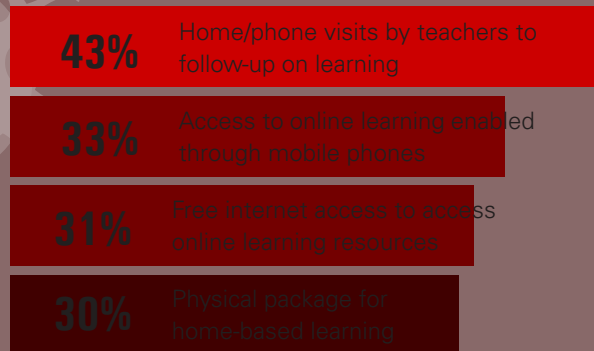


64% prioritize receiving support to make it easier to study at home

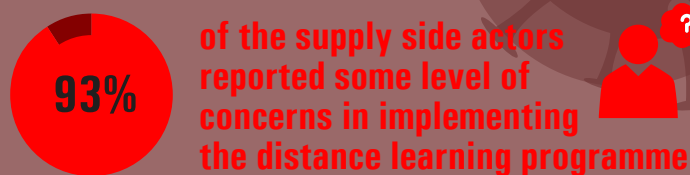
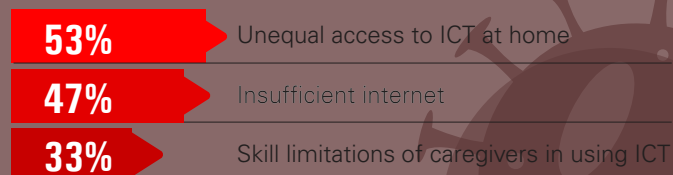
55% prioritize provision of guidelines for parents/caregivers

48% would like awareness materials on distance learning tools and resources available for families

TOP supplementary measures utilized by the most vulnerable student households to access distance learning on equal basis as peers:



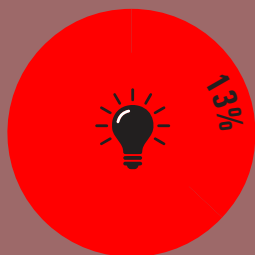
TOP 3 Challenges in implementing distance learning programmes by supply-side actors



Teacher engagement to complement distance learning efforts

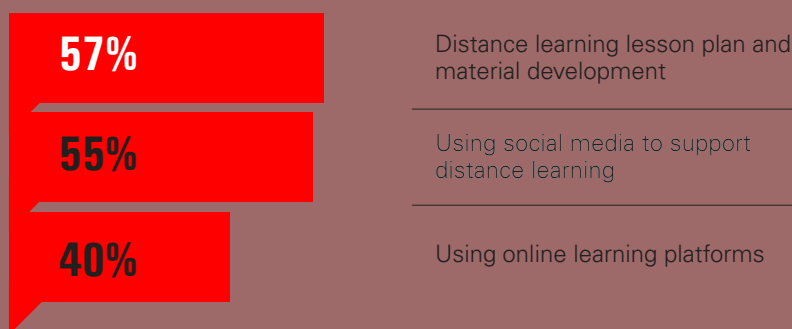


Capacity Development Needs

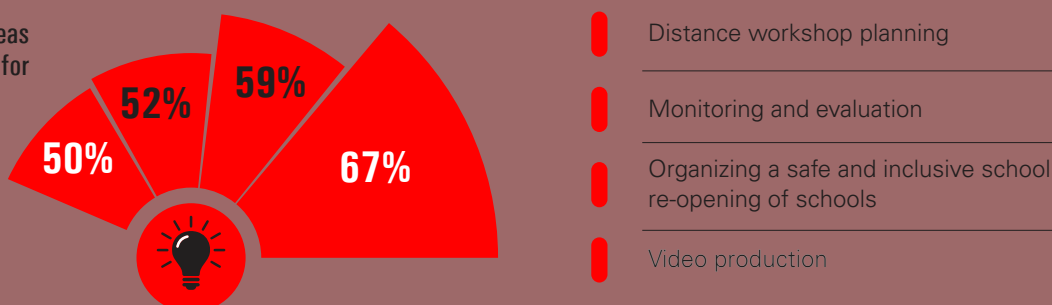


ONLY 13% of teachers and school directors felt they had enough capacity to perform their job functions during school closures

TOP 3 most frequently cited capacity development needs of all teachers are:

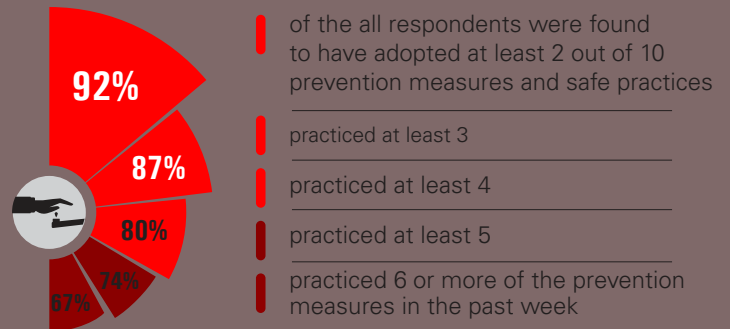
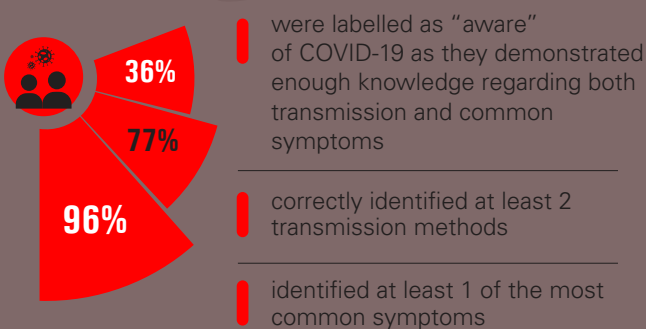


Top 4 most requested areas of capacity development for central level education administrators:

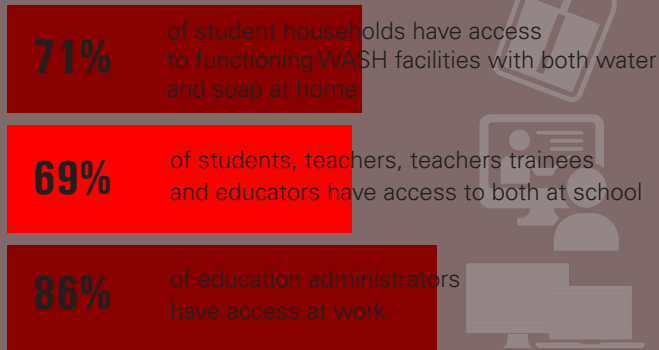


Multidimensional Impacts of COVID 19 and School Closures

Knowledge, Awareness and Practicing Prevention Measures



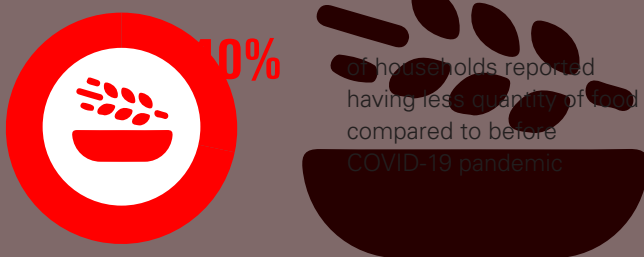
Access to WASH Facilities



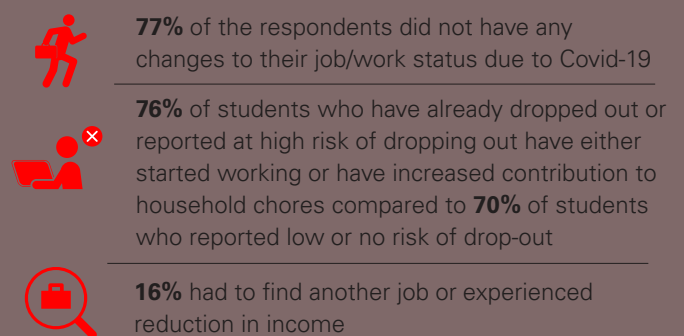
Student Health, Wellbeing and Protection



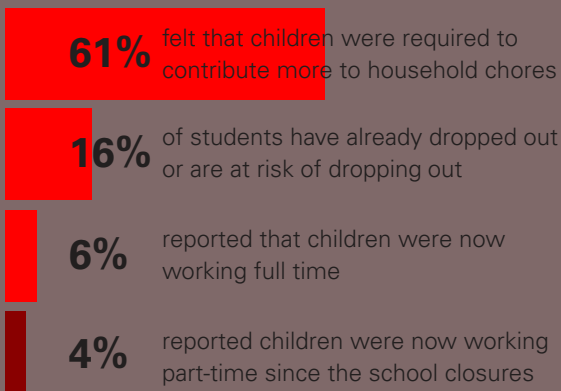
Access to food



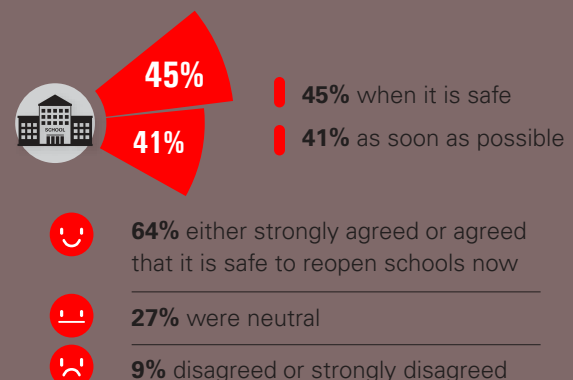
Economic impact



Changes to work status of children and risk of drop-out:



School reopening views



Executive summary

1

On 16 March 2020, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) took the decision to close all education institutions, including public and private schools, as a preventative measure against the spread of COVID-19. These school closures have resulted in disruptions to learning in all of Cambodia's estimated 13,482 schools, from pre-school through to upper secondary schools, with an estimated 3.2 million students effected.

In response, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), together with development partners (and other stakeholders, made significant efforts to provide continuous distance learning to children across all education levels.

To assist with continuous quality improvement of distance education services during this difficult time, MoEYS and the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) decided to undertake a comprehensive, coordinated assessment of the sector to gain evidence to help identify the best approaches to inform the further development of COVID-19 response and recovery efforts; to support the development of evidence-based response policies and practices, and to inform a holistic national response and recovery plan.

The education sector needs assessment targeted all populations of interest within Cambodia's education system, both from an education service delivery perspective, and from an education service demand perspective. The assessment involved pre-school, primary and secondary education students; teachers and school directors from both formal and non-formal education; teacher educators and teacher trainees at Teacher Training Institutions (TEIs); education administrators at central and sub-national level (provincial and district offices of education), and local authorities (commune/village chiefs and commune councils).

Enumerators from provincial and district offices of education, as well as from local and international NGOs collected data from students (including caregivers) and teachers in person. This in person data collection was conducted across 67 districts of 15 provinces using specifically designed survey tools. Teacher trainees and educators, school directors, central and subnational education administrators and local authorities were administered surveys online.

1.1 Findings

1.1.1 Multidimensional Impacts of COVID-19 and School Closures



i. Awareness, knowledge, prevention measures and healthy practices related to COVID-19

The assessment aimed to measure the awareness of COVID-19 among respondents through two knowledge questions: one relating to possible ways of contracting the virus, and the other related to the most common symptoms displayed by people infected with the virus.

Respondents were classified as being aware and knowledgeable of COVID-19 if they were able to identify at least two methods of contracting the virus and at least one of the most common symptoms.¹ Only 36% of education stakeholders were found to be aware when following the strict criteria used in the assessment, however when analysing the two knowledge questions separately, the vast majority of respondents (77%) were able to correctly identify transmission methods and the most common symptoms. Practicing prevention measures was found to be higher than knowledge of symptoms with nearly all education stakeholders (92%) adapting safety measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

While these findings are encouraging, knowledge of COVID-19 was lower among certain stakeholders, caregivers and students, and was affected by geographical location. In addition, prevention measures such as regularly disinfecting surfaces was found to be lower than other means of preventing the virus.



ii. Access to functional WASH facilities

In addition to having sufficient knowledge of COVID-19 transmission and practicing preventative behaviours, access to functioning WASH facilities is equally important. The respondents were asked to identify the types of WASH facilities and materials they had access to at home, school and work, depending on the type of population. For the purposes of this study, functioning WASH facilities are defined as having access to water and soap.

High numbers of students (71%) reported having functional WASH facilities with both water and soap in their households; and most (69% students, teachers, teacher trainees and educators reported having access to WASH facilities at school as well. Furthermore, the vast majority (86%) of education administrators have access at work. Disability status was found to correlate with the level of access to WASH facilities both at home and at school. For example, 56% of respondents who self-reported a disability have access to hand washing facilities at home compared to 60% of non-disability status

¹ Methods of contracting the virus were listed in the questionnaire as: 1. Airborne (droplets in the air of other people coughing, etc.); 2. Vector-borne disease (bites of mosquitos, sand flies, etc.); 3. Drinking/washing in contaminated water; 4. Breastmilk 5. Eating certain foods; 6. Physical contact with a contaminated object and surfaces; 7. Physical contact with infected people; where options 1, 6 and 7 were considered correct. Three most common symptoms are dry cough, fever, and tiredness according to WHO, which is used as a reference in this survey criteria.¹

students. This put students who identified as having a disability in a more vulnerable position regarding staying safe and adopting healthy measures. In addition, ID Poor households reported lower access to hand-washing facilities (57%) compared with households that did not hold ID Poor cards (60%).



iii. Student access to food and nutrition

The effects of protracted school closures on children's food and nutrition has been a worrying consequence of the multi-dimensional impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many children around the world, especially the most vulnerable, benefit from school feeding programmes. It is important to understand changes in access to food and nutrition for children during school closures.

This assessment noted a clear reduction in levels of access to food during school closures across all households (40%). The most affected households were those in the lower levels of education, pre-school and primary (51% and 47% respectively), as well as households with students enrolled in non-formal education (46%).



iv. Exposure to violence, abuse, or exploitation and mental health and psychosocial distress due to COVID-19 and school closures

The rapid assessment examined the extent to which children in Cambodia had experienced or were likely to face threats to their safety and wellbeing. Overall, different respondents indicated concerns around increased risks of violence, abuse or exploitation due to COVID-19, particularly during school closures.

The assessment found that both girls and boys are at an increased risk during school closures as a notable proportion of both groups (17% and 23% respectively) self-reported facing additional violence, abuse or exploitation. In addition to overall students being at an increased risk those who self-reported a disability were at an increased risk (23%) when compared to students with no disability (15%). Levels of increased exposure to violence, abuse and exploitation, as reported by secondary students, while heightened during school closures, were much lower when compared to the perceptions of increased risk of education stakeholders. 43% of all respondents perceived that boys were experiencing additional protection related risks because of COVID-19 and 36% perceived the same for girls.

In addition to increased exposure to violence, students were found to be experiencing increased mental health and psychosocial distress during COVID-19 with more than half reporting to have experienced at least one type of mental health psychosocial stressor during the pandemic period including sadness, loneliness and fear.

v. Economic Impacts of COVID-19



As included in the 'OECD Employment Outlook 2020: Worker Security and the COVID-19 Crisis' report, countries in Southeast Asia, including Cambodia, applied stringent containment and mitigation policies, which has, to date, effectively limited the spread of the virus and limited the number of casualties. In Cambodia, the assessment found that even with these policies in place

the majority (77%) of the respondents did not have any changes to their job/work status due to COVID-19, however there were a concerning number of respondents (16%) that, while still having a job, either had to find another job or experienced a reduction in income.

Children in Cambodia are also negatively affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19, with over half of the respondents (61%) reporting that children were required to contribute more to household chores; while a small amount reported children were working full time (6%) or part time (4%) since school closures. Students who have already dropped out of school or who reported as being at high risk of dropping out were found to have either started working or to have increased their contribution to household chores compared to students who reported either a low or no risk of dropping out.



vi. Increased risk of student drop out due to extended school closures

The findings illustrate overall risks of student drop out during school closures as compared to times when schools are in session. However, pre and primary students were found to be at higher risk of drop-out (13% and 10% respectively) compared to the lower and upper secondary school students (7% and 6% respectively); as well as students from households with valid ID Poor card compared to students from non-ID Poor card households (19% and 15% respectively).

1.1.2 Access, effectiveness and reach of distance learning efforts

The data outlined in this section should be understood in the context of distance learning being a completely new experience for most children in Cambodia. The continuous distance learning programmes provided as a result of school shutdowns due to COVID-19, required a new approach to learning for students, parents and teachers. Under these circumstances, it is reasonable to expect learning loss to occur. Furthermore, for many students, home environments are not conducive to study through distance learning as many children lack study space and face multiple disruptions.



i. Access to infrastructure, ICT, and basic learning materials

Access to appropriate and reliable infrastructure, information technology, communication devices, and basic learning materials is a prerequisite for both the demand for education service delivery and the supply of education service delivery, to fully participate in alternative distance learning initiatives and ensure continuous learning.

When presented with various types of infrastructure and technology/devices in their homes to engage in or support distance learning, the highest proportion of respondents (76%) across all types reported having access to smartphones. However, there were large variances in levels of access to smartphones across respondent types with education administrators having the highest levels of access (93%) and students (including caregivers) having the lowest levels (69%). There were also large disparities among respondent types in other areas of access, with education administrators found

to have the highest levels of access to the internet, WhatsApp/Zoom or Telegram and owning a computer (74%). Whereas students reported having the lowest access to those areas among all respondent types (26%).

Differences in access to ICT were observed among the same type of respondents (students, teachers and school directors) across different school levels. Higher levels of access to more advanced technology such as smartphones, personal computers/laptops, social media, internet access, utilization of online messaging applications (WhatsApp etc.) increases among students, teachers and school directors as school level increases. For example, lower and upper secondary students reporting access to smartphones (70% and 80% respectively) is much higher when compared to pre and primary school students (60% and 61% respectively). In addition, higher proportions of lower and upper secondary students report having access to proper learning and workspaces (47% and 54% respectively) compared to students in primary and preschool levels (36% and 33% respectively). Pre-school and primary school students reported higher levels of access to television (56% and 58% respectively) compared to lower and upper secondary school students (54% and 47% respectively).

Encouragingly, the large majority of all students (77%) reported actually having access to at least one type of basic learning material at home with reading and additional reference materials being the most accessible followed by school textbooks and basic writing materials. Lower and upper secondary students had higher access to textbooks (45% for both) and additional reading and reference materials (55% and 67% respectively) compared preschool students (12% access to textbooks and 28% access to additional reference material) and primary school students (48% access to textbooks and 39% access to additional reference material) reporting much lower access to those learning materials.

Surprisingly, non-formal education students compared to basic education students had the same or higher level of access to basic writing material and school textbooks (45% and 48% respectively) but lacked access to any additional reading or reference materials (36%).



ii. Access, participation and barriers to distance learning programmes of MoEYS and critical areas of support

The assessment measured the level of student access to various distance learning programmes, frequency of utilization and level of effort, as well as the barriers they faced in accessing these programmes and the types of alternatives to online learning that were pursued. Encouragingly, most students from all levels were able to access distance learning programmes of MoEYS (70%). The top four most frequently used distance learning methods are: utilizing paper-based worksheets and other paper-based learning materials provided by their schools; using online education videos posted on official MoEYS social media and other platforms for continuous distance learning; accessing online learning modules prepared by the school they attend; and learning through the national TV education broadcasts.

Students who reported using one of the alternative distance learning methods were asked to provide more detail on their level of effort and engagement.

The highest proportion of students, 35%, engaged in distance learning accessed it around four to five days per week, followed by 30% at three days per week, 22% at every day, and the lowest proportion of students, 13%, reported accessing distance learning once per week. While these findings indicate a high-level frequency of engagement, the levels of effort, or rather time spent while engaging in continuous distance learning, was considerably lower. The highest proportion of students (37%) who engaged in distance learning only did so 30 minutes to 1 hour per week with the second highest proportion of respondents (26%) reporting they spent 1 to 3 hours per week engaged in distance learning. These statistics are particularly concerning as they are indicative of the scale of learning loss that has occurred during the pandemic.

The most commonly reported barriers to accessing distance learning programmes across all school levels were financial constraints to pay for internet/cable TV or other equipment to access online learning (51%), internet connectivity problems (43%), lack of content knowledge of caregivers (22%) and lack of caregivers' time to support learning at home (20%).

When students and caregivers were asked what the most critical areas of support are to assist them in accessing and engaging in distance learning the highest proportion of respondents (64%) prioritized support related to increase of resources and practical guidelines for families and caregivers in order to provide support to children, even more so than financial support.



iii. Parental Engagement in distance learning

The needs assessment aimed to measure the level of support students were receiving from parents or caregivers concerning distance learning. The analysis of both caregiver and student respondents reveals the overwhelming majority of parents (91%) are able to support their students some of the time however there are low rates of respondents (23%) who reported caregivers supporting distance learning all of the time. The top barriers to parental engagement and support for those parents who are not able to support their students are: lack of knowledge of learning content, lack of time due to work and other responsibilities, and lack of knowledge or inability to use different technologies.



iv. MoEYS/sector response to address distance learning

While the distance learning programmes during the school shutdown helped students keep learning and provided opportunities for them to experience learning digitally, experiences globally indicate that all those involved still face a steep learning curve in developing, managing and implementing these programmes. The assessment found that nearly all education service delivery or 'supply-side' actors (93%) had some level of concern in implementing continuous distance learning programmes with the top three challenges being: unequal access to ICT at home; insufficient internet; and skill limitations of caregivers in using ICT.

Teacher engagement to complement distance learning efforts has been impressive with teachers reporting high rates of providing support for home-based learning (89%), facilitating small groups (85%) and engaging in regular communication with students during school closures (75%).

1.1.3 Capacity Development Needs of Educators

The responsibility of supply-side education stakeholders in ensuring the delivery of inclusive and equitable quality education remained unchanged during school closures. The assessment aimed to measure the attitudes of education stakeholders most directly responsible for student learning concerning their ability to perform their job functions and support distance learning. Due to the abrupt nature of school closings and the unprecedented need for educators to support distance learning it is not surprising that most teachers and school directors felt they did not have enough capacity to perform their job functions during school closures (13% and 7% respectively).

The various supply side education stakeholders were also asked to prioritize their capacity development needs to better support distance learning efforts. Teachers prioritized distance learning lesson plan and material development, using social media to support distance learning and using online learning platforms. Central level education administrators indicated distance workshop planning was their top priority, followed by monitoring and evaluation, organizing a safe and inclusive school re-opening and video production. Sub-national education administrators differed somewhat in their capacity development needs and prioritized distance learning workshop planning, organizing a safe and inclusive re-opening of schools, monitoring and evaluation and lastly, managing online learning platforms.

1.2 Recommendations

1.2.1 Multidimensional Impacts of COVID 19

1. Create a sustainable Risk Communications and Community Engagement (RCCE) approach and geographically target less responsive and most vulnerable stakeholders.
2. Triangulate data on access to WASH facilities from EMIS and this assessment.
3. Encourage schools to prioritize access to WASH facilities in their School Operating Funds (SOF) and conduct further analysis on school resources dedicated to WASH.
4. Identify and prioritize inclusion friendly WASH facilities.
5. Create clear nutritional guidelines and expand social protection programmes.
6. Increase student awareness of increased risks of exposure to violence, abuse and exploitation.
7. Monitor and track students' wellbeing and continue to enhance psychosocial first aid training.
8. Monitor possible rises in absenteeism and create a tailored approach as students return to school.
9. Strengthen school management committees (SMC) and local authorities' role in school attendance.
10. Improve MoEYS' scholarship programme targeting to reach the most vulnerable.

1.2.2 Access effectiveness and reach of distance learning efforts

1. Continue to use multiple distance learning delivery modalities to provide more flexible and equitable opportunities for students to learn.
2. Continue to simplify and prioritize curriculum and learning goals for different grade levels.
3. Invest in more dynamic real-time feedback on distance learning.
4. Two-way engagement required for more effective distance learning programmes.
5. Improving accessibility of basic teaching and learning materials for students.
6. Differentiated distance learning approaches for early-childhood and primary students required.
7. Further reinforcement of parental engagement strategies to help their children learn.
8. Continue to foster partnerships to enhance ICT infrastructure coverage across the country, incl. through public-private partnerships.
9. Need for ongoing advocacy concerning “learning loss” to keep education as a top priority in the government’s COVID19 recovery plan (including in terms of resourcing).

1.2.3 Capacity development needs of educators

1. Need for improved and more effective dissemination of policy responses in the education sector during COVID-19.
2. Educators require access to technological devices, ICT connectivity and digital skills to facilitate distance learning.
3. Set clear expectations of teachers and provide timely support to deliver successful distance learning programmes.
4. Conduct more detailed needs assessments of educators to respond to school reopening and to help students catch up on learning.
5. Vertically align capacity development initiatives across education stakeholders and also foster educator-educator collaborations between private and public schools.
6. Adapt TEI curriculums for distance learning.
7. Upgrade teacher educator information communication technology skills.
8. Prioritize infrastructure investments in TEIs.

Background

2

COVID-19 and the Cambodian education system

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on 11 March 2020. In addition to causing morbidity and mortality across the world, necessary actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 have resulted in widespread and unprecedented global economic upheaval, impacting people's socio-economic situations and welfare. In Cambodia, as of 16 November 2020, there had been a total of 302 confirmed cases. Of these, 289 patients have recovered.

COVID-19 poses economic threats to different aspects of Cambodia's development. Loss of livelihoods and income shocks in Cambodia are already evident and are expected to worsen due to the composition of the employment and labour markets.

Extremely poor households have already faced significant reductions in income. A rapid assessment of COVID-19 impacts on ID Poor households benefitting from the cash transfer programme for poor pregnant women and children aged 0 to 2 years indicated that 72 per cent of poor people included in the programme had experienced income loss due to COVID-19, while 74 per cent of rural and 87 per cent of urban households confirmed that their income had reduced by half due to COVID-19. Some ID Poor households had used negative coping strategies, such as taking private loans (14 per cent), selling livestock (9 per cent), taking bank loans (7 per cent) and selling possessions (1 per cent). These strategies can have long-term impacts on income and assets, and implications for overall wellbeing, including nutrition and access to services.

Multidimensional impact of COVID-19 on the education system

Many children from these very poor families are using their time during school closures to work, in order to contribute to the family income. This could affect their education prospects, as they may be at risk of not returning to school. Coupled with extra domestic chores, this also means children are not accessing the distance learning measures put in place during the closures, and thereby run the risk of learning loss—forgetting what they learned in the classroom. Families who have lost income now face the risk of not being able to afford the direct and indirect costs of schooling and could opt to keep their children home in the longer term.

School closures

The COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption to education systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries across the world. Closures of schools and other learning spaces have impacted 94 per cent of the world's student population, and up to 99 per cent in low- and lower-middle-income countries.²

On 16 March 2020, RGC took the decision to close all education institutions, including public and private schools, as a preventative measure against the spread of COVID-19. These school closures have resulted in disruptions to learning in all of Cambodia's 13,482 state schools, from pre-school through to upper secondary, including 3,064 community pre-schools, non-formal education (NFE) centres/programmes, and teacher education institutions (TEI). As a result, an estimated 3.2 million students have been affected. In response, MoEYS, together with development partners and stakeholders, has made significant efforts to provide continuous distance learning for all students in Cambodia. One of the main reasons for this assessment was to gather further information for MoEYS to refine its current distance learning strategy, explore the use of multiple delivery channels, and strengthen support to teachers and caregivers delivering remote learning.

Closures have also impacted teacher trainers and teacher trainees in 26 TEIs, affecting 720 teacher trainers (296, or 42 per cent female), and 5,248 teacher trainees (3,268, or 63 per cent female). The closures also impact 124 higher education institutions across the country, including 76 institutions under the management of MoEYS. This is impacting 16,525 educational personnel (3,439 female) and 222,879 students (106,952, or 48 per cent female) in the NFE sub-sector. The closure impacts 351 community learning centres, of which 310 are managed by MoEYS and the rest by development partners, impacting 9,377 students (6,064 female) and 1,694 education personnel (405 female).

The impact of COVID-19 on education service delivery and student learning threatens to setback progress Cambodia has made in education, and to exacerbate challenges faced by the sector in recent years. Based on the sector analysis commissioned by the European Union in 2020³, the Early Childhood Education sub-sector has seen some tremendous progress in recent years, where the largest growth of 5-year-old enrolment has occurred in the public sector, rising from 122,778 in 2016/17 to 147,580 in 2019/20. Community pre-school numbers have also risen from 21,583 to 25,171, with a particularly notable increase in the past year. The analysis illustrated that the primary gross completion rate had increased from 82.5 per cent (public 79.9 per cent, private 2.6 per cent) in school year 2016/17 to 88.2 per cent (public 83.3 per cent, private 4.9 per cent) in school year 2019/20.

The analysis highlights large inequities, with significantly larger proportions of girls completing than boys. After a number of years of declining primary drop-out rates, school years 2018/19 and 2019/20 have seen a reversal in the trend, with drop out rising sharply to 6.8 per cent. Both male and female drop-out rates have risen, with male rates rising fastest to reach 7.7 per cent and female rates rising to reach 5.9 per cent. Nationally, the transition rate from primary to lower secondary is 85 per cent, slightly below the four-year average of 85.5 per cent. Between 2016/17 and 2019/20 the lower secondary gross completion rate increased from 44.5 per cent (public 42.6 per cent, private 1.9 per cent) to 47.3 per cent (public 44.5 per cent, private 2.8 per cent) though there was a slight decline in 2019/20.

2 United Nations (2020). Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond (Issue brief). New York: United Nations. doi: https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/08/sg_policy_brief_covid-19_and_education_august_2020.pdf

3 Joint Government Development Partners Education Sector Review, Annex X: Cambodia Education Sector Analysis: ECE, Primary, Lower and Upper Secondary Education Analysis, June 2020 (unpublished)

COVID-19 education response

Response plan and financing for the response plan

The Joint Technical Working Group for Education, which includes MoEYS and members of ESWG, identified and agreed on objectives, activities and indicators for the Education COVID-19 Response Plan. On 15 July 2020, H.E. Minister Dr. Hang Chuon Naron formally endorsed the Cambodia Education Response Plan to the COVID-19 Pandemic.⁴

The response plan has been designed according to specific needs resulting from COVID-19. This plan is defined to give partners ideas on how they can support the prevention of the disease, how they can continue to support learners, especially the most vulnerable, during this period when schools are closed, more detailed guidance on how education partners can support MoEYS to re-start learning, and which activities to prioritize once schools re-open. As a coordination tool, it will ensure a harmonized response across schools and minimize duplication of efforts across education sector partners.

The four selected objectives or intended outcomes are linked to the COVID-19 main consequences on school systems during closures, and after school re-opening. The four planned outputs/objectives are:

1. Staff and students are able to continue remote teaching and learning safely
2. Students and education staff return to education institutions safely
3. Staff and students are able to teach and learn in an adaptable learning environment
4. MoEYS systems at national and sub-national levels have increased resilience.

The total budget estimated to fund activities in the response plan for the period June 2020–December 2021 is \$31,485,824

Given the depth of information that has been collected through the joint rapid assessment, it is envisaged that the content of the response plan will be reviewed and adapted to incorporate the findings and recommendations made in this report.

Summary of key instructions, guidelines and directives issued by MoEYS

In January 2020, MoEYS sent a letter⁵ to schools notifying them of the threat of COVID-19 and urging the adoption of good hygiene practices in schools. In mid-March 2020, MoEYS closed schools in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, and later called for the closure⁶ of all schools and education institutions across the country until further notice. The ministry subsequently announced teleworking arrangements⁷ for all education personnel.

In April 2020, MoEYS issued a directive⁸ on the implementation of distance learning and e-learning programmes at pre-primary, primary and secondary education levels. Complementary to this directive, MoEYS developed an operational guideline⁹ to support the implementation of distance learning in pre-schools, primary schools, secondary general education schools and targeted

4 MoEYS Response Plan accessible at: https://www.moeys.gov.kh/index.php/en/planning/3858.html#.X4_EMIgzY2w

5 MoEYS. No.03. Directive on Practicing Measures to Prevent Respiratory Infection caused by new Coronavirus Epidemic at Public and Private Educational Institutions. Issued on 27 January 2020.

6 MoEYS. No.13. Directive on Getting Started Short-term Vacation and Early School Break for All Public and Private Educational Institutions across Cambodia. Issued 16 March 2020.

7 MoEYS. No. 17. Guideline on Further Responses to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19. Issued 26 March 2020.

8 MoEYS. No. 23. Directive on 'Distance Learning' and 'E-learning' Programme for Students from Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education. Issued 24 April 2020.

9 MoEYS. No. 29. Operational Guideline for Distance Learning Implementation. Issued 8 June 2020.

higher education institutions. The guideline supported the practical implementation of the directive at national, sub-national and education institutional levels, as well as elaborating management tasks and tasks for the implementation of distance learning. On 29 April 2020, MoEYS issued letter #2122 to the Ministry of Economy and Finance requesting: 1) the provision of incentives to contract teachers from May 2020 onward when they are assigned to support distance efforts; and 2) postponing the provision of incentives for double shift teaching, multi-grade teaching, Thursday teaching, and overtime teaching from May 2020 until schools re-open.

On 28 May 2020, MoEYS issued a letter¹⁰ to suspend all forms of new teacher recruitment (3,600 teachers) for year 2020.

In early June 2020, MoEYS issued guidelines¹¹ on e-learning programmes at TEIs. The guidelines set out principles, measures and necessary steps for all TEIs to provide training and capacity development to teacher trainees, teacher educators and management teams. On 8 June, MoEYS issued a letter¹² announcing distance and e-learning for the literacy programme and the non-formal primary education equivalency programme.

To complement the directive released in April 2020 on the implementation of distance and e-learning programmes, MoEYS prepared and distributed the detailed Guideline #29¹³ to reinforce continuous learning efforts and the involvement of relevant stakeholders, and reiterated the need for strengthened monitoring and evaluation (M&E) efforts at national and sub-national levels. This guideline is intended to support the daily implementation and management of distance learning, from early childhood education to Grade 12, and five higher education institutions.

In July 2020, MoEYS issued a letter¹⁴ on end dates for live Grade 1 to Grade 3 videos. Broadcasting of all videos from Grades 1 to 3 would end by 29 July 2020, but the videos are stored and available on various websites, such as the MoEYS Facebook page, YouTube, E-Learning and TVK2, etc. Shortly after, on 10 July 2020, MoEYS issued guidelines on requirements for school health promotion in the context of COVID-19. These guidelines instructed all public and private education institutions on various measures, including health measures, for education institutions to prepare for the re-opening of schools. They instructed on how to ensure the safety and health of education personnel, teachers and students in the context of COVID-19 and beyond. The guidelines call for improved collaboration and stakeholder partnerships, and articulate key monitoring, case management and reporting requirements.

On 8 April 2020, MoEYS issued a directive¹⁵ postponing the national exam at lower secondary and upper secondary education in school year 2019/20 and advised all students to do self-study at home following MoEYS textbooks and e-learning platforms. On 6 July 2020, MoEYS issued a letter¹⁶ allowing private education institutions to organize online exams in accordance with their

10 MoEYS. No.2384. Suspension of New Teacher Recruitment for 2020. Issued on 28 May 2020.

11 MoEYS. No. 30. Guidelines on E-Training for Teacher Education in Teacher Education Institutions. Issued on 9 June 2020.

12 MoEYS. No. 28. Instruction on Distance and E-learning for the Literacy Programme and Non-Formal Primary Education Equivalency Programme. Issued on 8 June 2020.

13 MoEYS. No.29. Operational Guideline for Distance Learning Implementation. Issued on 6 June 2020.

14 MoEYS. No.39. Announcement on the End Date of Live G1-3 videos by 29 July 2020; but the broadcast videos are stored in various websites like MoEYS FB, YouTube, E-Learning, TVK2 etc. for Khmer and Mathematics subjects for Grades 1, 2 and 3. Issued on 6 July 2020.

15 MoEYS. No. 20. Directive on Postponing National Exam at Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary Education in 2019/20 Academic Year. Issued on 8 April 2020.

16 MoEYS. No. 2851. Allow Private Education Institutions to Organize Two-Day Face-To-Face Final Exams at Lower Secondary, Upper Secondary and Higher Education Level. Issued on 6 July 2020.

institution's calendar, with acceptable quality standards for lower and upper secondary grade levels (Grades 9 and 12). The letter provided guidelines for these institutions to autonomously issue exam certificates with recognition from MoEYS. However, due to the decision of the Government to reschedule Khmer New Year holidays in 2020, MoEYS issued another letter, #35,¹⁷ announcing the postponement of the Grade 12 national exam for private institutions from 17 August 2020 to 27 August 2020.

On 6 July 2020, another letter¹⁸ was issued to public higher education institutions that were offering distance learning to organize a two-day face-to-face final examination, while complying with safety requirements. On 14 July 2020, MoEYS issued another guideline¹⁹ to instruct private institutions to organize Grade 12 national exams for two days, starting on 17 August 2020.

To reinforce the educational improvement of students, MoEYS produced student workbooks and broadcast these through Telegram groups and other social networks. It instructed school management committees and teachers to print and photocopy the workbooks for scholarship students and students from poor families. Understanding that schools did not have the ability to print the materials, on 11 August 2020, MoEYS issued an instruction²⁰ (#36) on the use of the World Bank's Higher Education Improvement Project (HEIP) budget to support school operating funds at public primary schools and secondary schools nationwide. The funding is expected to be disbursed in November 2020. On 27 August 2020, MoEYS issued a letter²¹ to the Ministry of Civil Service to request incentives for contract teachers and state teachers who have done additional work during the pandemic.

Distance learning during the pandemic

Strategic partnerships with development partners and the private sector to ensure continuity in learning

With support from development partners, MoEYS has taken actions to ensure children are safe, protected and healthy, despite school closures. The key development partners and NGOs supporting MoEYS include the European Union, UNICEF, UNESCO, the Global Partnership for Education, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, USAID, UNFPA, the World Food Programme, SIDA, JICA, Save the Children, Aide et Action, CARE, ChildFund Cambodia, Finn Church Aid, Plan International, SeeBeyondBorders, Voluntary Service Overseas, and World Vision International, to name a few. The major areas of support include activities related to continuous learning: the production of information, education and communication materials and associated risk communication activities; support in building stronger and more resilient learning environments; the provision of basic hygiene supplies to schools; support with school and student grants; the ID Poor cash transfer programme, including links with the MoEYS scholarship programme; the provision of school meals to children from poor households; and school preparedness for safe school re-opening. These activities range across all the education sub-sectors, including early childhood education, primary and secondary education, higher education, teacher training and NFE. They target national and sub-national beneficiaries and audiences. The total budget indicated for the activities supported by development partners and NGOs is US\$ 19 million as of 9 October 2020.

¹⁷ MoEYS. No. 35. Directive on the Preparation and Organization of G12 National Exams for Private Education Institutions SY 2019/20.

¹⁸ MoEYS. No.2852. Allow Private Education Institutions to Organize Two-Day Face-To-Face Final Exams at Institutions. Issued on 6 July 2020.

¹⁹ MoEYS. No. 33. Guideline on the Preparation and Implementation of the G12 Exam for Private Institutions. Issued on 14 July 2020.

²⁰ MoEYS. No. 36. Instruction on the Use of the Higher Education Improvement Project Budget (HEIP) to Support School Operating Funds at Public Primary Schools and Public Secondary Schools. Issued on 11 August 2020.

²¹ MoEYS. No. 3765. Request for Incentives for Contract Teachers and State Teachers who have Carried out Additional Work During the Pandemic.

Ensuring the continuity of learning when schools were closed became a priority for governments the world over, many of which turned to information and communication technology (ICT). This required teachers to deliver lessons online. In Cambodia, MoEYS implemented immediate actions and measures to respond to the threat of COVID-19, with a focus on assisting students with continuous learning.

In March 2020, MoEYS began to prepare online lessons for students in Grades 9 and 12, as students in these grades have annual national examinations. Noting the extended school closures and the importance of supporting learning for all children (not just Grades 9 and 12), MoEYS developed distance learning content to reach students from pre-school to Grade 12, including those from ethnic minority communities and children with hearing and vision difficulties.

MoEYS efforts on continuous distance learning to students were delivered across a variety of platforms. Initial continuous learning programmes from pre-school to upper secondary school could be accessed only online, through platforms such as the MoEYS e-learning website, Facebook page, YouTube channel, Krou Cambodia and Komar Rien Koma Cheh, the ministry's official Facebook page for early grade learning. MoEYS, with support from a variety of development partners, started to broadcast continuous or distance learning programmes through a new dedicated education television channel (TVK2) and on radio. The TVK2 channel broadcast learning content relevant to students from pre-school to upper secondary,²² while the radio programmes focused on reaching children engaged in pre-school and multilingual education from Grades 1 to 3. Efforts have been made to integrate Cambodian sign language into primary and secondary education.

The total budget linked to continuous learning activities supported by development partners and NGOs was US\$9 million as of 9 October 2020. Support includes the production of lesson videos ranging from early childhood to secondary, and NFE; the multilingual education radio programme; the provision of online supplementary resources and online education programmes; the provision of necessary equipment for video production and setting up studios; and the provision of print materials to support distance learning.

MoEYS mobilized assets from public-private partnerships in response to the crisis, and to scale up distance learning and digital connectivity. Metfone, a leading telecom provider, is providing free data connectivity to teachers and students nationwide to access e-learning portals, including WiKi TV and those of MoEYS until the end of 2020. SMART, a large telecom provider, has funded MoEYS to ensure continuous learning of Grade 12 students by financing 1,000 learning videos. Other private partners contributing to the production of distance learning content include E-School Cambodia, and the Westline Education Group (private chain of schools). MoEYS cooperated with the Good Learning-General Incorporated Association²³ to localize 280 video-based teaching activities and 3,000 exercises for Grades 1 to 6 by translating them into Khmer language.

In addition to TVK2, television stations like Apsara TV, Sky One TV-35, Digital One TV-6, Singmeng TV-post 119 and Splus TV for phones are all broadcasting education videos. MoEYS also created a distance education application²⁴ in conjunction with the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication (MPTC) to aid students in online learning. Ezecom provided internet to some selected schools, and created internet packages that allow Ezecom users to access the MoEYS-MPTC app and video content free of charge.

22 TVK2 is currently broadcast across 54 cable television services in all 25 of Cambodia's provinces and municipalities, according to a report issued by MoEYS on 19 April 2020.

23 <https://km.khanacademy.org/>

24 Google Play <https://bit.ly/2EnVTf5> , App Store <https://apple.co/30VPXlg>

In the NFE sector, MoEYS and the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, in partnership with UNESCO, have made the BEEP platform public, serving as a supplementary learning resource for 610,000 students enrolled in lower secondary school. The two ministries are also developing continuous learning opportunities for the NFE sector to ensure that at least 300,000 lower secondary school students (50 per cent girls) and out-of-school youth can continue to access the most up-to-date learning resources through the BEEP platform.

Reiterating its commitment to digital learning, MoEYS opened the Centre for Digital and Distance Learning at the capital's Preah Sisowath High School. The construction of the centre, which will serve as a studio for producing educational videos and a venue for digital forums, seeks to advance virtual education in Cambodia. MoEYS cooperated with ChildFund Cambodia and other partners to expand offline digital libraries that can be accessed without the internet. The ministry collaborated with the Australian Centre for Education to provide scholarships to 2,000 Grade 12 students to prepare for their Grade 12 national exam. The scholarship can be used for an intensive three-month English course between June and September 2020.

Access to ICT at the household level

In terms of access to major ICT in Cambodia, the latest available figures based on a 2015 large-scale nationwide survey indicate that 48 per cent of rural households in Cambodia owned a television and 38 per cent owned a radio.²⁵ A 2016 survey (most recent large-scale figures available) showed that 48 per cent of Cambodians owned a smartphone (internet capability) and that “in 2016 Internet/Facebook became the most important channel through which Cambodians access information (30 per cent)—surpassing television (29 per cent) and almost doubling radio (15 per cent).”²⁶

A rapid assessment conducted by MoEYS' Primary Education Department during the early months of COVID-19 school closures to gather more recent data on access to distance learning and e-learning showed that 24 per cent of the 513,303 primary school students (Grades 1–6) in 2,858 primary schools surveyed had access to distance learning on television and 22 per cent had access to e-learning via Facebook. Figures for upper primary grades were higher than for early grades. However, more in-depth checks showed worrying trends: only 17 per cent of students viewed more than 50 per cent of the length of every video and only 24 per cent of students received homework and feedback from teachers, although around 73 per cent of teachers reported distributing homework. Only 7 per cent of students engaged with teachers on question-answer sessions. Distance e-learning has some potential reach, but greater engagement will be required even from those children fortunate enough to be able to access learning materials online.²⁷

Reach and effectiveness of distance learning efforts

As schools remained closed, agencies working in the education sector conducted education needs assessments, initially focusing on overall access to continuous and distance learning, using feedback from students and caregivers.

²⁵ National Institute of Statistics, Directorate General for Health, and ICF International, (2015). Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2014. Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and Rockville, Maryland, USA: National Institute of Statistics, Directorate General for Health, and ICF International.

²⁶ The Asia Foundation, (2016). Mobile Phones and Internet Use in Cambodia 2016: <https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Mobile-Phones-and-Internet-Use-in-Cambodia-2016.pdf>. Retrieved 24 June 2020.

²⁷ MoEYS, (2020). Report on Distance Learning and Electronic Learning. Primary Education Department. Issued 19 May 2020 (Khmer language document).

National data on access to technology, and small-scale rapid surveys and assessments revealed gaps in access to and utilization of distance and continuous learning platforms and materials. These gaps needed to be explored, along with barriers to access and potential policy/capacity development support in order to implement the response plan, as well as the COVID-19 response and recovery programme.

MoEYS and UNICEF Cambodia jointly conducted a small-scale online survey. It was filled out by 575 participants—215 who were students/learners, and 360 who were caregivers responding on behalf of their children. Of the total respondents, 37 per cent were from rural areas and 58 per cent were from urban areas, with the remaining 5 per cent not specifying. The respondents had different levels of education, including pre-school (14 per cent), primary (58 per cent), lower secondary (13 per cent) and upper secondary (15 per cent). Of the respondents, 49 per cent (281) were female, 48 per cent (277) were male, and 3 per cent (17) did not wish to answer.

The most common challenges faced by respondents in accessing continuous learning platforms and programmes was poor internet connectivity (54 per cent), financial problems, making it difficult to purchase internet/phone credit (42 per cent), inconvenience related to needing to share devices (23 per cent), poor television or radio coverage (10 per cent), lack of awareness of television or radio schedules for broadcasting (22 per cent), and no time to learn due to daily chores or taking care of siblings (18 per cent). A Save the Children small-scale assessment cited challenges that included additional expenses for purchasing internet services and devices to continue learning, as well as loss of time caused by slow and interrupted internet services. The monitoring report indicated that only 20 per cent of multilingual education students in the north-eastern provinces of Ratanakiri and Mondulakiri had a radio at home to access distance learning.

Risk of learning loss during school closures

A Save the Children small-scale assessment found that 97 per cent of children across primary and secondary school grades expressed concern about their learning during the pandemic.²⁸ An online survey conducted by Social Action for Community and Development of 187 students and parents revealed that while 80 per cent of participants who took part in the survey understood the benefits of e-learning, more than 70 per cent claimed they faced many challenges to obtaining knowledge through non-traditional ways of learning. Some students said they were not ready for online learning, that the learning process was complicated, and that they felt stressed.

The MoEYS-UNICEF small-scale rapid assessment found that common concerns of students and caregivers who had the means to access continuous learning materials were learning outcomes, examinations, and the future of their children's education. In terms of learning outcomes, the majority (62 per cent) thought they were learning less than when schools were open, 3 per cent thought they did not learn at all, 26 per cent thought they were learning the same amount as before the school closures, and 9 per cent thought they were learning more than when schools were open.

Also identified by the survey was a request for innovative distance learning methods to better engage and motivate children, especially younger children, and better structures for monitoring the level of effort and learning levels of students. There was progress here, as survey results showed that 87 per cent of survey respondents reported they had been assigned exercises or homework, and of those, 87 per cent confirmed that the school and/or their teacher had put in place a mechanism to monitor the completion of their homework.

²⁸ Including 67 per cent of primary education students, 96 per cent of lower secondary education students and 100 per cent of upper secondary education students. Save the Children (2020), Evidence to Action Report.

A presentation by the USAID/RTI All Children Reading-Cambodia programme on 2 October 2020 highlighted that the risk of learning losses was particularly high in early grade levels. During a normal school holiday (8–10 weeks), there is typically a 10–15 per cent drop in literacy skills among students, especially in early grades where students are still learning their basic reading skills. With extended school closures, learning loss research estimates a 40 per cent learning loss after 25 weeks out of school, as the worst-case scenario.

School re-opening

On 5 July 2020, MoEYS announced that schools would re-open soon, in three stages. In the announcement, MoEYS shared that higher-standard schools with sufficient resources to implement virus prevention techniques would open first, followed by medium-standard schools and minimum-standard schools. No clear timeframe for the re-opening of higher-standard schools was indicated.

In August 2020, MoEYS developed a standard operating procedure²⁹ to support the school re-opening arrangement. The procedure provided guidelines on various measures, including: health measures for education institutions to prepare for back-to-school teaching and learning; ensuring the continuation of sustainable development at education institutions; and ensuring safety and health for education personnel, teachers and students in the context of COVID-19 and beyond.

On 10 August 2020, MoEYS issued a media release on the second phase of school re-opening planned for September 2020. It announced that national exams for Grades 9 and 12 in public schools would be conducted in December 2020.

On 25 August 2020, MoEYS issued three different guidelines³⁰ on Phase 2 re-opening for pre-primary, primary, and secondary education on 7 September 2020. The second phase of school re-opening included re-opening all schools for all grade levels in the north-eastern provinces of Kratie, Steung Treng, Ratanakiri and Monduliri. It elaborated on the partial re-opening of state pre-schools, community pre-schools, primary and lower secondary schools. MoEYS reiterated the implementation of a hybrid/blended learning approach that included face-to-face learning, online and distance learning, traditional learning (with worksheets), and self-study. The guidelines shared information on the extension of the current school year 2019/20 to the end of December 2020, and the re-opening of the new school year 2020/21 to 11 January 2021. The guidelines elaborated on the prioritization of learning, with an emphasis on Khmer and Mathematics in the primary grade levels in the current school year. For Grade 9, emphasis was on Mathematics, Khmer, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History and foreign languages. For Grade 12 (Science stream), focus was on Mathematics, Khmer, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History and foreign languages. For Grade 12 (social science stream), focus was on Khmer, Mathematics, History, Geography, Moral Citizenship, Earth Science and Environment, and foreign languages. Teaching-learning for all other subjects will resume in SY 2020/21. MoEYS also announced that the national exams for Grade 9 would be conducted at the end of November, and for Grade 12 in December 2020.

²⁹ MoEYS. Standard Operating Procedures for School Re-opening in the Context of COVID-19. Issued August 2020.

³⁰ MoEYS. Guidelines #37, #38 and #39 for pre-primary, primary and secondary schools respectively. Issued on 25 August 2020.

Purpose and objectives of the assessment

3

MoEYS and the ESWG decided to do a comprehensive, coordinated assessment of the sector to gain evidence that would help determine the best approach for future response and recovery strategies in Cambodia. The joint rapid needs assessment of the education sector integrated findings from data collected specifically for this assessment and other assessments or studies done by education and social sector partners. This was to assess their current COVID-19 response efforts, to support the development of evidence-based response policies, and to inform a holistic response and recovery plan.

Through various surveys of target populations, this assessment will help the education sector in Cambodia to:

- Measure the level of access, quality and effectiveness of distance learning across different platforms for students from pre-primary through to secondary grade levels, infrastructure requirements and bottlenecks affecting learners (for example, lack of caregiver engagement/support, access to learning materials, technologies, such as TV, radio, computer devices, internet and electricity connectivity, appropriate learning spaces, suitability for children with disabilities, etc).
- Identify current teaching-learning outreach efforts by schools (pre-primary to secondary) and TEIs, (provincial and regional teacher training colleges and teacher education colleges).
- Determine capacity development needs of teachers, school directors, teacher educators and education administrators at national and sub-national levels to adequately support distance learning during school/TEI closures.
- Understand the extent of the multi-dimensional impact of COVID-19 on the education system in Cambodia, the health, safety and social protection-related impacts on the affected population (students, teachers, school directors, education administrators at national and sub-national levels, teacher educators and teacher trainees). The assessment places emphasis on understanding the impacts on vulnerable affected populations (for example, students from households with high poverty levels, households living in rural, remote and hard-to-reach areas, migrant worker families, and people with disabilities).

Methodology

4

The research methodology of this assessment was largely based on primary data collection. It used quantitative methods through face-to-face and online self-administered cross-sectional structured surveys, designed separately for each population of interest. This enabled surveyors to analyse and draw patterns and findings. An in-depth background analysis and desk review of recent actions, assessments and complementary studies was used as secondary data to strengthen comparative analysis of the findings and inform recommendations.

Target population, sampling, research design and participant selection

The education sector needs assessment targeted all populations of interest (from both the demand and supply sides) in the education system in Cambodia. This included pre-school, primary, and secondary education students, teachers, and school directors from both formal and non-formal education, teacher educators and teacher trainees at TEIs, education administrators at central and sub-national level (provincial and district offices of education), and local authorities (commune/village chiefs, councils).

Administrative data from MoEYS management information systems, namely the Education, Human Resource and Financial Management Information Systems, was used to inform sampling. The sampling frame for the selection of schools (clusters) was obtained from the Education Management Information System as a complete list of all state schools (13,482) from pre-school to upper secondary, per province/district and disaggregated by sub-sector, urban/rural/disadvantaged area, number of enrolled students, and teaching staff. Human Resource Management Information System administrative data, and TEI data was used to determine the population size for school directors, teacher trainees/educators, and education administrators where Education Management Information System data could not provide a sampling frame. A full list of local authorities or the total population number was not available, and local authorities were identified per selected district or through school management committee lists, according to availability among those who were commune/village chiefs or councillors.

Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate the total target population and suggested sample sizes for each population for this study, per sub-sector, where possible. Sample size calculations and sampling strategies used in this study are explained in detail further in this section. Annex 1 and Table 2 also show the actual number of sample size targeted versus reached in detail.

Table 1: Population size and sample size for students, teaching staff and school directors

Education institution type	# of institutions/directors	Sample size for directors	# of students	Sample size ³¹ for students	# of teachers	Sample size for teachers
State pre-schools	4,4092 ³²	101	233,132	1,317	5,414	718
Community pre-schools	3,064	N/A	62,414	1,309	1,309	688
Primary education	7,282	365	2,023,473	1,322	44,914	762
Lower secondary education	1,247	294	324,986	1,320	14,404	750
Upper secondary education	544	226	628,694	1,320	28,493	760
NFE centres/programmes	332	172	9,377	814	564	458
Teacher education institutions	24	N/A	5,248	1,186	1,322	298
TOTAL		1,158	3,287,324	8,588	97,773	4,434

Table 2: Population size for education administrations and local authorities

Education administrators/local authorities	MoEYS central level technical departments ³³	Provincial offices of education	District offices of education	Local authorities
# of staff	845	2,220	2,352	NA
Sample size	349	328	331	One per school cluster as available
Sample size reached	321	281	324	315

31 The sample size for students (caregivers for pre- and primary students) was independently computed based on a 95 per cent confidence level and 5 per cent of margin of error; and was multiplied by the design effect of 2.0 and a 10-per cent non-response rate was added.

32 Number of pre-school directors is not the same as number of institutions. There is a difference between Human Resource Management Information System and Education Management Information System data because some pre-schools are in primary school compounds and are managed by the primary school director. There are only 231 separated state pre-schools, and 135 of them were reported to have a separate director, for which the sample size was calculated as 101.

33 From 20 selected relevant departments only: Department of ICT, Department of Personnel, Department of Finance, General Department of Education, Department of Primary School, Department of Secondary School, Department of Non-Formal Education, Department of Health Education, Department of Curriculum Development, Department of Early Childhood Education, Department of Training & Retraining, Department of Professional Orientation, Department of Special Education General Inspectorate, Department of Assurance Educational Quality, Department of Examination Affairs, General Department of Policy and Planning, Department of Planning, Department of Education Management Information System, Department of Policy, Department of M&E.

Students/caregivers/teachers at school clusters³⁴

The sample size for students (caregivers for pre- and primary students) and teachers was independently computed for each population based on a 95 per cent confidence level and 5 per cent of margin of error.³⁵ The sample size was multiplied by the design effect of 2.0 to ensure enough sample size for the use of complex sampling procedures (multi-stage cluster methodology) for the selection of samples from the study population. A 10-per cent non-response rate was added to the sample size for students (caregivers) and teachers.

A multi-stage cluster sampling strategy was used to select schools and participants. In the first stage, 15 provinces representative of the country from six geographical regions, and four to six districts from each province were purposefully selected, taking into consideration the inclusion of rural/urban/remote/disadvantaged zones. In the second stage, six clusters (schools) were randomly selected from each district based on the school level/type (one of each institution: state pre-school, community pre-school, primary, lower and upper secondary education, NFE programme/centre).³⁶ There was also purposive selection of special education schools to oversample for students with disabilities, and selection of more districts and schools in known disadvantaged areas with more ethnic minority populations, such as the north-east region. This was to obtain data on the experiences of the most vulnerable people. A systematic sampling strategy was applied to choose students/caregivers and teachers from selected schools to ensure a proportionate distribution of students from all grades, and both female and male. On average, 20 to 25 students were targeted per the four school levels (state and community pre-schools, primary, lower and upper secondary), as well as 14 to 15 per NFE centre/programme,³⁷ 13 teachers from each formal institution cluster and four to five teachers from each NFE centre/programme (including community learning centres, literacy programmes, etc.).

Teacher trainees and educators, school directors, central MoEYS, sub-national level education administrators and local authorities

The sample size for school directors and education administrators was calculated using a 95 per cent confidence level and 5 per cent margin of error separately, using the total population for each school and administrative level.

The selection of school directors was based on systematic sampling using the list of all school directors for each of the target sub-sectors (basic education). The list of school directors was structured in ascending order of school size (total enrolment), per sub-sector, and by sex. The sampling interval of 'total population number/sample size' was used to select directors for online surveys. A list of selected school directors was shared with each provincial and district office of education for participation and follow-up.

The selection of teacher trainees/educators and education administrators was not systematic, as a full list of trainees and staff was not obtained. The respondents participated online through survey links shared by directors until a sufficient and proportionate sample size was reached. Each central department, provincial and district office of education, and TEI was informed of the sample size needed, disaggregated by sex.

³⁴ Excluding teacher trainees and teacher educators at TEIs, as they were interviewed online.

³⁵ A 95 per cent confidence level and 5 per cent margin of error for NFE students and teachers.

³⁶ Due to random sampling of schools in select districts, in some cases the total enrolment of students and the number of teachers (100 per cent of students and teachers) at selected schools was less than the sample size dedicated per school. In this case, additional schools of the same level, or participants in larger schools, were selected to reach the sample size.

³⁷ According to the total sample size, the calculation is based on using each sub-sector target divided by total number of districts equally.

A specific sample size was not calculated for local authorities and the participants were chosen based on availability and convenience. They were identified in selected school districts or reached via dissemination of online links through support from school management committees, and provincial and district office of education channels.

Assessment tools

Six survey questionnaires were designed which included closed-ended, single or multiple answer questions to collect comprehensive feedback on the most pressing needs and challenges. This facilitated focused intervention efforts that could be addressed to improve the current situation, along with some follow-up and open-ended questions on specific challenges /vulnerabilities identified. Questionnaires were designed to get feedback on actual experiences of both the demand- and supply-side actors in the education system. Some questions were relevant for perceptions and/or self-reporting of the supply-side actors to compare with the experiences of students and learners.

The questions related to assessing experiences relevant to multi-sectors: health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), nutrition, social policy, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), protection and education, including knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding COVID-19, access to nutrition, WASH facilities, experience and perceptions around protection, and MHPSS issues. These were followed by a larger component, which focused on education-related indicators, such as access to distance learning, risk of drop out, access to ICT, basic learning materials, preferred methods of alternative distance learning, teacher and parental engagement in distance learning, critical support or policy awareness, and capacity development needs of educators and administrators. Disability status and ID Poor status were determined by filter questions asking participants to self-report. The structured questionnaires were designed using excel forms and an online form builder on KOBO Toolbox. Each survey questionnaire had around 40 questions and lasted 45 to 60 minutes, depending on the facilitation of the enumerator and the type of respondent population.

An Institutional Review Board approval was obtained for the survey terms of reference, with detailed methodology, survey questionnaires and data collection plan and approach. This outlined the level of involvement of children in the study before the beginning of data collection and enumerator training. During the training and throughout the assessment, the whole data collection process considered and abided by the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis.³⁸

Enumerator training, data collection and management

Data collection training for 94 master enumerators was simultaneously conducted in three zones (Phnom Penh, Kampong Cham and Siem Reap) on 13 August 2020. Participants included 33 technical officials from provincial, and 27 from district, offices of education, and 37 assessment focal points of NGOs. The training was facilitated by master trainers from MoEYS, Save the Children and UNICEF. The training focused on questionnaire content and structure, data collection management and quality control, processes of respondent selection and interview techniques, ethical considerations, and the use of the KOBO platform and application for data collection. A data collection manual had been developed and was introduced to the master trainers during the training.

Data collection took place between 17 August and 14 September 2020, and surveys were collected in 67 districts of 15 provinces. Data was collected in a collaborative way by provincial and district office of education officials, with technical coordination by MoEYS and UNICEF. Data

³⁸ <https://www.unicef.org/media/54796/file>

was also collected by 13 local and international NGOs: CARE International, ChildFund Cambodia, Finn Church Aid Foundation, Food for Hungry Cambodia, Good Neighbours Cambodia, Hands of Hope Community, Khmer NGO for Education, Plan International, Save the Children International, SIPAR Cambodia, Voluntary Service Overseas in Cambodia, WOMEN and World Vision Cambodia, under technical coordination from Save the Children International.

In many locations, the data collection process was well organized, as selected students and teachers had been pre-scheduled. A group survey administration strategy was used by trained enumerators facilitating the groups. The arrangements were made taking into consideration COVID-19 prevention measures and safe practices. For areas where students/caregivers and/or teachers did not have access to phones, or they could not come to schools, data was collected at the household/community level, in an open place as applicable in order to reach the selected participants.

Data collection methods were flexible in the field. Where devices and/or internet were available, tablets/computers/smartphones were used to capture data and upload to the system directly. However, in locations where devices and internet services were not available, paper-based questionnaires were administered to groups or individuals. Completed questionnaires were then entered into the KOBO system.

The quality of data collected through NGOs was monitored by the assessment focal point (M&E staff/programme staff) of respective organizations. Data cleaning was conducted by these NGOs individually. Then, the completed datasets were sent to the M&E team at Save the Children to check for consistency, as part of the second tier of cleaning procedures. Datasets from these 13 NGOs were merged into one file for each survey type.

Data collected by MoEYS was supported by UNICEF and the Department of Planning in MoEYS. Datasets from MoEYS/UNICEF datasets were merged with 13 NGO datasets in one master file of each survey type. The final datasets were transformed into STATA, and final data cleaning was conducted before the preparation of statistical analysis. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics techniques in STATA. Pearson's Chi-square Test was mainly used in the analysis to examine differences in the proportions between indicator variables and independent variables, such as type of institution/school grade level, sex, ID Poor and disability status.

Limitations to the assessment

For the assessment, schools had to provide a full list of students and teachers in each selected cluster (school) to the field assessment teams for systematic selection of participants. There might have been bias in the selection of cases, where schools did not have the contact numbers of all students, and the participants were selected from the available contact lists. It is more likely that the students/caregivers who did not have contact numbers would be coming from more disadvantaged backgrounds and the study might under-represent their unique experiences, even if an equal number of students was represented from each cluster. Randomly inviting participants rather than systematically sorting the student lists according to sex and grade levels might have caused the male: female ratio of students to be less equal, with more females participating in the assessment (57 per cent versus 43 per cent). This might lead to over-representation of female student experiences.

NGO teams experienced some difficulties accessing selected clusters in rural/remote areas, and some could not be reached as planned. NGO partners had to access locations where they had already established trust, and where access was possible/more convenient, but still in

the same district. This limitation did not apply to clusters covered by MoEYS/UNICEF, as information on the exact locations of schools/centres was readily available to provincial and district offices of education.

In some selected districts, there were not enough teachers across the number of schools planned to be selected to cover the total sample size, even if 100 percent of teachers were interviewed. This was a problem with pre-schools and primary schools exclusively. Reserve/additional pre- and primary schools were randomly added in each district to reach the sample size for teachers only. Some selected districts in the cluster did not have a non-formal centre or community pre-school. To reach the sampling size, these were replaced by selecting additional ones in districts where there were more than one. This process still followed the purposive selection of districts with differing backgrounds. The sample sizes for state and community pre-schools were originally calculated separately, according to the administrative data. Larger sample sizes were calculated for school directors of community pre-schools and NFE. In reality, there was only one manager, if any, at community pre-schools and NFE centres, and fewer teachers compared to Education Management Information System data. Accordingly, only one community pre-school and NFE teacher were interviewed, covering all eligible participants who were identified.

Selection of school directors was systematic and covered directors from all provinces in Cambodia. However, it was not possible to create Messenger groups with only targeted school directors as planned, due to technical issues and privacy concerns. The list of selected directors was shared with the applicable district offices of education, however in order to increase participation online links were made accessible to more directors. These links were shared through various channels during the data collection phase. Even though submissions mostly matched the school codes selected, it is possible that there were submissions from school directors outside of the master and reserve lists. This might lead to biased findings, as more directors with higher levels of access could have participated compared to those with more limited access. However, there was a good distribution of school directors from all 25 provinces in the country. As this led to a smaller sample of school directors, the findings and perspectives of school directors might be skewed or misleading, especially when disaggregated by school grade level, for example pre-schools where there were very few directors.

There were limitations in compiling six different datasets and identifying the type of respondents beyond the main categories. This was a factor where there were missing or contradictory data entries for variables such as type of institution, grade year level, or teaching grade, and a clear distinction between teacher trainees and students, and teacher educators and teachers, as they used the same KOBO forms regardless of whether the data was collected online or face-to-face. This led to differing numbers of total respondents in the analysis of each question when analysis was conducted per respondent type (student, caregiver, teacher) versus disaggregated by school grade level or institution type. In future, it is recommended that each type of respondent has a completely separate form online.

Demographics

5

A total of 15,172 cross-sectional surveys were employed in this assessment: 7,367 with basic formal education students (4,317 caregivers if their children were of primary school age and below), 559 with NFE students, 3,318 with teachers using face-to-face structured interviews, 1,307 with teacher trainees, 1,090 with school directors, 290 with teacher educators, 926 with education administrators through online self-administered surveys, and 315 with local authorities using both methods, depending on feasibility.

The demographics of the survey populations included in this study by type of respondent, sex, and average age are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Demographics of the rapid assessment survey population

Type of respondent	Frequency	Male	Female	Average age	Percentage of survey population
Student*	7,367	43%	57%	10.8	49%
Teacher	3,146	47%	53%	35.8	21%
Teacher trainee	1,307	37%	63%	20.9	9%
School director	1,090	86%	14%	42.7	7%
Education administrator	926	72%	28%	43.8	6%
NFE student	559	33%	67%	25.5	4%
Local authority	315	80%	20%	51.5	2%
Teacher educator	290	66%	34%	37.2	2%
NFE teacher	172	57%	43%	42.3	1%
Total	15,172	49%	51%	23.5	100%

*Formal education (pre-school through Grade 12) including caregivers for pre-school and primary

Almost half of the survey population (49 per cent) were formal education students and their caregivers, from pre-school to upper secondary school. The teacher population was 21 per cent of the total survey population, and 9 per cent were teacher trainees. The overall proportion of respondents by sex was almost equal, with 51 per cent female and 49 per cent male. This was significantly different among school directors, local authorities and education administrators, where men far outnumbered women. This was the expected distribution as there is a higher proportion of men in these positions.

The proportion of students from each school level and type is presented in Table 4. Pre-school student caregivers (state and community pre-schools) account for 34 per cent of the student survey population, 25 per cent were caregivers of primary school students, 25 per cent for lower secondary school students, and 16 per cent for upper secondary students.

Table 4: Proportion of students from each school level and type

School level	Number of students	Percentage of student survey population
Pre-school	2,491	34%
Primary	1,822	25%
Lower secondary	1,868	25%
Upper secondary	1,162	16%
Number of students	7,343	100%

For the purposes of this study, disability status was determined by questions related to difficulty in performing physical or cognitive activities. This included difficulty moving, seeing, hearing, speaking or learning, as self-reported by respondents. The respondents (n. 8,885) were classified as having a disability if they reported difficulty with one of the five areas. Overall, the respondents were classified as 21 per cent with a disability versus 79 per cent without a disability. The percentage of respondents who reported having difficulties or no difficulties in performing physical or cognitive activities is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Percentage of respondents who have difficulties (student/caregiver)

Type of Difficulty	Percentage of respondents
No difficulties	79%
Difficulty learning ³⁹	10%
Difficulty moving	8%
Difficulty seeing	5%
Difficulty speaking	4%
Difficulty hearing	3%

Of the respondents, 95 percent selected Khmer as the language spoken at home, while 5 per cent spoke a language other than Khmer at home. Poverty status was determined by respondents holding a valid ID Poor card: 82 per cent of respondents reported having no ID Poor card, while 18 per cent reported holding a valid ID Poor card. Heads of households were 80 percent male and 20 per cent female. In terms of caregivers' occupations, 62 per cent of respondents were farmers, 12 per cent were self-employed, 10 per cent labourers/workers, 7 per cent were employees in government, NGOs, or the private sector, 6 per cent were engaged in other occupations, 2 per cent were fishers and 1 per cent raised livestock.

³⁹ Learning difficulty used here in Khmer language referred to having a hard time studying and being mentally weak. However, the enumerators were not trained enough to explain various mental/or learning difficulties in detail.

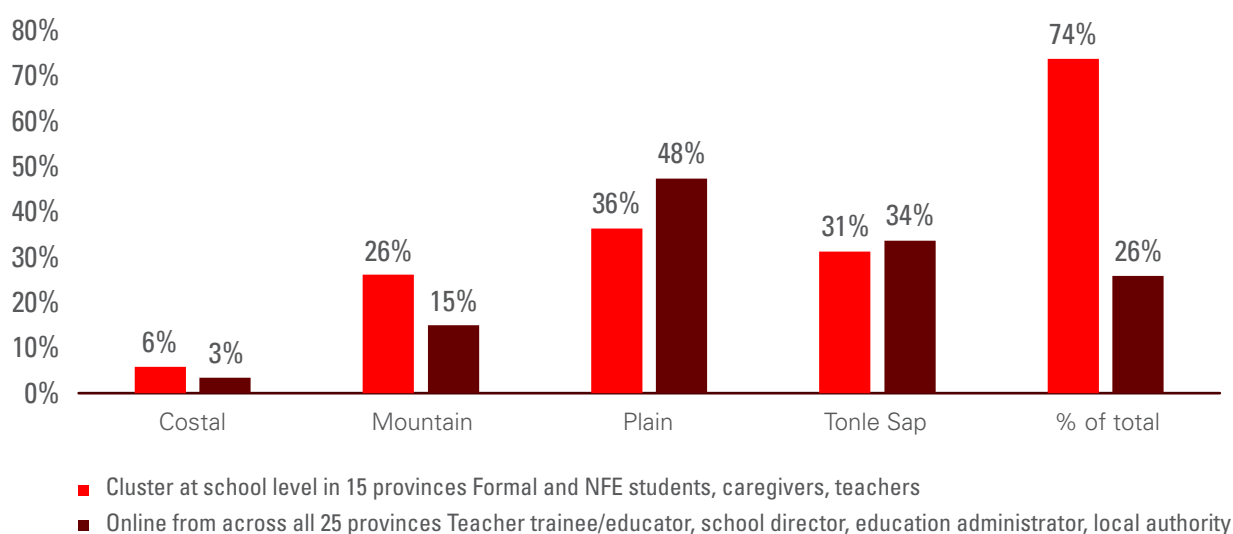
With regard to education levels of the respondents, 32 per cent of households had a member who completed primary school, 30 per cent of households had a member who completed lower secondary education, 21 per cent of households had a member who completed upper secondary school, 10 per cent of households had a member who completed a tertiary degree, 3 per cent of households had a member who completed a vocational degree, and 4 per cent of households did not have any members who completed any level of formal education.

In this study, 15 provinces⁴⁰ were selected for the cluster sampling strategy to collect face-to-face surveys from students and teachers at the school cluster level. The classification of the four regions used in this study is the categorization used by MoEYS, based on people of similar livelihoods, terrains and geographical proximity. The provinces included in the four regions are:

- 1 **Plain:** Phnom Penh*, Kandal*, Kampong Cham*, Tbong Khmum, Svay Rieng, Prey Veng* and Takeo*
- 2 **Tonle Sap:** Kampong Thom, Siem Reap*, Oddar Meanchey*, Battambang*, Banteay Meanchey, Pailin, Pursat* and Kampong Chhnang
- 3 **Coastal:** Sihanouk, Kampot, Kep and Koh Kong*
- 4 **Mountain:** Kampong Speu*, Preah Vihear, Kratie*, Stung Treng*, Ratanakiri*, Monduliri*.

*Provinces selected for this assessment for in-person data collection.

Figure 1: Cluster and online respondents per region



The cluster proportion of surveys collected at school level versus online surveys from across all provinces in Cambodia by region is presented in Figure 1.

⁴⁰ 15 provinces in this study are marked with (*) in the list of provinces by region. Please refer to the full list of 67 districts in 15 provinces, partner collecting data, coverage and number of surveys in Annex 1-4.

Assessment findings

6

Multi-dimensional impact of COVID-19 on the education system

This section assesses the extent of the multi-dimensional impacts of COVID-19 on the education system in Cambodia, including health, safety, wellbeing and social protection related effects on all education stakeholder populations. It includes an analysis on awareness, knowledge, prevention measures and healthy practices related to COVID-19, and access to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. Later in this section, issues related to wellbeing of children will be analysed: protection, MHPSS and physical health, followed by the economic impacts of COVID-19.

Awareness, knowledge, prevention measures and healthy practices related to COVID-19

The assessment aimed to measure the awareness of COVID-19 among respondents through two knowledge questions: one relating to possible ways of contracting the virus, and the other related to the most common symptoms displayed by people infected with the virus. Strict criteria were used to identify respondents who demonstrated enough knowledge. Respondents were classified as being aware and knowledgeable of COVID-19 if they were able to identify at least two methods of contracting the virus and at least one of the most common symptoms.⁴¹

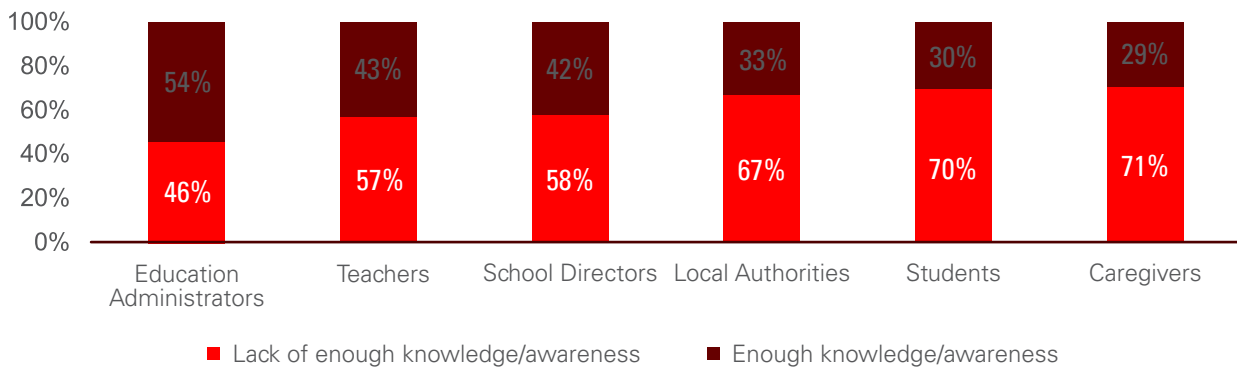
Different survey populations showed different levels of knowledge regarding COVID-19 transmission and symptoms. Around 54 per cent of the education administrators demonstrated enough knowledge, but only 29 per cent of caregivers, followed by 30 per cent of students, 33 per cent of local authorities, 42 per cent of school directors and 43 per cent of teachers demonstrated enough knowledge, as shown in Figure 2.



36 per cent of respondents were labelled 'aware' of COVID-19, as they demonstrated enough knowledge of both transmission and common symptoms. The majority, 65 per cent, were labelled 'lacking' enough knowledge/awareness of the virus. However, when the two knowledge questions were analysed separately, 77 per cent correctly identified at least two correct transmission methods and 96 per cent identified at least one of the most common symptoms.

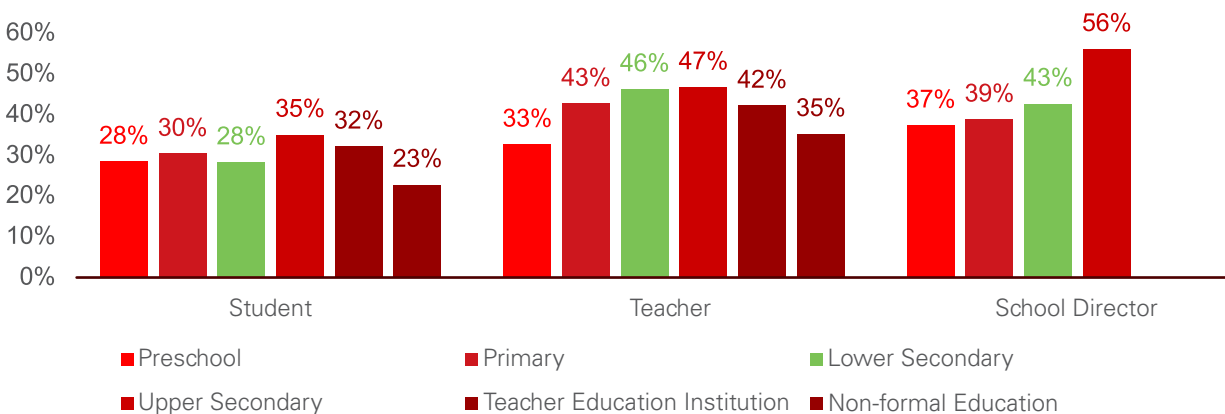
⁴¹ Methods of contracting the virus were listed in the questionnaire as: 1. Airborne (droplets in the air of other people coughing, etc.); 2. Vector-borne disease (bites of mosquitos, sand flies, etc.); 3. Drinking/washing in contaminated water; 4. Breastmilk 5. Eating certain foods; 6. Physical contact with a contaminated object and surfaces; 7. Physical contact with infected people; where options 1, 6 and 7 were considered correct. Three most common symptoms are dry cough, fever, and tiredness according to WHO, which is used as a reference in this survey criteria.

Figure 2: COVID-19 knowledge levels among respondents, by respondent type



When the results were disaggregated by school level, as presented in Figure 3 below, the lowest level of knowledge among students was found to be among NFE students, with only 23 per cent demonstrating sufficient knowledge. The highest level of knowledge was found to be among upper-secondary level students, at 35 per cent. Among teachers, the lowest level of awareness was found to be among pre-school teachers, at 33 per cent, followed by 35 per cent of NFE teachers. The highest percentage of awareness was demonstrated by lower and upper secondary school teachers, at 46 and 47 per cent, respectively. All three types of respondents (students/teachers/school directors) demonstrated the highest levels of knowledge at the upper-secondary school level. This finding could be explained through findings in the other sections regarding higher levels of access to ICT among the same groups of respondents. This increases their exposure to information in general.

Figure 3: COVID-19 knowledge among respondents, by school level and type⁴²



The data revealed substantial differences in knowledge levels of respondents from households with different poverty status, as presented in Table 6: 25 per cent of respondents in households with valid ID Poor cards compared to 31 per cent with no ID Poor card demonstrated enough knowledge of COVID-19. Independent variables, such as sex or disability status did not have a correlation with the level of knowledge. Disability status resulted in differences in the level and type of practiced prevention measures, as explained in the following section.

⁴² Pre-school and primary school level knowledge is still based on the knowledge of caregivers.

Table 6: COVID-19 knowledge levels by gender, disability status, and ID Poor status

Independent variable		Lack of enough knowledge/ awareness	Enough knowledge/ awareness	Total # of respondents	P-value
Gender	Male	64%	36%	7,258	0.390
	Female	65%	35%	7,517	
Disability status	Disability	71%	29%	1,781	0.111
	Non-disability	69%	31%	6,804	
ID Poor status	Valid ID Poor	75%	25%	1,485	0.000
	No ID Poor	69%	31%	6,704	

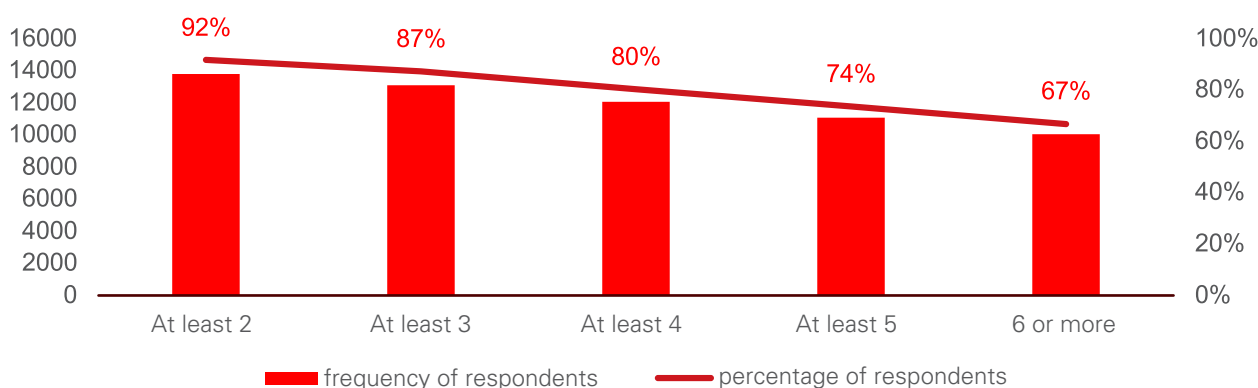
COVID-19 prevention measures, safe practices and behaviours

Given that there is no known treatment for the COVID-19 virus, the majority of global efforts to fight with the pandemic have been around behaviour change communication. This has included increasing awareness and knowledge; and encouraging healthy behaviours to reduce the transmission and community spread of the virus, especially where there was no government mandated restriction of movement, quarantine measures and/or lockdowns. In line with global efforts, and assessing the cooperation of populations in terms of adopting safety measures, the survey respondents were asked to identify some healthy prevention and control measures practiced in the last week to reduce the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19, refer Figure 4 below.⁴³



It is apparent that practicing prevention measures was found to be higher than knowledge of symptoms and transmission. The criteria were less strict, as respondents were labelled as practicing healthy behaviours even if they reported practicing only two of the 10 measures (see Figure 4).

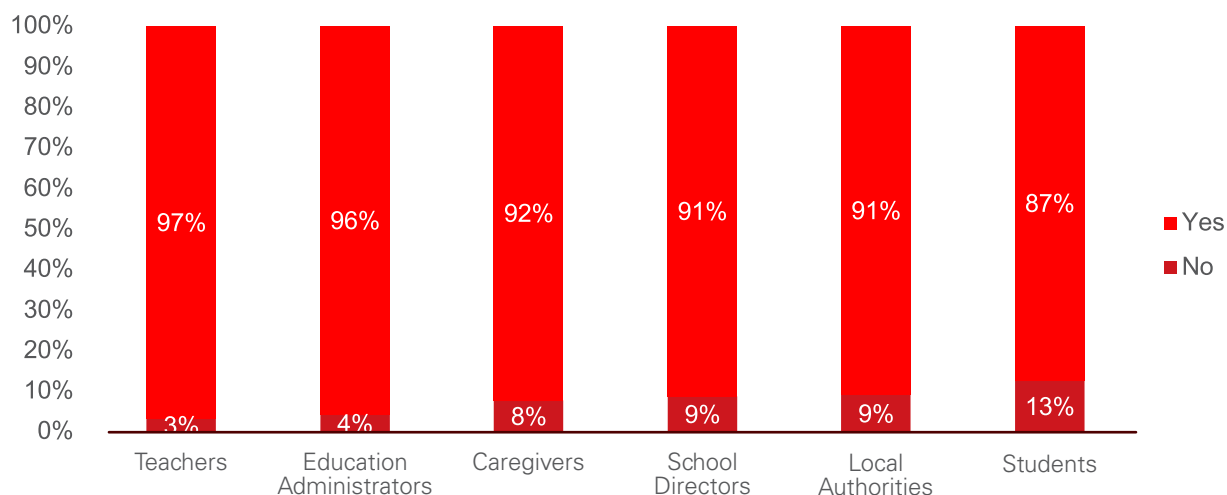
Figure 4: Number of prevention measures adopted by respondents in the last week



⁴³ Respondents were labeled as practicing healthy behaviours and prevention measures if they reported at least two out of 10 listed practices in the past week.

As shown in Figure 5, even though adopting prevention measures and practicing healthy behaviours was generally high among all respondents, it was lowest among students (87 per cent), compared to teachers (97 per cent), education administrators (96 per cent), and caregivers (92 per cent).

Figure 5: Percentage of respondents who practiced healthy behaviours to protect themselves from COVID-19, by type of respondent



Disability status is one of the acknowledged vulnerabilities that prohibit individuals from having the same opportunities of access and standards of living as other individuals. The analysis showed that the disability status of the respondent was found to be an important determinant for adopting prevention measures and practicing healthy behaviours. As presented in Table 7 below, when results were disaggregated by region, the respondents from mountainous regions demonstrated the lowest percentage of practicing healthy behaviours, at 88 per cent, compared to the rest of the regions, at 93 per cent or above.

Table 7: Percentage of respondents who practiced healthy behaviours to protect themselves from COVID-19, by sex, disability status, ID Poor status, and region

Independent variables		Not practicing prevention measures	Practicing prevention measures	Total	P-value
Sex	Male	9%	91%	7,372	0.002
	Female	7%	93%	7,619	
Disability status	Disability	15%	85%	1,822	0.000
	Non-disability	9%	91%	6,951	
ID Poor status	Valid ID Poor	12%	88%	1,535	0.009
	No ID Poor	10%	90%	6,836	
Region	Coastal	5.96%	94%	788	0.000
	Mountain	12.44%	88%	3,481	
	Plain	6.74%	93%	5,935	
	Tonle Sap	7.25%	93%	4,827	

Figure 6 presents different prevention measures and healthy behaviours practiced by survey respondents, by total respondents and by survey population type. The most frequently reported prevention measures and healthy behaviours practiced by survey respondents were washing hands more regularly (82 per cent), wearing a mask when going out (79 per cent), staying at home as much as possible/social distancing (79 per cent), and covering the nose and mouth with a tissue or bent elbow when coughing (73 per cent). Conversely, a substantially lower percentage of respondents (60 per cent) mentioned practicing behaviours such as avoiding contact with sick people, cleaning or disinfecting surfaces more regularly, or avoiding touching their faces, including nose, mouth and eyes.

Figure 6: Frequently practiced healthy behaviours, by total respondents and by survey population type



Most frequently reported measures across survey population types have not shown any major differences, however other independent variables such as disability status, poverty status and sex of respondents showed correlations with some of the types of practices adopted.

There were noteworthy differences between the percentage of respondents who reported practicing certain prevention measures when the results were disaggregated by household poverty status. The data revealed that there were substantial differences between households with or without valid ID Poor cards and the practice of almost all the listed prevention measures and healthy behaviours. A higher percentage of respondents from the no ID Poor status than the valid ID Poor status reported frequently practicing prevention measures. For example, staying home as much as possible and social distancing to protect oneself was practiced by a higher percentage of respondents from households with no ID Poor card than respondents from households with a valid ID Poor card (76 per cent versus 73 per cent). There were also substantial differences between the adoption of almost all the listed prevention measures and healthy behaviours: a higher percentage of respondents from no ID Poor status versus valid ID Poor status reported frequently practicing prevention measures.

Respondents who self-identified as having or not having a disability reported significantly different levels of practicing some of the prevention measures: washing hands more regularly (73 versus 81 per cent), covering nose and mouth with a tissue or elbow when coughing (62 versus 68 per cent), wearing a mask when going out (70 versus 75 per cent), and physical distancing from others when outside (50 versus 54 per cent). More details will be available in the annex to the report.

Access to functional WASH facilities

In addition to having sufficient knowledge of transmission and practicing preventative behaviours, access to functioning WASH facilities is equally important. This can create an enabling environment for people to put knowledge into practice and to be able to reduce the transmission of diseases in general, and in this case to protect themselves from COVID-19. The respondents were asked to identify the types of WASH facilities and materials they had access to at home, school and work, depending on the type of population. For the purposes of this study, functioning WASH facilities are defined as having access to water and soap.



Overall, 71 per cent of student households have functioning WASH facilities, with access to both water and soap at home; 69 per cent of students, teachers, teacher trainees and educators reported having access to both at school; and 86 per cent of education administrators have functional WASH facilities at work.

Different types of populations targeted in this study responded to the question on access to WASH facilities at applicable access points: at home, school or work. Students and caregivers were asked about their access both at home and at school, while teachers and school directors were asked about their access at the school level, and education administrators were asked about access at the work level. Table 8 provides details on access to WASH facilities, by type and access point.

Table 8: Hygiene facilities at different access points: home, school or work

WASH facilities	Home	School	Work
Hand-washing facilities available	60%	79%	86%
Latrine	79%	89%	86%
Soap	92%	86%	90%
Water	73%	75%	90%
Cleaning products	50%	58%	72%
Access to improved water supply for drinking	74%	48%	77%
Hand sanitizer	60%	57%	93%
Face masks	48%	36%	77%
None of the above	0%	1%	0%
Total	9,183	13,688	925

Students' access to WASH facilities was analysed individually by the type of facility at home. The highest proportion of students, 92 per cent, reported having access to soap at home, followed by 79 per cent having access to a latrine at home, 73 per cent having access to improved water supply for drinking, and 74 per cent having access to running water at home. The lowest percentage of student households was found to have access to face masks, 48 per cent, and cleaning products, 50 per cent.

In a school setting, as reported by all three types of respondents (students, teachers and school directors), the most accessible WASH facilities were reported as latrines, 89 per cent, soap, 86 per cent, and handwashing facilities, 79 per cent, while the least accessible facilities at the school level were identified as availability of face masks, 36 per cent, improved water supply for drinking, 48 per cent, and cleaning products, 58 per cent. At the work level, as reported by education administrators, access was at least the same or a lot higher for all the listed types of facilities.

The level of access to some WASH facilities at school was reported to be higher than at home. For example, the percentage of respondents who had access to hand-washing facilities at home was 60 per cent, compared to 79 per cent at school. Access to a latrine at home was 79 per cent, compared to 89 per cent school, and access to cleaning products was 50 per cent at home compared to 58 per cent at school. Conversely, access to improved water supply for drinking appeared to be a lot higher at home, 74 per cent, than at school, 48 per cent, along with hand sanitizer, face masks and soap.

Table 9: Hygiene facilities at school, by respondent type

WASH facilities	Student/ caregiver	School director	Teacher	P-value
Hand-washing facilities available	75%	89%	86%	0
Latrine	88%	92%	91%	0
Soap	83%	93%	92%	0
Water	71%	87%	79%	0
Cleaning products	54%	64%	65%	0
Access to improved water supply for drinking	45%	56%	56%	0
Hand sanitizer	47%	83%	74%	0
Face masks	26%	59%	52%	0
None of the above	1%	0%	0%	0
Total	9,010	1,089	3,589	

Access to WASH facilities at schools was disaggregated by respondent type, so as to compare the level of access reported by students separately. This was to avoid higher levels of access reported by teachers and school directors at school level skewing the average. There were differences in access to facilities reported by all respondent types. A considerably higher percentage of teachers and/or school directors reported accessibility to all facilities compared to students, such as access to hand-washing facilities at school (89 per cent of school directors versus 75 per cent of students), soap (93 per cent of school directors versus 83 per cent of students), access to hand sanitizers (83 per cent of school directors and 74 per cent of teachers versus only 47 per cent of students), and access to face masks (59 per cent of school directors versus 26 per cent of students) as shown in Table 9 above.

The significantly different levels of access reported by students and teachers/school directors, especially for WASH infrastructure such as hand-washing facilities, present interesting findings and the results should be investigated further to see whether students were not offered the same facilities as teachers and directors at school. Low levels of face mask access and the different levels of access reported by students versus their teachers and school directors could be explained by a possible lack of knowledge: before the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures, not having access to face masks at school could be considered normal, as this was not a basic school health need, and even if schools are now equipped with all COVID-19 related prevention supplies, respondents might be unaware of this, as schools were still closed at the time of the assessment.

Table 10: Hygiene facilities at home or school, by disability status

WASH Facilities	Home			School		
	Disability	Non-disability	P-value	Disability	Non-disability	P-value
Hand-washing facilities available	56%	60%	0.001	73%	76%	0.013
Latrine	73%	81%	0.000	85%	89%	0.000
Soap	88%	93%	0.000	79%	84%	0.000
Water	66%	75%	0.000	65%	73%	0.000
Cleaning products	44%	52%	0.000	52%	55%	0.010
Access to improved water supply for drinking	68%	75%	0.000	41%	45%	0.002
Hand sanitizer	56%	61%	0.000	46%	47%	0.794
Face masks	42%	50%	0.000	28%	25%	0.016
None of the above	0%	0%	0.572	1%	1%	0.065
Total	1,835	7,006		1,803	6,881	

Disability status was found to correlate with the level of access to WASH facilities both at home and at school (except for equal access to hand sanitizer at the school level). This put students who identified as having a disability in a more vulnerable position regarding staying safe and adopting healthy measures. The status of disability had a greater impact on the level of students' access at home versus at school. As shown in Table 10 above, students identifying as having difficulties reported significantly lower levels of access to certain WASH facilities at home than at their school: 56 per cent of students reported the availability of hand washing facilities at home versus 73 per cent at school, and 73 per cent reported the availability of latrines at home versus 85 per cent at school.

Table 11: Hygiene facilities at home or school, by ID Poor status

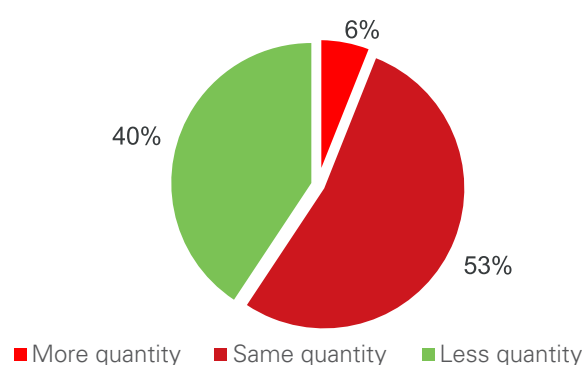
WASH facilities	Home			School		
	Valid ID Poor	No ID Poor	P-value	Valid ID Poor	No ID Poor	P-value
Hand-washing facilities available	57%	60%	0.008	74%	76%	0.113
Latrine	67%	82%	0.000	87%	89%	0.029
Soap	91%	92%	0.129	83%	84%	0.329
Water	71%	73%	0.104	70%	72%	0.073
Cleaning products	42%	52%	0.000	48%	56%	0.000
Access to improved water supply for drinking	69%	75%	0.000	45%	45%	0.850
Hand sanitizer	45%	63%	0.000	42%	47%	0.000
Face masks	38%	51%	0.000	22%	27%	0.000
None of the above	0%	0%	0.663	1%	1%	0.415
Total	1,552	6,885		1,512	6,768	

Differences in access to WASH facilities at home between students from households with or without ID Poor card status was observed both for the availability of WASH infrastructure (hand-washing facilities, latrines, improved water sources) and equipment and materials that need to be purchased (cleaning products, hand sanitizers and face masks). As shown in Table 11, ID Poor households reported lower access to these facilities compared with households that did not hold ID Poor cards. Access to WASH infrastructures at the school level did not show any differences for students from poorer households, as schools provide students with more equal access regardless of the ID Poor status. Conversely, the level of access to certain equipment and materials, such as cleaning products, hand sanitizer and face masks, was not found to be equal even at the school level. The data needs further exploration to understand the underlying reasons, for instance lower levels of access even at the school level might indicate that students are asked to pay for these products.

Student access to food and nutrition

The effects of protracted school closures on children's food and nutrition has been a worrying consequence of the multi-dimensional impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many children around the world, especially the most vulnerable, benefit from school feeding programmes and it is important to understand changes in access to food and nutrition for children during school closures. This is also exacerbated by high levels of household income loss due to the pandemic in general. The findings could help mitigate the situation through specific policy focus.

Figure 7: Changes in access to food in quantity



As shown in Figure 7, around 53 per cent of students and caregivers reported that their households had access to the same quantity of meals per day before and during the pandemic, while 40 per cent of households reported having less food than before COVID-19.

Table 12: Impact on food quantity, by school level

Access to food	Pre-school	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Teacher education institution	Non-formal education
More quantity	4%	4%	10%	6%	2%	9%
Same quantity	45%	49%	66%	65%	57%	44%
Less quantity	51%	47%	25%	29%	40%	46%
Total	2,454	1,808	1,842	1,139	1,271	539

P=0.000

As shown in Table 12, changes in the quantity of food in the household varied between different types of respondents. A larger percentage of household respondents, such as caregivers of pre-school and primary students (51 per cent and 47 per cent, respectively) and NFE students (46 per cent) reported having access to less food than before the pandemic. Access to food for pre-school, primary and NFE student households declined more than the average of all respondents (40 per cent). Lower and upper secondary student households were less effected in terms of food quantity and number of meals per day, before and during the pandemic. Pre-schools in the study included community pre-schools and NFE centres, which are generally located in less advantaged areas and might account for the changes in access to food across respondent types.

Table 13: Impact on food quantity, by respondent type, gender, ID Poor status

Access to food	Valid ID Poor	No ID Poor
More quantity	4%	5%
Same quantity	41%	57%
Less quantity	54%	38%
Total	1,535	6,815

P=0.000

Table 13 demonstrates that ID Poor status exacerbated the level of access to food as expected: 54 per cent of households with a valid ID Poor card had less access to food during the pandemic compared to all other variables, while 38 per cent of households without an ID Poor card reported having access to less quantity of food.

Issues related to wellbeing of children: Protection, MHPSS and physical health Exposure to violence, abuse, or exploitation due to COVID-19 and school closures

Global evidence, including experiences from previous public health emergencies like the Ebola virus in West Africa from 2014 to 2016, showed that school closures contributed to increased rates of abuse and exploitation of children, with spikes in child labour, neglect, sexual abuse and teenage pregnancy.⁴⁴



20 per cent of boys and girls self-reported facing, or being at additional risk of, violence, abuse or exploitation due to school closures; 45 per cent of other types of respondents perceived that children would face additional protection risks due to COVID-19 and during school closures. Facing additional protection risks, as self-reported by students (secondary school age and older), was vastly different from the perceptions of supply-side education stakeholders.

The rapid assessment tried to understand the extent to which children in Cambodia had experienced or were likely to face threats to their safety and wellbeing. Overall, different respondents indicated concerns around increased risks of violence, abuse or exploitation due to COVID-19, particularly during school closures.

Students who self-identified as having a disability reported being more at risk of experiencing additional violence, abuse or exploitation (23 per cent) than those who self-identified as not having a disability (15 per cent). This trend was similar in specific types of protection risks: students with disability more frequently reported experiencing emotional abuse (8 per cent) than those without a disability (3 per cent), engaging in child-labour activities (11 per cent versus 5 per cent), and experiencing physical abuse (7 per cent versus 2 per cent).

⁴⁴ UNICEF, (20 March 2020). COVID-19: Children at heightened risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence amidst intensifying containment measures. Media release, retrieved 14 October 2020 from: <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/covid-19-children-heightened-risk-abuse-neglect-exploitation-and-violence-amidst>



Overall, 43 per cent of all respondents perceived that boys were at risk of experiencing additional protection-related risks due to COVID-19 school closures, while only 23 per cent of boys self-reported facing additional risks.

Figure 8: Violence, abuse and exploitation risk factors for boys, as perceived by different respondents

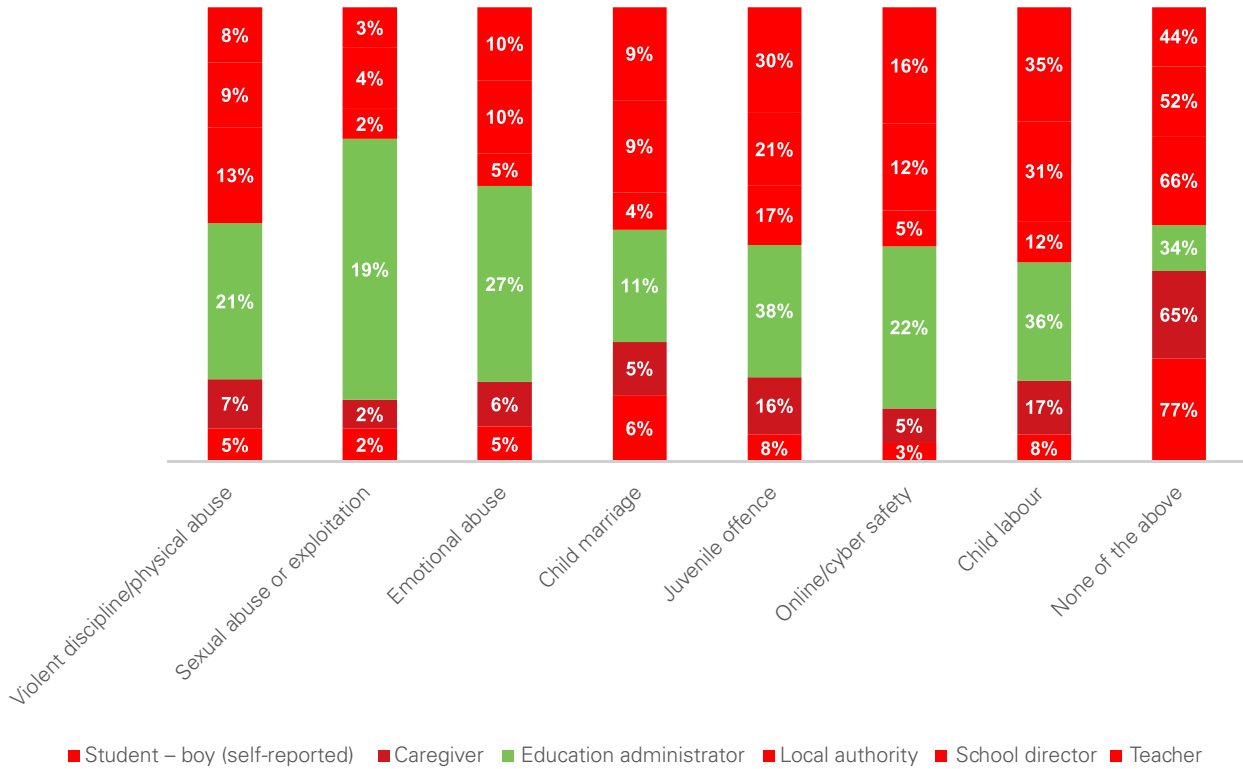


Figure 8 illustrates the wide range of risk factors that boys can be vulnerable to, as perceived by the different respondent types, and self-reported by boys. However, there were substantial differences between the perspectives of supply-side education respondents (education administrators at national and sub-national levels, school directors and teachers) and demand-side respondents (students and caregivers). More specifically, while 23 per cent of boys who self-reported having or expecting to experience additional risks, 34 per cent of local administrators, 35 per cent of caregivers, 48 per cent of school directors, 56 per cent of teachers, and 66 per cent of education administrators at central, provincial and district levels perceived the same.



Overall, 36 per cent of all respondents perceived that girls were at risk of experiencing additional protection risks due to COVID-19 school closures, while only 17 per cent of girls self-reported facing additional risks.

Figure 9: Violence, abuse and exploitation risk factors for girls, as perceived by different respondents

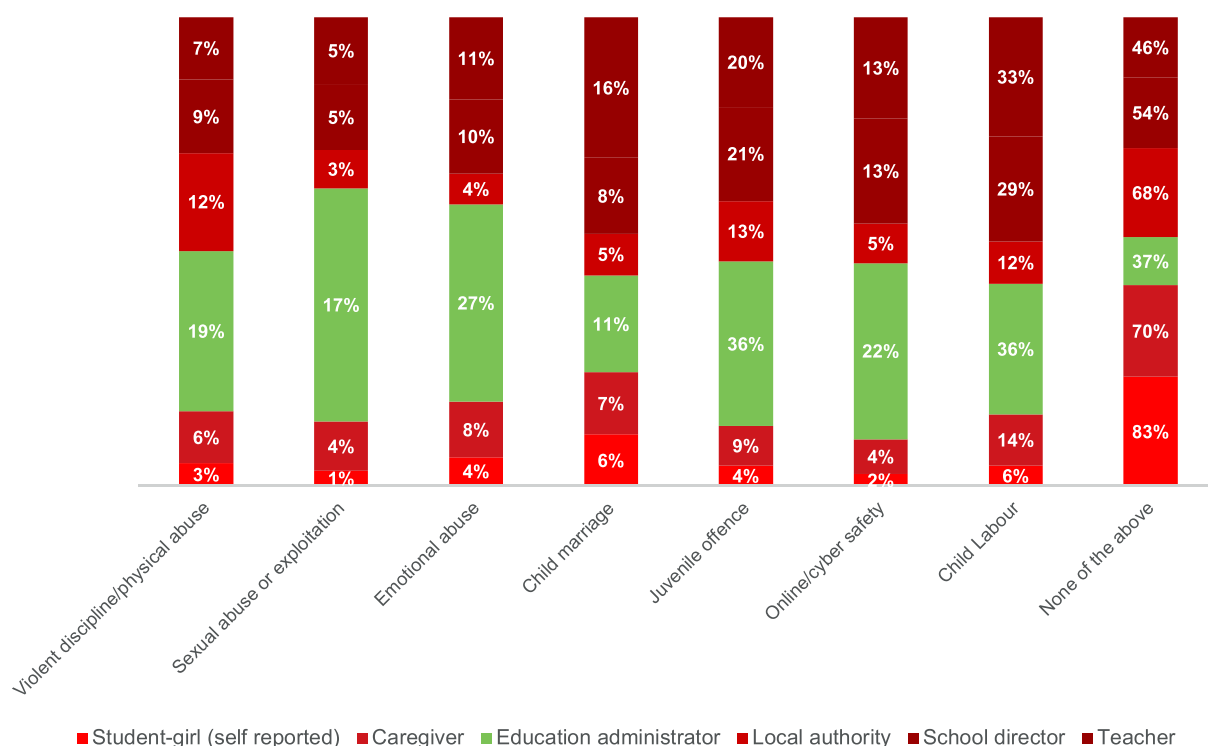


Figure 9 illustrates the wide range of risk factors that girls can be vulnerable to, as perceived by different respondent types, and self-reported by girls. There are again differences in the perspectives of supply-side education respondents and students themselves, as well as caregivers. While 17 per cent of girls self-reported that they had or were likely to experience additional risks, 30 per cent of caregivers and 32 per cent of local administrators perceived the same. A significantly higher percentage of education administrators, 63 per cent, teachers, 54 per cent, and school directors, 46 per cent, perceived that girls would face additional risks.

Risk of engaging in child labour was the most frequently reported concern for both boys and girls (on average 25 per cent for both), as well as risk factors related to emotional and/or sexual abuse and neglect (between 10 per cent and 11 per cent for both).

There were differences in the type of risk factors to which boys and girls could be vulnerable. Approximately 57 per cent of respondents did not highlight any additional risk factors that boys might experience during the pandemic, 26 per cent of respondents identified that boys might be at a higher risk of engaging in child labour, 23 per cent of respondents highlighted the risk of juvenile offences by boys (association with gangs, substance abuse, stealing, viewing pornographic material), followed by identifying boys to be at risk of abuse by receiving a sexual message/inappropriate content online (11 per cent), experiencing emotional abuse/neglect (10 per cent), and experiencing violent discipline/physical abuse (9 per cent).

Approximately 64 per cent of the respondents did not highlight any additional risk factors that girls might experience during the pandemic. However, 24 per cent of respondents identified that girls might be at a higher risk of engaging in child labour, 17 per cent highlighted the risk of juvenile offences by girls, 11 per cent highlighted girls being at risk of emotional abuse/neglect, and 10 per cent of girls were perceived to be at risk of child marriage and/or abuse with inappropriate messages/content online.

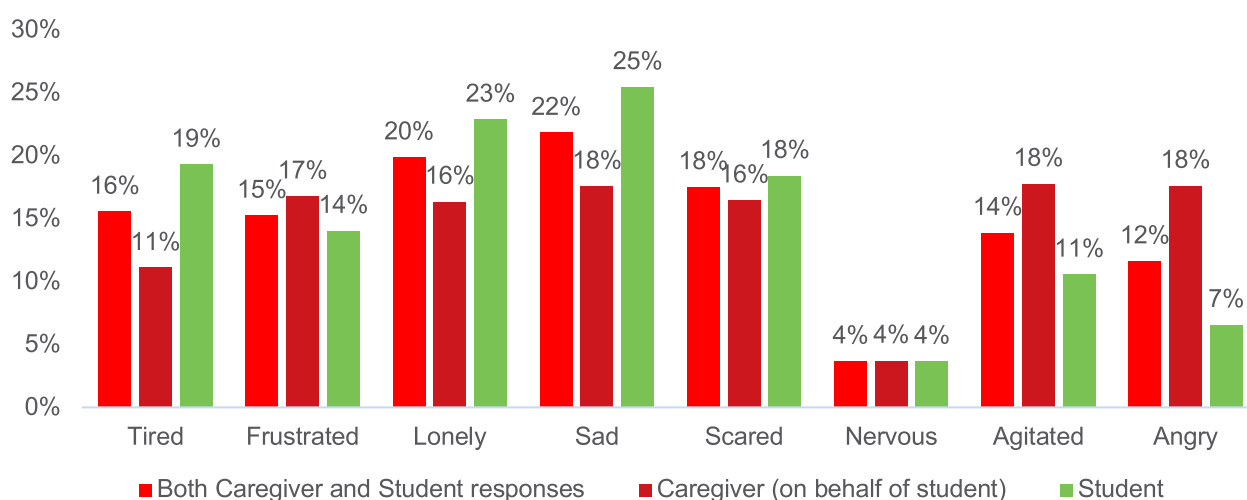
Student mental health and psychosocial distress due to COVID-19 and school closures

People all over the world are facing severe impacts on their mental health and psychosocial wellbeing due to the COVID-19 pandemic; some due to the immediate effects of the virus on health, others to the consequences of measures to contain the spread, such as physical isolation and suspension of services, as well as worries about loss of livelihoods and education.



Overall, 55 per cent of respondents were identified as experiencing at least one type of mental health or psychosocial stressor during the pandemic period. Specifically, 58 per cent of secondary school students self-reported experiencing at least one type of mental health and psychosocial stressor, and 52 per cent of caregivers reported that their children had shown signs of distress as a result of being out of school and/or the ongoing pandemic.

Figure 10: Mental health and psychosocial stressors experienced by students



The assessment tried to unpack the type of mental health and psychosocial distress by analysing emotional, cognitive or behavioural symptoms. The survey listed 10 different symptoms/stressors and respondents chose the ones they experienced during the pandemic, especially during school closures.

Figure 10 provides a summary of the frequently experienced stressors for all students, with the most recurrent emotions being reported as sadness, 22 per cent, loneliness, 20 per cent and fear, 18 per cent of students. The most frequently reported stressors among caregiver responses (on behalf of pre- and primary school children) include anger, 18 per cent, agitation, 18 per cent, sadness, 18 per cent, frustration, 17 per cent, and fear, 16 per cent. The most frequently self-reported symptoms for secondary students, teacher trainees and NFE students were sadness, 25 per cent, loneliness, 23 per cent, and tiredness 19 per cent. Anger, agitation and frustration observed among younger children could be explained as signs of acting out due to school closures and sudden changes to structure. This illustrates that younger children need more attention, as they cannot express feelings of loneliness, sadness and fear in the same way that older children in higher grade levels can.

Respondents who self-identified as having a disability experienced similar stressor to those of student and caregiver respondents, where the most frequently reported symptoms included sadness, 27 per cent, fear, 25 per cent, loneliness, 24 per cent, and tiredness, 22 per cent.

Figure 11: Percentage of students experiencing at least one type of mental health and psychosocial stressor

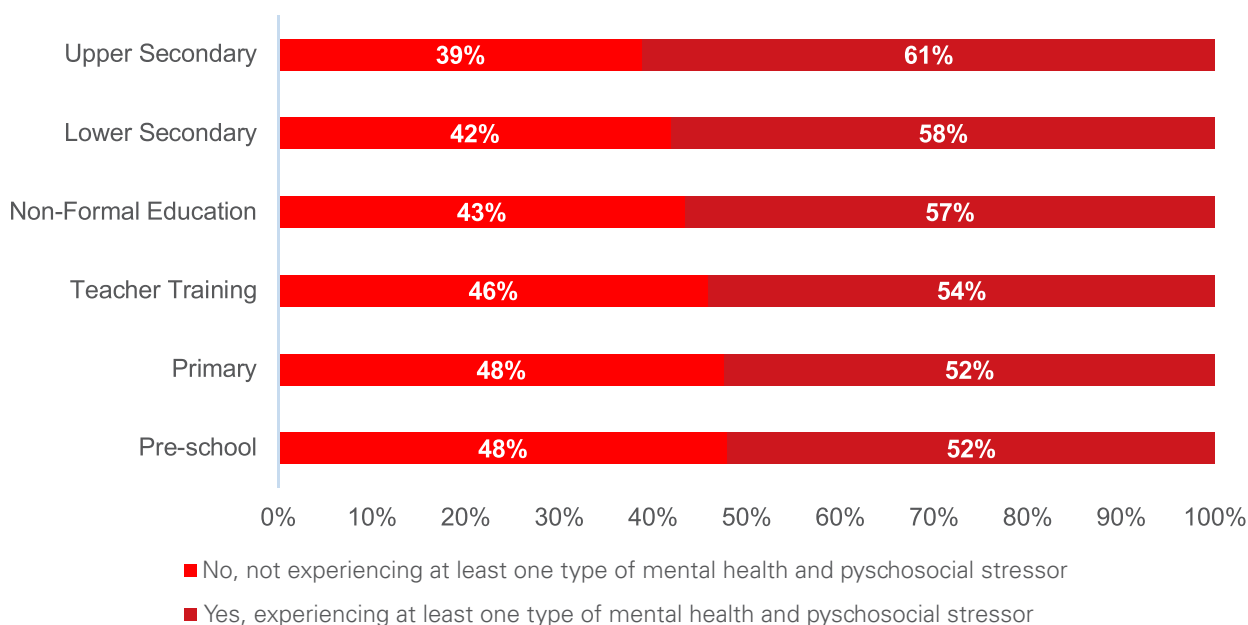


Figure 11 illustrates that the pandemic also affected the mental and psychosocial wellbeing of students across grade levels. Students from higher levels of education experienced more stressors. Approximately 61 per cent of those in upper secondary school experienced at least one mental health and psychosocial stressor, compared to 58 per cent in lower secondary school, 57 per cent of students in NFE centres, 54 per cent in TEIs, and 52 per cent in primary school and pre-school. Worry among higher grade students related to future and upcoming exams, as mentioned in other studies and observed in these findings.

Students and teacher trainees who self-identified with disability more frequently reported experiencing MHPSS distress than those who self-identified as not having a disability. Nearly 68 per cent of respondents who self-identified as having a disability (n.1,672) reported experiencing at least one stressor, compared to 52 per cent of respondents who self-identified as not having a disability (n.6,351).

Analysis by geography illustrates some differences in the extent to which students' mental and psychological wellbeing was affected. Nearly 64 per cent of the respondents from coastal regions and 57 per cent from the Tonle Sap region experienced at least one stressor, compared to 55 per cent of respondents from the mountain region and 52 per cent from the plain region.



The most frequently reported stressors among students include sadness, 25 per cent; loneliness, 23 per cent; tiredness, 19 per cent; and fear, 18 per cent.

Supply-side respondent perspectives: Policy measures to minimize the impact of school closures on the health and wellbeing of students

One of the major objectives of this or any needs assessment is to contribute to the formulation of future evidence-based policy. While assessing the impacts of school closures on students and caregivers is vital to the creation of such policy, its efficacy relies on education stakeholders responsible for implementation. Therefore, this assessment reached out to education administration officials at both national and sub-national levels to gauge their attitudes towards policies that could be developed to minimize the negative impacts of school closures on the health and wellbeing of Cambodian students.

Table 14: Policy measures to minimize the impact of school closures on the health and wellbeing of students

Policy measures	Number of education administrators	Percentage of respondents
Guidelines/tips to parents/caregivers to support students' learning and provide mental health and psychosocial support	704	76%
Information campaigns/messages to prevent COVID-19 and ensure students' safety and wellbeing	690	75%
Set up national, sub-national or school level mechanisms to monitor student wellbeing/learning	507	55%
Organize home visits by teachers or other personnel to support students' progress and wellbeing	457	50%
Provide mental health and psychosocial support to students	120	13%
Provide mental health and psychosocial support to teachers to care for themselves	100	11%

Table 14 displays a list of six policy areas presented to national and sub-national education administrators which could help minimize the negative impacts of school closures on the health and wellbeing of students. Education administrators most frequently felt that policies which provided guidelines and advice to parents to support their students' learning and help them provide mental health and psychosocial support to their children would be the most beneficial (76 per cent). This was followed by raising awareness: 75 per cent of respondents selected policy measures around information campaigns and public messaging to help prevent COVID-19 and ensure student safety and wellbeing, while 55 per cent selected setting up national, sub-national or school level mechanisms to monitor student wellbeing and learning.

Economic impacts of COVID-19

As included in the 'OECD Employment Outlook 2020: Worker Security and the COVID-19 Crisis' report,⁴⁵ countries in Southeast Asia, including Cambodia, applied stringent containment and mitigation policies, which effectively limited the spread of the virus and limited the number of casualties. The OECD report asserts that the combination of great uncertainty, fear of infection, individual restraints following public guidelines and mandatory lockdowns, immediately produced a sharp contraction in economic activity, creating an impact on the labour market.

Changes to job status of caregivers/parents



77 per cent of the respondents did not have any changes to their job/work status due to COVID-19, however 16 per cent, while still having a job, either had to find another job or experienced a reduction in income.

Table 15: Changes to work status of caregivers/parents

Work status	Frequency	Per cent
No changes to work status due to COVID-19	3,201	77%
Continue job as before	2,896	70%
Did not have a job before COVID-19	305	7%
Changes to work status due to COVID-19	670	16%
Had to change jobs/find another job	151	4%
Working reduced hours and/or salary	519	12%
Loss of job, or inability to work due to sickness	306	7%
Total	4,177	100%

⁴⁵ OECD Employment Outlook 2020: Worker Security and the COVID-19 Crisis: OECD iLibrary. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 October 2020 from: <https://www.oecdilibrary.org/sites/1686c758-en/index.html?itemId=%2Fcontent%2Fpublication%2F1686c758-en>

As elaborated in Table 15, responses from caregivers indicate that 77 per cent did not have any changes to their work status due to COVID-19. Of these respondents, 90 per cent continued their previous jobs and 10 per cent who were unemployed pre-COVID continued to stay unemployed. However, of the 16 per cent (n.670) who experienced changes to their pre-COVID work status, 23 per cent had to find another job, and 77 per cent continued to work but with reduced hours and salary. Another 7 per cent lost their jobs or were unable to continue their jobs due to sickness during the COVID-19 pandemic. In other words, at the time of the assessment, 86 per cent of caregivers reported being employed, while 14 per cent of caregivers were unemployed.

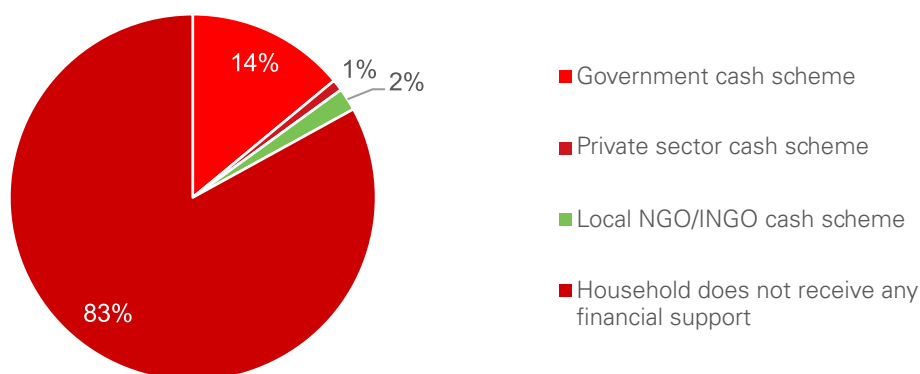
In analysing the economic impact on people with disabilities, 12 per cent of the respondents with disabilities reported losing their jobs or being unable to continue their jobs due to sickness, compared to 7 per cent of respondents without disabilities. For those respondents with ID Poor cards, 64 per cent reported that they could continue their jobs, compared to 71 per cent of non-ID poor card holders. However, 11 per cent of ID Poor card holders were unemployed even before the pandemic, compared to 6 per cent of the non-ID Poor card holders. Therefore, the overall unemployment situation illustrates that 80 per cent of caregivers in ID Poor households are now employed (compared to 89 per cent pre-COVID) versus 87 per cent of non-ID poor households, adding an extra burden to ID Poor households who were already suffering from lack of jobs and income.

While COVID-19 has impacted respondents across all geographies, between 73 per cent (in the plains region) and 82 per cent (in the coastal and mountainous regions) did not experience any changes to their professional status. However, 8 per cent of respondents in plains and Tonle Sap areas experienced job losses, compared to 6 per cent in mountain regions and 4 per cent in coastal regions. Approximately 18 per cent of the respondents in the plain region and 17 per cent in Tonle Sap area also experienced changes in work status (change in job or reduced income), compared to 14 per cent in coastal and 12 per cent in mountain regions.

Education sector respondents benefitting from social protection schemes

Globally and across all contexts, governments have attempted to mitigate the negative economic impacts of COVID-19 through offering different financial aid benefit packages to citizens most severely affected.

Figure 12: Percentage of households receiving financial support



In Cambodia, financial aid is provided to those most in need through various types of COVID-19 subsidies and cash assistance schemes, either from the government, the private sector or local and international NGOs. As displayed in Figure 12 above, 14 per cent of demand-side respondents (student households) reported receiving support from the government’s COVID-19 cash transfer scheme, followed by 2 per cent receiving support from a local or international NGO, and 1 per cent from a private sector cash scheme. Data also revealed that 31 per cent of households who have reported job losses and who are currently unemployed have received support versus 20 per cent of those who still have employment.

The analysis found that households with members who identified as having a disability in this assessment were more likely to receive cash support: 22 per cent versus 16 per cent of households without members with disabilities.

Receiving financial support through cash assistance schemes was highest among respondents from the Tonle Sap region, at approximately 19 per cent, followed by the coastal region at 16 per cent and around 13 per cent for both the plain and mountain regions.

Table 16: Financial support, by school level

Financial support received by respondents	Pre-school	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Teacher education institution	Non-formal education
Financial support from government cash scheme	18%	20%	11%	7%	6%	17%
Financial support from private sector cash scheme	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	5%
Financial support from local / international NGO cash scheme	2%	3%	2%	0%	0%	4%
No support received from any source	79%	75%	86%	91%	94%	76%
Total	2,332	1,722	1,687	1,065	1,208	490

There are significant differences between households receiving one form or another of financial support across school levels. As shown in Table 16 above, approximately 25 per cent of households with primary school age children and 21 per cent of households with pre-school students reported receiving some form of financial support, whereas fewer respondents in the upper levels of education reported receiving financial assistance: approximately 14 per cent for lower secondary, 9 per cent for upper secondary and 7 per cent for TEIs. The findings also reflect that households with children continuing school in secondary levels generally have higher levels of economic stability and income.

Impact of reduction of household income on children

Of the 9,015 respondents who answered this question, 61 per cent (n. 5,478) felt that children were required to contribute more to household chores since the school closures: 6 per cent (559) reported that children were now working full time, and 4 per cent (359) reported that children were now working part-time, while 29 per cent of students had not seen any changes to their work status, including increased contribution to household chores.

Table 17: Impact of reduction of household income on children – impact on boys and girls

Type of work	% of responses (Boys)	% of responses (Girls)
Working full-time	8%	5%
Working part-time	5%	3%
Children are required to contribute more to household chores	55%	65%
Children are not working or do not contribute more to household chores	32%	27%

When disaggregated by sex as displayed in Table 17, the data illustrates some significant differences, especially among the number of children required to contribute more to household chores since the school closures. Girls are being asked to contribute more than boys (65 per cent versus 55 per cent), however boys are 3 per cent more likely than girls (8 per cent compared to 5 per cent) to work full-time and 2 per cent more likely to work part-time (5 per cent compared to 3 per cent). Girls are still more likely to have additional duties at home or additional working arrangements overall that may take away from time previously spent learning (73 per cent girls versus 68 per cent boys).

Table 18: Impact of reduction of household income on children, by school level

Type of work	Pre-school	Primary	Lower-secondary	Upper-secondary	Teacher education institution	Non-formal education
Working full-time	4%	9%	6%	5%	5%	14%
Working part-time	3%	4%	5%	4%	5%	4%
Children are required to contribute more to household chores	27%	52%	81%	83%	84%	69%
Children are not working or do not contribute more to household chores	66%	35%	8%	8%	6%	13%

Table 18 displays the impact of reduction of household income on children, disaggregated by school level. Accordingly, students enrolled in lower and upper secondary grade levels are reporting either that they have started work or are contributing more to household chores. Among lower secondary students, approximately 11 per cent reported working full-time or part-time, approximately 80 per cent are contributing more to household chores, and only some 8 per cent reported not being affected by school closures in this regard. Upper secondary students are working slightly less during school closures, with almost 9 per cent working full-time or part-time, 83 per cent are contributing more to household chores, and again only 8 per cent did not report being affected in this regard. While secondary students are reporting the highest rates of either working full-time or part-time or contributing to household chores, nearly 9 per cent of primary school students are reporting working full-time, second only to 14 per cent of NFE students.

Distance learning during school closures

This section analyses the level of access, quality and effectiveness of distance learning across different platforms for students from pre-primary through secondary grade levels, and the infrastructure requirements and bottlenecks affecting learners, for example lack of caregiver engagement/support, access to learning materials and technology (TV, radio, computer devices, internet and electricity connectivity), appropriate learning spaces suitable for children with disabilities, etc.

The section will analyse access to ICT, basic learning materials and participation in distance learning programmes of MoEYS. It will then analyse barriers to accessing distance learning programmes, support for distance learning, and parental engagement to support student learning. Finally, it will include analysis on supplementary measures taken to ensure learning of vulnerable students.

Access to infrastructure, ICT, basic learning materials, and participation in distance learning programmes of MoEYS

Access to appropriate and reliable infrastructure, information technology, communication devices, and basic learning materials is a prerequisite for both the demand and supply sides of the education system to fully participate in alternative distance learning initiatives and ensure continuous learning. Globally, the level of access differs between learners, educators, administrators and authorities, depending on the available resources between and within countries, and between people of different socio-economic status and distinct vulnerability in the same country.

School closures due to COVID-19 have driven education systems around the world to provide alternative learning methods, largely through the use of technology, by adopting online teaching, or broadcasting lessons over national television and radio channels. Using technology was the most timely and easiest method of dissemination to initially mitigate the impacts on student learning loss. However, because of the rapidity of school closures, little consideration was given to the level of access to technology among the most vulnerable students, who most likely have lower levels of access.

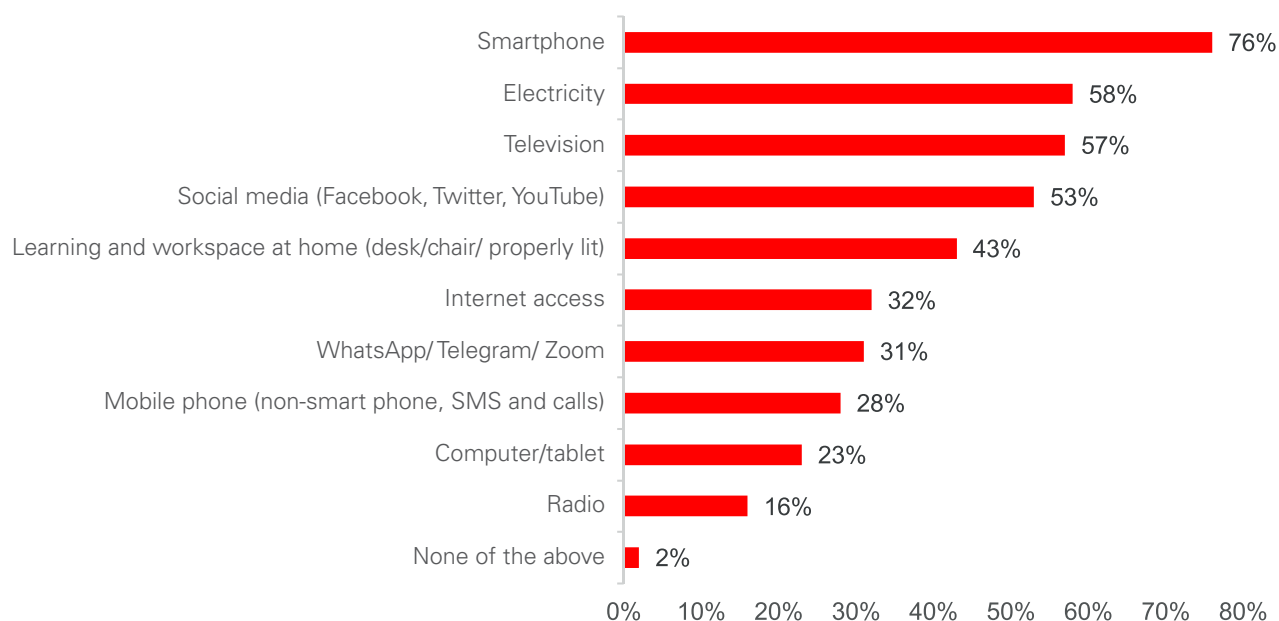
Therefore, it is important to assess the level of access, and barriers in access to infrastructure, ICT, basic learning materials and alternative distance learning methods, as well as available support systems and preferred modalities of support to increase the participation in and efficiency of alternative distance learning.

Access to ICT



76 per cent of respondents had access to smartphones; 58 per cent to electricity; 57 per cent to a television; 52 per cent to social media; and 43 per cent to a learning or work place that was properly lit and equipped with a desk and a chair at home. Only 16 per cent of respondents reported having access to a radio, and 23 per cent reported access to an individual computer or tablet.

Figure 13: Proportion of respondents with access to infrastructure, technology/devices in their homes to support distance learning by type



As elaborated in Figure 13 above, the highest percentage of respondents, 76 per cent, reported having access to smartphones, 58 per cent reported having access to electricity, followed by 57 per cent to television, 52 per cent to social media, and 43 per cent to a learning and work place that was properly lit and equipped with a desk and a chair at home. On the other hand, 32 per cent reported having access to internet, 23 per cent reported access to an individual computer or tablet, and only 16 per cent reported having access to a radio.

Table 19: Level of access to different types of ICT, by respondent type

Infrastructure, technology/ devices	Caregiver/ student	Teacher	School director	Education admin	Local authority	P-value
Smartphone	69%	86%	83%	93%	67%	0
Television	54%	69%	55%	61%	26%	0
Electricity	53%	67%	47%	83%	64%	0
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	45%	66%	55%	80%	37%	0
Learning and workspace at home (desk/chair/properly lit)	40%	49%	30%	59%	56%	0
Mobile phone (non-smart phone, SMS and calls)	28%	30%	20%	29%	39%	0
Internet access	26%	39%	28%	74%	35%	0
WhatsApp/Telegram/Zoom	21%	43%	39%	75%	15%	0
Radio	12%	21%	12%	22%	78%	0
Computer/tablet	12%	34%	31%	82%	25%	0
None of the above	3%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0
Other	2%	2%	3%	2%	0%	0
Total	9,092	3,570	1,076	923	311	

Table 19 presents the level of access to all types of technology and devices from all respondents (n. 14,972). The analysis was conducted to better understand the differences among various stakeholders. Although there were differences observed in the proportion of access to the same technologies between different types of respondents, the highest percentage of respondents across almost all respondent types reported having access to smartphones (with the exception of local authorities). Education administrators had the highest level of access to a smartphone, at 93 per cent, followed by teachers at 86 per cent, school directors at 83 per cent, and caregivers/students at 69 per cent.

Three out of the top four ICT infrastructure types or devices (smartphones, television, electricity, social media accounts) mentioned across respondent types were the same, except for local authorities for whom the top three were ranked slightly differently, with highest level of access to radio, followed by smartphones, electricity and learning and workspaces at home.

In terms of access to ICT devices such as personal computers and laptops, to the internet, and to communication applications such as WhatsApp, Telegram or Zoom, the proportion of education administrators who had access compared to other respondent types differed significantly.

While 74 per cent of education administrators have access to the internet, only 39 per cent of teachers, 28 per cent of school directors and 26 per cent of students have access to the internet. Similarly, computer or laptop ownership among education administrators was 82 per cent versus 34 per cent for teachers, 31 per cent for school directors and only 12 per cent for students. Student reporting of access to WhatsApp, Telegram or Zoom was lower than expected in general, and compared to others: 21 per cent of students versus 75 per cent of education administrators, 43 per cent of teachers and 39 per cent school directors. Having lower access to these communication applications compared to devices which can support them, and even social media accounts, could be related to awareness of these applications, rather than access. It could also be the result of low access to regular internet, given that these applications need fixed and reliable internet connections.

This is concerning because central level administrators communicate through these channels with sub-national authorities, all the way down to school level actors such as directors and teachers, who can then reach students/caregivers more regularly using these channels. The differences might pose additional challenges for both supply and demand sides to ensure and strengthen dissemination of knowledge and participation, and to monitor the effectiveness of alternative distance learning methods and materials tailored for students in each sub-sector. According to differences identified in access to ICT, measures could be taken to tailor the methods of dissemination for distance/accelerated and remedial learning materials for certain groups of students and learners.

As anticipated, differences in access to certain types of ICT were observed between the same type of respondents (students, teachers and directors) across different school levels, in addition to differences between respondent types. Higher levels of access to more advanced technology, such as smartphones, personal computers/laptops, social media, internet access, utilization of online messaging applications (WhatsApp, etc.) increases among students, teachers and school directors as school levels rise. Both higher proportions of lower and upper secondary students reported having access to proper learning and workspaces (47 and 54 per cent, respectively) compared to students in primary (36 per cent) and pre-school (33 per cent). On the other hand, access to television and radio were reported more commonly among pre- and primary school students compared to students in secondary school.

Table 20 illustrates the proportion of access to listed ICT for three types of respondents from different formal basic education school levels.

Table 20: Access to listed ICT among three types of respondents from different formal basic education school levels (*S=Student, T= Teacher, SD= School director)

School level / ICT Type	Pre-school			Primary			Lower-secondary			Upper-secondary		
	S*	T	SD	S	T	SD	S	T	SD	S	T	SD
Smartphone	60%	80%	86%	61%	84%	82%	70%	84%	81%	84%	90%	93%
Television	56%	66%	57%	59%	72%	55%	54%	72%	48%	47%	69%	67%
Social media	39%	60%	57%	34%	63%	48%	47%	63%	64%	60%	68%	74%
Learning and workspace at home	33%	42%	33%	36%	53%	28%	47%	53%	31%	54%	47%	39%
Electricity	61%	55%	51%	50%	67%	40%	46%	67%	50%	52%	65%	69%
Internet access	21%	29%	38%	18%	38%	21%	29%	38%	26%	36%	36%	51%
WhatsApp/ Telegram/ Zoom	8%	31%	34%	7%	32%	29%	23%	32%	51%	39%	52%	69%
Mobile phone	38%	39%	24%	37%	31%	18%	23%	31%	23%	18%	25%	25%
Radio	14%	22%	5%	12%	20%	10%	10%	20%	13%	8%	21%	20%
Computer/ tablet	8%	16%	29%	6%	21%	25%	6%	21%	32%	12%	43%	54%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	4%	4%	1%	2%	4%	2%	3%
None of the above	4%	1%	1%	4%	0%	3%	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%

Table 21: Level of access to ICT infrastructure and devices, by sex, disability and ID Poor status

Infrastructure/ ICT type	Gender		Disability status			ID Poor status			
	Male	Female	P-value	Disability	Non-disability	P-value	Valid ID Poor	No ID Poor	P-value
WhatsApp/ Telegram/ Zoom	32%	29%	0.000	17%	22%	0.000	9%	23%	0.000
Learning and workspace at home (desk/ chair/ properly lit)	41%	45%	0.000	33%	43%	0.000	27%	44%	0.000
Television	57%	58%	0.040	48%	55%	0.000	42%	57%	0.000
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	54%	52%	0.104	38%	47%	0.000	31%	48%	0.000

Infrastructure/ ICT type	Gender		Disability status			ID Poor status			
	Male	Female	P-value	Disability	Non-disability	P-value	Valid ID Poor	No ID Poor	P-value
Electricity	59%	58%	0.250	46%	56%	0.000	46%	56%	0.000
Smartphone	78%	74%	0.000	66%	70%	0.002	54%	73%	0.000
Internet access	34%	31%	0.000	24%	27%	0.009	16%	28%	0.000
Mobile phone (non-smart phone, SMS and calls)	28%	28%	0.641	26%	28%	0.036	32%	27%	0.000
Computer/tablet	28%	18%	0.000	10%	12%	0.101	5%	13%	0.000
Radio	18%	15%	0.000	13%	12%	0.472	14%	12%	0.136
None of the above	2%	2%	0.972	2%	3%	0.749	6%	2%	0.000
Total	7,343	7,589		1,812	6,950		1,527	6,830	

As shown in Table 21, all other independent variables were found to correlate with the level of access to ICT infrastructure and devices, such as sex, disability and ID Poor status. Most clear differences were observed between households with or without a valid ID Poor card. The highest proportion of respondents without access to any of the mentioned infrastructure were from households with valid ID Poor cards, at 6 per cent, compared to 2 per cent of non-ID poor households. Lower poverty status as determined by the ID Poor card resulted in significantly lower levels of access to all types of infrastructure and ICT, except for access to radio ($p=0.136$). Disability status also correlated with access to 6 out of 10 listed ICT types. Lower levels of access were reported by people who had self-reported as having a disability versus people with no disability. Access to learning and work spaces was 33 per cent for people with disability compared to 43 per cent for those without disability. Similarly, there were clear differences in access to social media (38 per cent with disability versus 47 per cent without), television (48 per cent with disability versus 55 per cent without), and WhatsApp/Telegram/Zoom (17 per cent with disability versus 22 per cent without). Sex of the respondent also correlated with the level of access. The largest differences were observed across males and females with access to a personal computer/laptop (28 per cent versus 18 per cent), smartphones (78 per cent versus 74 per cent), and internet access (34 per cent versus 31 per cent).

Access to basic learning materials at home



77 per cent of all students have access to at least one type of basic learning material at home.

Basic learning materials are as important as infrastructure and technology for ensuring access to distance learning, and facilitating self-study and follow-up to continue learning. In this assessment, the basic learning materials were divided into three categories: basic writing materials, school textbooks, and additional reference and reading materials. The access was measured in two dimensions, as self-reported by students and caregivers on the actual ownership of or access to materials at home, and as perceptions of the education administrators, school directors, teachers and local authorities on access that students have at home.

Figure 14: Student access to basic learning materials: Actual vs. perceptions

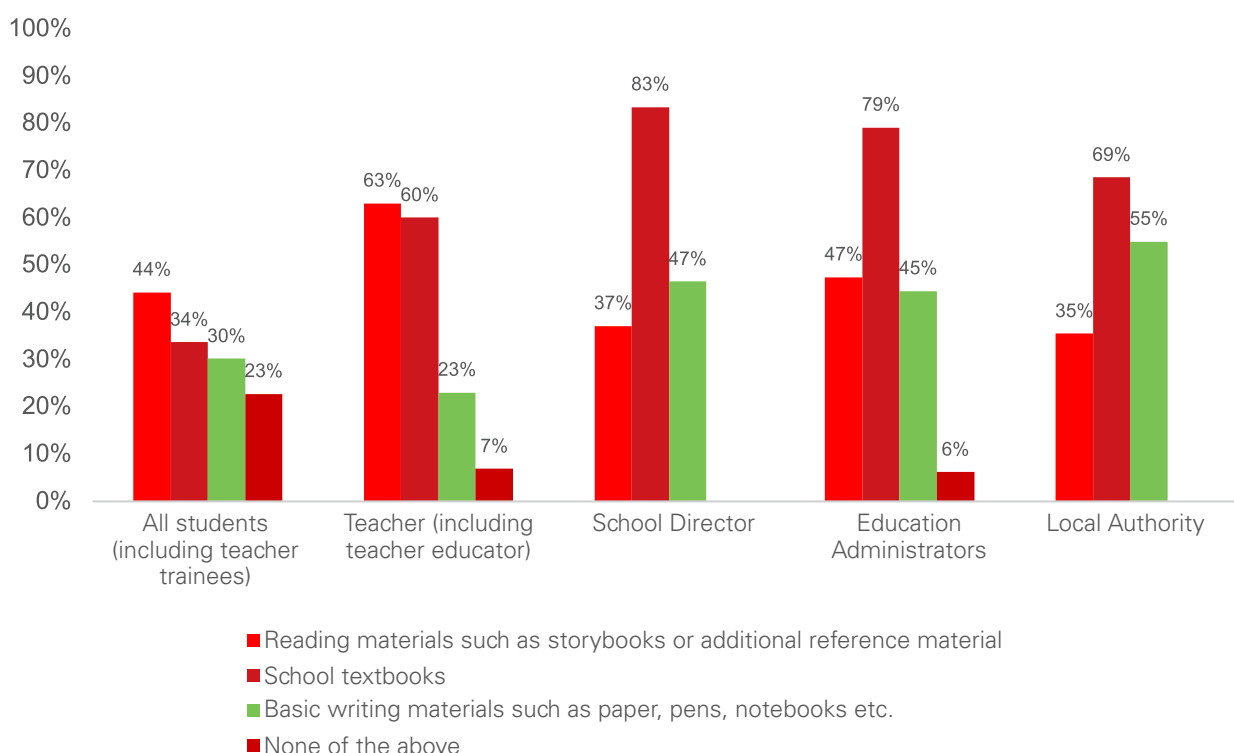
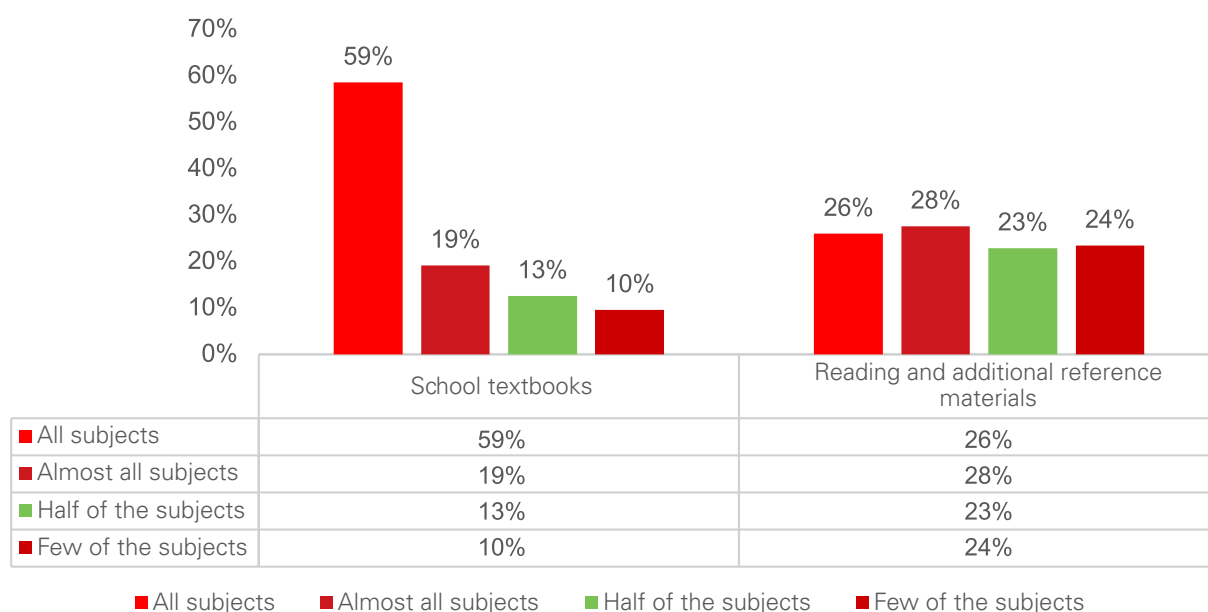


Figure 14 illustrates student access to basic learning materials as reported by students themselves or their caregivers, compared to supply-side actors in the education system, such as teachers, school directors, education administrators and local authorities. Overall, 44 per cent of students reported reading and additional reference materials as being most accessible, followed by school textbooks (34 per cent) and basic writing materials (30 per cent).

There was a significant difference between the actual ownership of basic learning materials that the students had access to, and the percentages reported by the supply-side actors according to what they perceived as students having access at home. Of the students who responded (n. 8755), 77 per cent had access to at least one type of basic learning material at home, while 23 per cent did not have access to any of the materials. Conversely, as perceived by supply-side stakeholders, the percentage of students without any access to basic learning materials was a lot lower, between zero (school director and local authority) and 7 per cent (teachers).

Figure 15: Level of access to school textbooks and reading/additional reference materials among students who have access at home



Students who reported having access to school textbooks and reading/additional reference materials at home were asked to rate the level of access in terms of availability of subjects covered (see Figure 15). Of the students who had school textbooks (n. 2,867), 78 per cent had them for almost all or all subjects, 13 per cent had them covering half of the subjects, and 10 per cent had them for a few of the subjects. Of the students who had access to additional reading and reference materials at home (n. 3,656), 54 per cent had materials that covered almost all or all subjects, 23 per cent had almost half of the subjects, and 24 per cent had materials that covered a few of the subjects.

Table 22: Percentage of students with access to basic learning materials at home, by school level

Learning materials	Pre-school	Primary	Lower-secondary	Upper-secondary	Teacher trainee	Non-formal education	P-value
Basic writing materials, such as paper, pens, notebooks etc.	30%	33%	26%	27%	29%	45%	0
School textbooks	12%	48%	45%	45%	23%	48%	0
Reading materials, such as storybooks or additional reference material	28%	39%	55%	67%	52%	36%	0
None of the above	43%	18%	10%	10%	23%	19%	0

When the level of access to basic learning materials was cross-checked across different school levels, shown in Table 22, secondary students had higher access to additional reading and reference materials (55 per cent for lower secondary and 67 per cent for upper secondary) compared to pre-school (28 per cent) and primary school students (39 per cent). Access to textbooks was 45 per cent for both lower and upper secondary, 48 per cent for primary, and 12 per cent for pre-school. Although pre- and primary school students reported higher access to basic writing materials, access at all levels were low: 26 per cent of lower secondary and 33 per cent of primary. Surprisingly, NFE students compared to basic education students had the same or higher levels of access to basic writing materials and school textbooks but lacked access to any additional reading or reference materials. Close to half of the pre-school children, 43 per cent, had no access to any of the listed basic learning materials, which is a concerning finding.

Access to and participation in distance learning programmes of MoEYS

The assessment measured the level of student access to various distance learning programmes, frequency of utilization and level of effort, as well as the barriers they faced in accessing these programmes and the types of alternatives to online learning that were pursued.

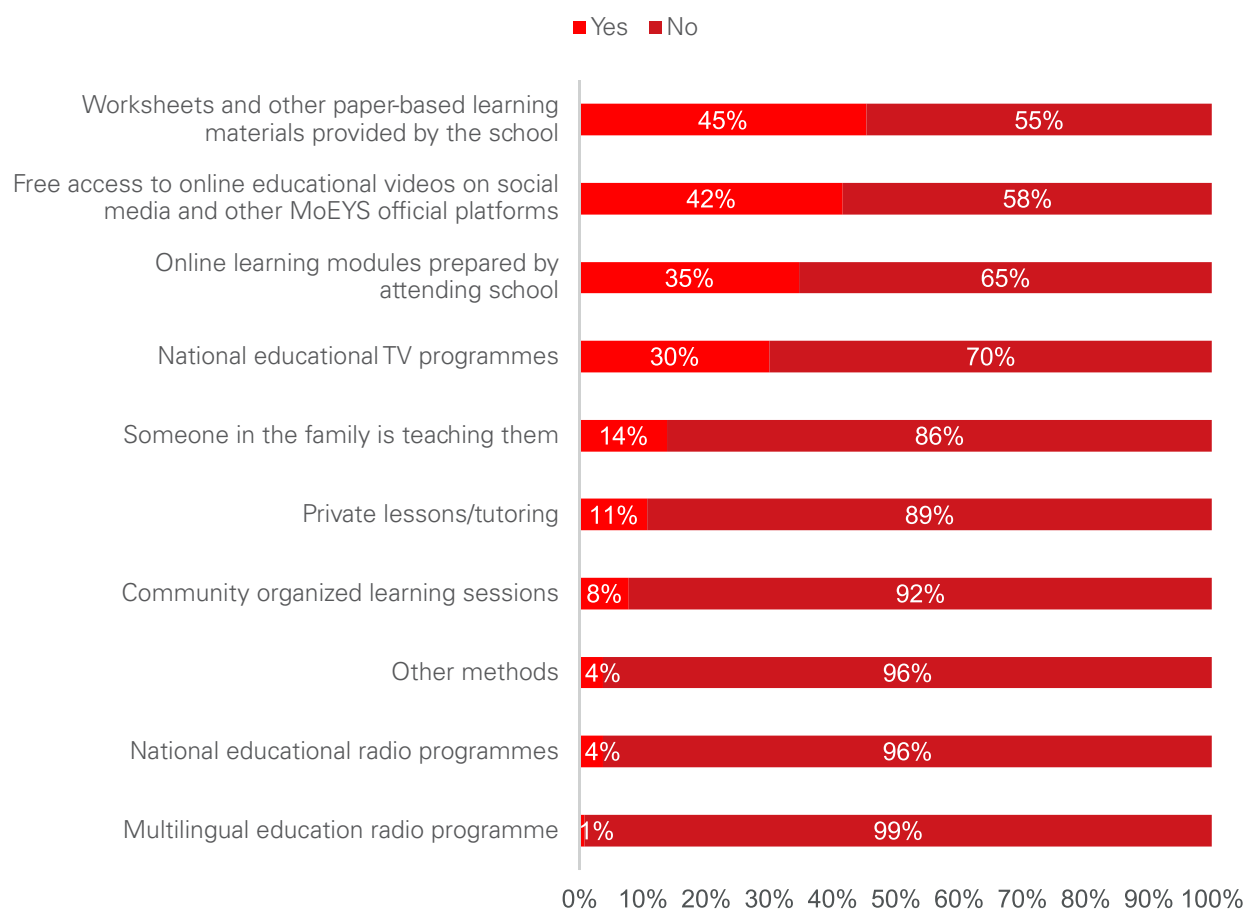


Overall, the findings show that approximately 70 per cent of students had accessed at least one of the distance learning programmes of MoEYS since the school closures. While 72 per cent of students from non-ID poor households reported accessing at least one alternative distance method, only 57 per cent of students from ID Poor households reported accessing distance learning.

Of all students interviewed, including NFE students and teacher trainees (n.9,233), 70 per cent reported having used at least one of the alternative distance learning methods since the school closures: 41 per cent of students reported using only one type of alternative distance learning method, while 25 per cent reported using two methods, and 33 per cent reported using three methods.

As elaborated in Figure 16, of the 70 per cent engaged in distance learning, 45 per cent used worksheets and other paper-based learning materials provided by their school, 42 per cent made use of the free access to online education videos posted on official MoEYS social media and other platforms for continuous learning, 35 per cent accessed online learning modules prepared by the school they attend, and 30 per cent reported accessing distance learning through national TV education broadcasts. Apart from the top four most commonly reported alternative distance learning methods, 14 per cent were taught by someone in the family, 11 per cent received some sort of private tutoring, 8 per cent participated in community organized teaching sessions, and the lowest proportion of students reported having used national radio and multilingual radio education programmes, at 4 per cent and 1 per cent, respectively.

Figure 16: Top three most frequently used distance learning methods reported by students



Students who reported using one of the alternative distance learning methods were asked to provide more detail on the level of effort and engagement: 35 per cent who engaged in distance learning accessed it around four to five days per week, 30 per cent two to three days per week, 22 per cent every day, and only 13 per cent engaged in distance learning once per week (refer to Figure 17). Although the access seemed to be frequent, the level of effort was found to be lower than suggested by teachers, or according to standards: 37 per cent only spent between 30 minutes to one hour per week on distance learning, 26 per cent spent between one and three hours, 16 per cent spent more than five hours, 12 per cent between three and five hours, and 8 per cent spent less than 30 minutes (refer to Figure 18). Compared to the actual level of effort reported by students, teachers stated that they believed children actually accessed distance learning 3.8 hours per week (an average of all teacher responses) whereas the suggestion was 4.4. hours per week.

Figure 17: Percentage of students by frequency of accessing distance learning each week

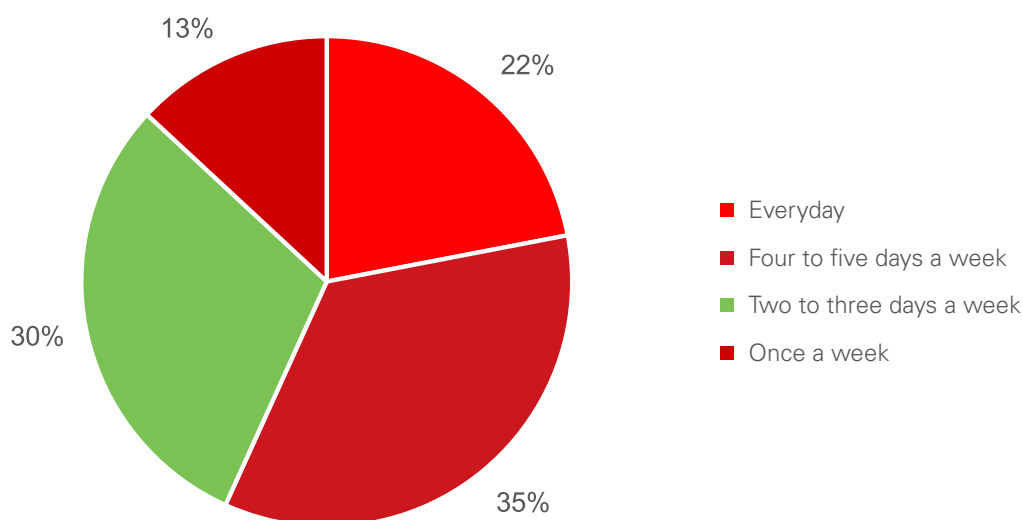
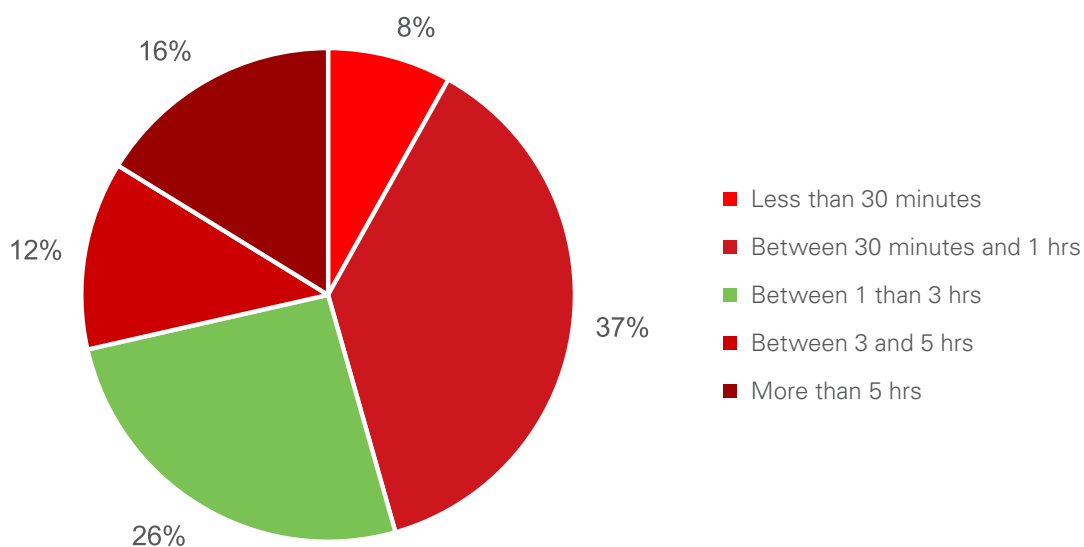
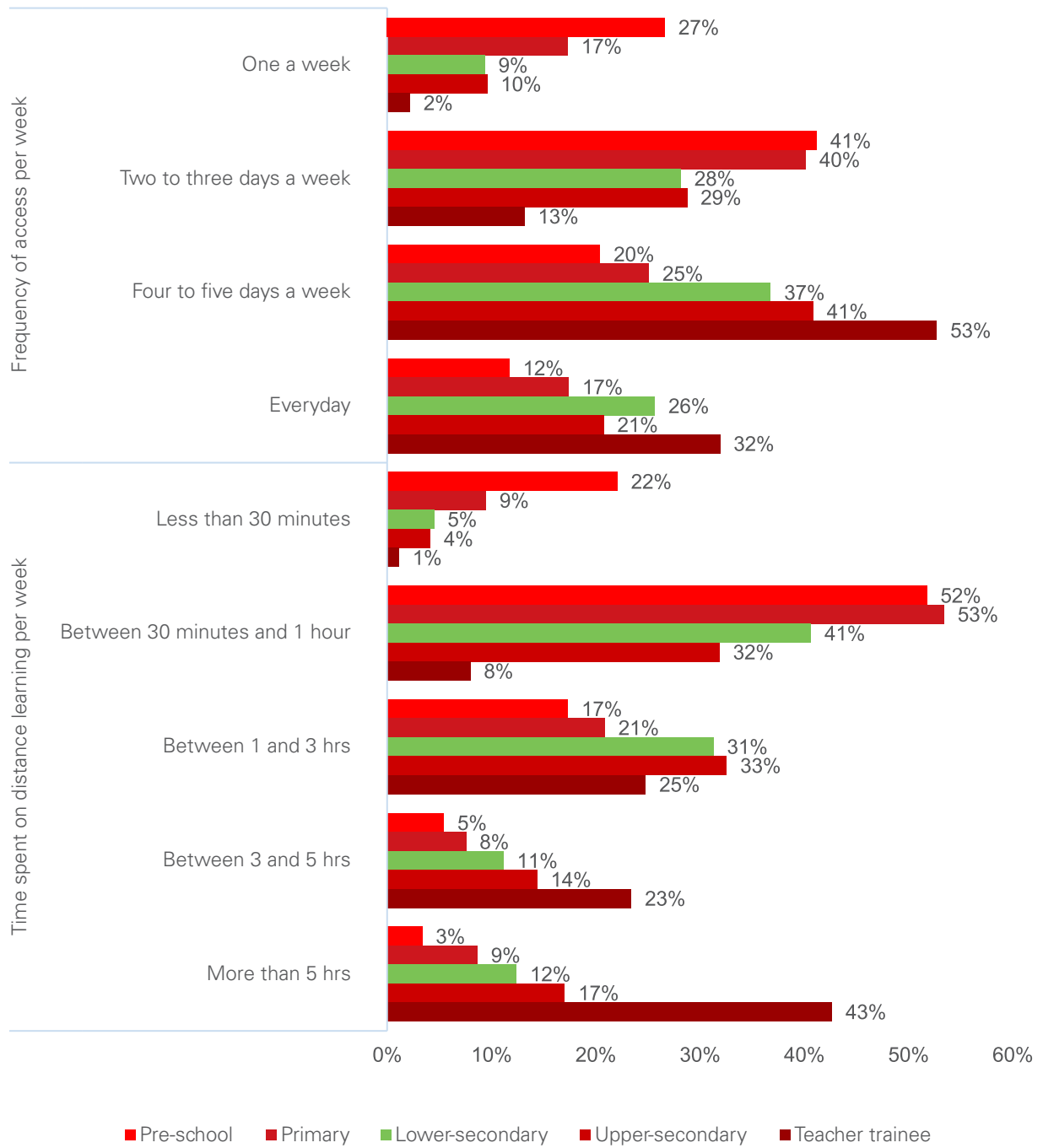


Figure 18: Percentage of students by duration spent learning each week



Level of effort in terms of frequency of access and time spent distance learning was analysed further across grade levels (see Figure 19). It was found that teacher trainees and secondary school students accessed distance learning more frequently, as well as spending more time in a week in learning. While 85 per cent of teacher trainees and around 62 per cent of secondary students accessed distance learning at least four days a week; only 32 per cent of both primary and preschool students utilized distance learning methods at least four days a week or more. Similar trend was observed in the amount of time spent in distance learning per week where the students in higher grade levels spent more time studying. These findings could be related to the availability of enough content versus limited materials provided for preschool and primary students, especially on online platforms as the priority was given to grade 9 and 12 students who have upcoming exams, especially early in the emergency response for continuous learning.

Figure 19: Level of effort in frequency of access and time spent on distance learning by grade level



Different types of students accessed different methods of alternative learning. The most commonly reported method was worksheets and other paper-based materials. On average, secondary school students were found to engage heavily with online videos on the MoEYS social media and e-learning platforms (54 per cent for lower secondary and 66 per cent for upper secondary). Specifically, 80 per cent of teacher trainees depended on online learning modules prepared by their training institution. Preferences for all methods of alternative learning categories, such as online material, TV and radio education, worksheets, learning through family, community or private tutoring support, depended on the school level of the student, as shown in detail in Table 23. For pre- and primary level students, family support was very important, as 35 per cent of pre-school and 27 per cent of primary students continued their learning with someone in the family teaching them.

Table 23: Alternative distance learning methods accessed, by different school levels

Alternative distance learning methods	Pre-school	Primary	Lower-secondary	Upper-secondary	Teacher trainee	Non-formal education	P-value
Online learning modules prepared by the student's school	13%	13%	34%	42%	80%	10%	0.000
Free access to online educational videos on social media and other MoEYS official platforms	28%	31%	54%	66%	37%	28%	0.000
National educational TV programmes	38%	38%	36%	25%	10%	35%	0.000
National educational radio programmes	4%	7%	3%	2%	1%	6%	0.000
Multilingual education radio programme	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0.000
Worksheets and other paper-based learning materials provided by the school	41%	48%	50%	55%	33%	53%	0.000
Someone in the family is teaching them	35%	27%	5%	2%	1%	12%	0.000
Community organized learning sessions	13%	12%	6%	5%	0%	20%	0.000
Private lessons/ tutoring	10%	16%	13%	14%	1%	15%	0.000
Other methods	2%	3%	3%	3%	8%	2%	0.000
Total	1,301	1,166	1,517	930	1,234	348	0.000

Comparative analysis of the level of access to ICT infrastructure and devices and access to certain types of alternative distance learning methods revealed less variation of access to certain technologies, such as television ownership, between students of different grade levels. For example, while there were 24 percentage points between upper-secondary students' access to smartphones (84 per cent) and pre-school students' access (60 per cent), there was only a maximum of 12 percentage points between the highest and lowest levels of access, which was 59 per cent for primary and 47 per cent for upper-secondary students. Therefore, there is a more equal distribution among students from various grade levels of technologies that are not advanced (internet, smartphone, social media, WhatsApp, etc.). This trend is similar to access to distance learning and preferred methods. Worksheets and national TV education programmes appear to be more equally accessible to all grade levels, while online-based distance learning methods appear to be utilized mostly by higher grade level students. This aligns with the levels of access to the types of technology needed to use these alternative methods.

Given that primary and pre-school students depend a lot more on someone in the family, or a community session to support their distance learning, these grade levels need special support and more accessible and understandable forms of distance education materials. These materials must be user-friendly for caregivers. Pre- and primary schools both have low access to smartphones and lower frequency of use of online distance learning. There was little difference between pre-schoolers and primary students in access to online learning: primary students were slightly higher than pre-schoolers, as there were more materials available to them online. This trend signifies that the level of access of caregivers and the socioeconomic background of students have similar results in terms of accessing distance learning, and the preferred method.

Barriers to accessing distance learning programmes of MoEYS



The four most frequently reported barriers to accessing distance learning programmes are financial barriers, internet connectivity issues, and caregivers' lack of content knowledge or time to support learning at home.

For 30 per cent of students who were unable to or had not accessed any distance learning since schools closed, the assessment explored barriers to access to better understand the reasons behind not engaging in continuous learning.

Figure 20 illustrates the four most frequently reported barriers to accessing distance learning programmes: financial barriers to paying for internet, cable, TV, and/or other necessary equipment to access online learning (51 per cent), internet connectivity problems (41 per cent), caregivers not being able to support/encourage children to study at home because they have insufficient content knowledge (22 per cent) and caregivers having no time to support/encourage children to study at home because of work/other chores (20 per cent).

Figure 20: Most frequently reported barriers to accessing distance learning programmes

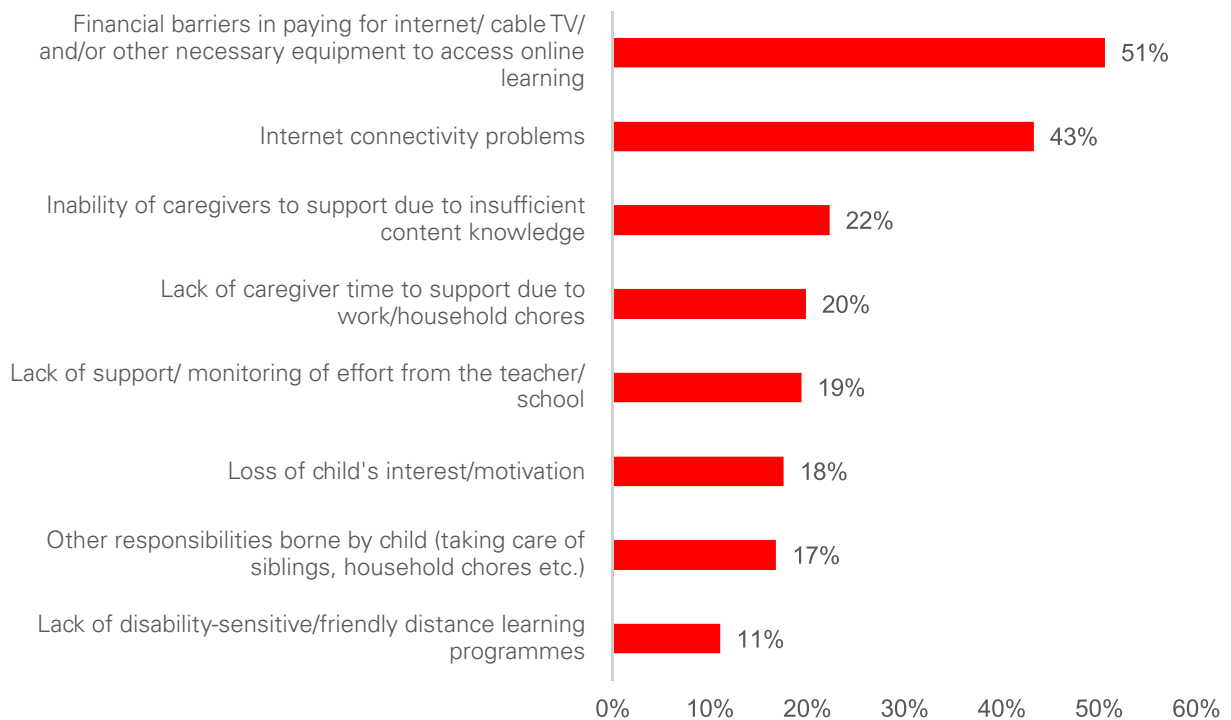
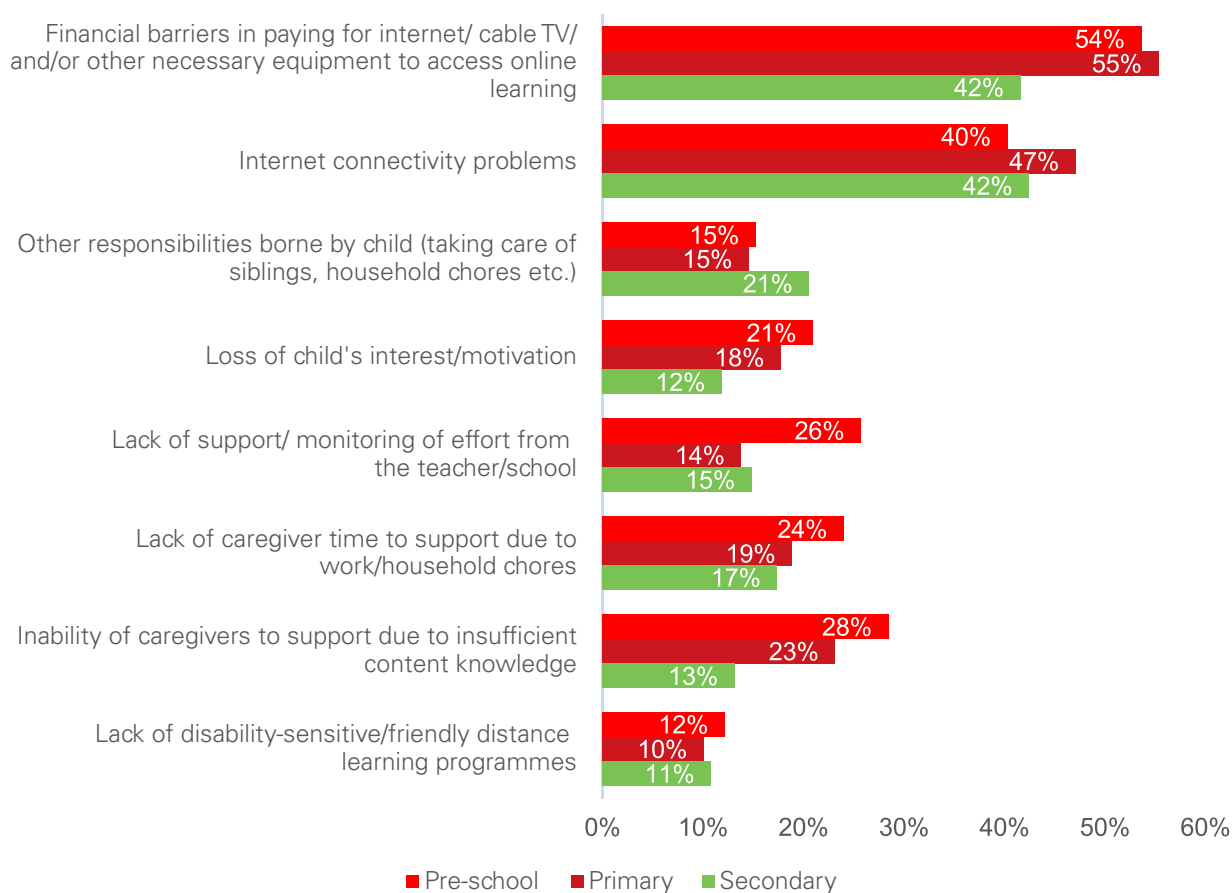


Figure 21 illustrates that financial constraints to paying for internet/cable TV or other equipment to access online learning, and internet connectivity problems, are the two most commonly reported barriers to distance learning across all school levels (early childhood, primary and secondary). These are also the two most frequently reported barriers for teacher trainees and those enrolled in NFE centres.

Figure 21: Barriers to distance learning programmes, by school level



At secondary school level, 21 per cent of students were unable to access distance learning due to other responsibilities at home, such as caring for their siblings and contributing to household chores. At primary level, other frequently reported challenges included inability of caregivers to support learners due to insufficient content knowledge (23 per cent), work/household chores (19 per cent) and loss of interest/motivation of primary school-aged students (21 per cent).

At the early childhood school level, other frequently reported challenges were the inability of caregivers to support due to insufficient content knowledge (28 per cent), work/household chores (26 per cent), lack of monitoring or support from teachers for early childhood school students (26 per cent), and loss of interest/motivation of early childhood school students (21 per cent).

Poverty status of households had an impact on the type of barriers students faced in accessing distance learning. Students from ID Poor households tended to experience more barriers than those from non-ID Poor households due to financial constraints in paying for internet/cable/TV, lack of support/monitoring from teachers or schools, and loss of interest/motivation from the child.

Support for distance learning

Perceptions on levels of support

MoEYS and its partners are working tirelessly to respond to and recover from the negative effects of the global health crisis, subsequent school closures, and downturn in economic activity. Understanding education stakeholders' attitudes to the levels of support they received during the crisis will help

measure the gap between support provided and where stakeholders focus the often-limited government and private resources.

The assessment asked students, caregivers and teachers if the support received to access and engage in distance learning was adequate: 62 per cent of respondents felt that support for distance learning had been either completely inadequate or inadequate, 21 per cent were neutral, 16 per cent felt the support received was adequate, and only 1 per cent reported support being completely adequate.

Figure 22: Percentage of respondents on the adequacy of support received for distance learning

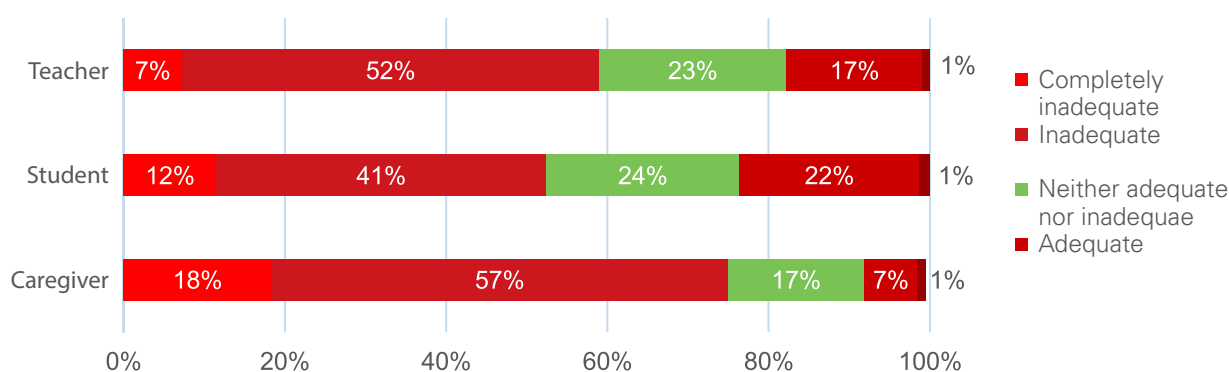


Figure 22 illustrates the attitudes of students, caregivers and teachers towards the levels of support received to access and engage in distance learning. The data illustrates substantial differences in how these populations view the support they received, with students reporting 14 percentage points higher than caregivers that they had been adequately or completely adequately supported throughout distance learning (23 per cent versus 9 per cent). There was little variation between gender, disability or ID poor card status: 63 per cent of males and 60 per cent of females reported either inadequate or completely inadequate, 62 per cent of respondents who reported a disability and 63 per cent of respondents not reporting any disability felt support was inadequate or completely inadequate, 69 per cent of ID poor card holders reported feeling that support was inadequate, as did 63 per cent of respondents with no ID poor card.

Critical areas of support for distance learning



The top three of the six critical areas of distance learning support are: (i) providing support to make studying at home easier for students (64 per cent); (ii) providing practical guidelines and instructions to parents or caregivers on how best to support their children's distance learning (55 per cent); and (iii) providing awareness materials on distance learning tools and resources available for families (48 per cent).

Students and caregivers in Cambodia are eager, engaged and active participants in the sector. Central to the work of MoEYS and their partners in mitigating the effects of school closures is knowing the areas of distance learning support that these stakeholders consider most critical. To better understand demand-side support priorities, student and caregiver survey respondents who felt that distance learning support had been inadequate or completely inadequate (analysis in the previous section) were asked to choose the three areas most critical to help them access and engage in distance learning.

Table 24: Most critical areas of support for distance learning, by school level

Areas of support	Pre-school	Primary	Lower-secondary	Upper-secondary	Teacher trainee	Non-formal education
Support to make it easier for the child to study at home	60%	64%	73%	65%	57%	69%
Practical guidelines and instructions for parents / caregivers on how to support and provide distance learning	59%	52%	57%	55%	48%	55%
Awareness materials on the distance learning tools and resources available to families	48%	48%	44%	50%	49%	51%
Financial support to families to compensate for lost income	25%	22%	17%	23%	29%	31%
Safe childcare spaces for those who cannot be looked after by caretakers	29%	25%	25%	18%	24%	16%
Financial support to pay for private childcare services	7%	7%	8%	7%	6%	6%
Other	3%	4%	4%	9%	6%	2%

Table 24 illustrates the most critical areas of support for distance learning disaggregated by school level. There is a correlation between respondents' school levels and their increased prioritization of support.

Parental engagement to support continuous learning of students

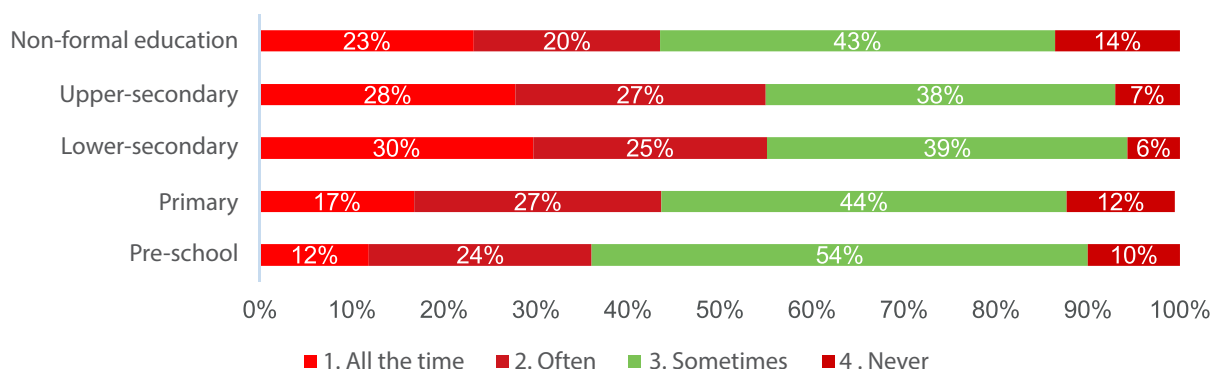
Caregiver/parent engagement levels in student learning

Research has shown that parental engagement strongly influences student learning and can positively impact areas of student achievement, leading to higher grades and completion rates, lower drop-out rates, and aid in areas of student development, such as increased social capital, efficacy of learning

and improved behaviour.⁴⁶ Parental engagement and support becomes even more important, with the majority of student learning taking place at home with limited supervision from teachers and no regular classroom attendance.

The needs assessment aimed to measure the level of support students were receiving from parents or caregivers. The overall results represent an average between pre-school and primary caregivers' responses regarding how much time they were able to dedicate to supporting their children with distance learning at home, and responses by students on how much time their caregivers spent supporting them with distance learning. The analysis of both caregiver and student respondents reveal that 91 per cent of caregivers appear to spend at least some time supporting home-based learning: 42 per cent of caregivers were sometimes able to support distance learning, 26 per cent were often able to support, 23 per cent were able to support all the time, and 9 per cent were never able to support students. These findings seem contradictory to the top barriers to accessing distance learning, such as around 23 percent reporting insufficient caregiver knowledge of content as a barrier to access. However, support could be perceived in different ways and serve different purposes, such as parental encouragement, supervision and monitoring, as well as at least having the time to support. Although 91 per cent reported supporting children's learning at home to a certain level, the majority were not able to do it all the time or often.

Figure 23: Extent to which parents/caregivers were able to support students at home, by school level




When disaggregated by school level, as displayed in Figure 23, the data illustrates variances in the availability of caregivers to support student learning at home. Surprisingly, a higher percentage of caregivers reported never being able to support their pre- and primary school children (10 and 12 per cent, respectively), compared to a lower percentage of lower and upper secondary school students reporting that their caregivers were never able to support their learning at home (6 and 7 per cent, respectively). This supports the idea that there are different perceptions around support and having the time to spend supporting children rather than having lesson content knowledge. Otherwise, pre- and primary school students' caregivers would have reported providing higher levels of support.

Following that trend, the data illustrates that upper secondary (28 per cent) and lower secondary (30 per cent) have the highest rates of caregivers able to support student learning at home all of the time, 23 per cent of caregivers of NFE students, 17 per cent of caregivers of primary school students, and 12 per cent of caregivers of pre-school students. Higher levels of caregiver support

⁴⁶ Emerson, L., Fear, J., Fox, S. and Sanders, E. (2012). Parental engagement in learning and schooling: Lessons from research. A report by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) for the Family-School and Community Partnerships Bureau: Canberra.

provided towards ensuring continuous learning at home for secondary grade level students could be related to the perception of the importance of schooling at certain grade levels and perceptions regarding longer-term effects in the students' future. It is known that families of children in secondary education have a higher ability to financially and emotionally support their children to continue their education at higher grade levels, as it is beyond basic education and less common.

Barriers to parental/caregiver engagement in, and support to, student distance learning




Top three barriers to parental engagement in distance learning are: (i) lack of knowledge of learning content and materials (55 per cent), (ii) parents have no time due to work and other responsibilities (54 per cent), and (iii) lack of knowledge or inability to use different technologies (48 per cent).

Table 25: Barriers to parental engagement in distance learning

Key barriers	Percentage of respondents
No time due to work and other responsibilities	54%
Lack of knowledge of learning content and materials	55%
Not enough knowledge/inability to use certain technologies and/or devices	48%
Not enough guidance/support on how to engage children	17%

Of the survey respondents who reported parents or caregivers never being able to support distance learning (9 per cent), 697⁴⁷ were asked to choose some key barriers to parental engagement in distance learning. The findings indicate the need for parents to better understand what their children are learning at school. Table 25 illustrates the most significant barrier to parental support for distance learning is lack of knowledge of learning content and materials (55 per cent), no time due to work and other responsibilities (54 per cent), lack of knowledge or inability to use different technologies (48 per cent) and lack of guidance or support on how to engage children in their learning (17 per cent).

Relationship between the highest level of education in a household and the level of support provided by caregivers for distance learning



55 per cent of survey respondents who answered 'parents or caregivers were never able to support distance learning' were from households where the highest level of education was primary or lower.

⁴⁷ Due to an error in some of the online surveys, not all caregivers or parents who answered 'never' to their ability to support students' distance learning were presented with the barriers to support question.

Figure 24: Relationship between highest level of education in a household and the amount of support caregivers are able to provide for distance learning

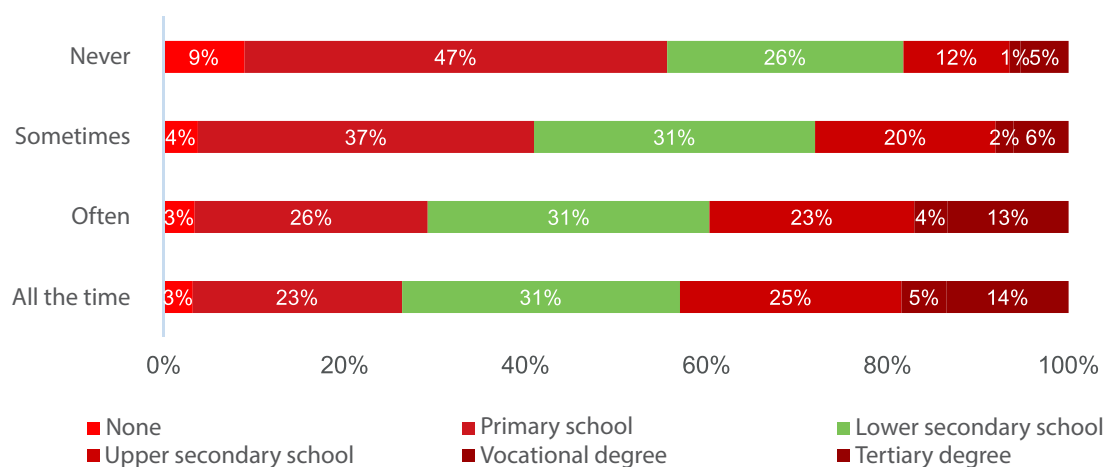
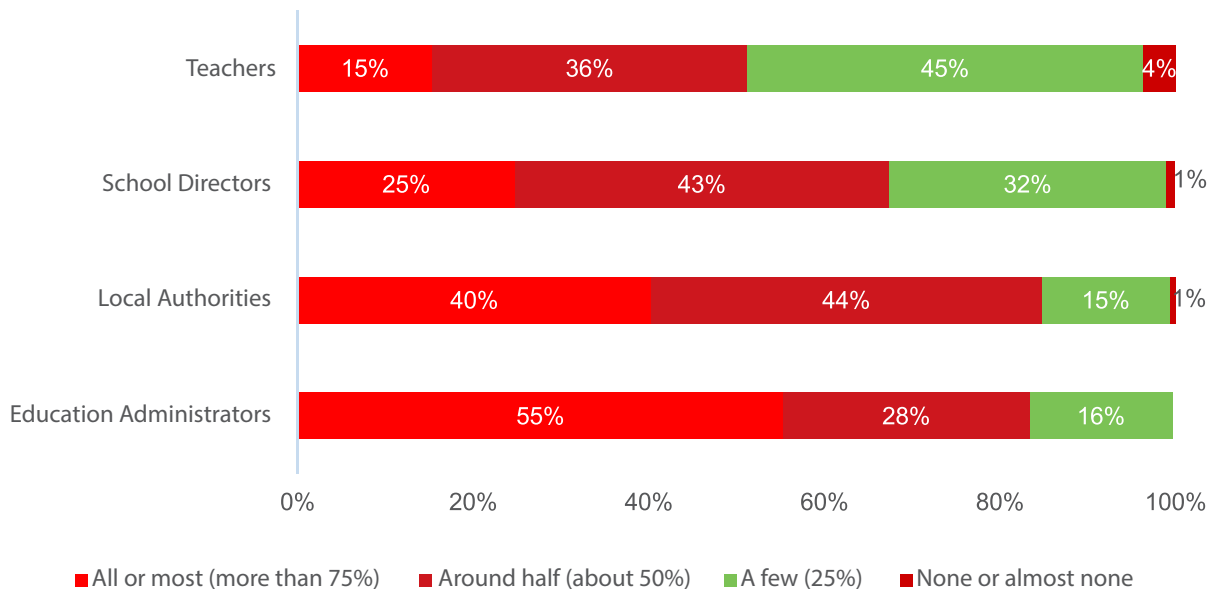


Figure 24 displays the relationship between the highest level of education in a household and the ability of a parent or caregiver to support their children with distance learning. The data is reporting some significance between these two variables: 55 per cent of parents or caregivers who were never able to support distance learning were from households where the highest level of education was primary or lower (i.e. none), compared with 45 per cent from households in which the highest level of education was at least lower secondary. When viewing households that reported parents and caregivers being able to support distance learning all the time, the data reported only 26 per cent of respondents being from households where the highest level of education was primary or lower, versus 74 per cent from households where the highest level of education was lower secondary or higher.

Perceptions of supply-side respondents on caregiver/parent engagement levels in student learning

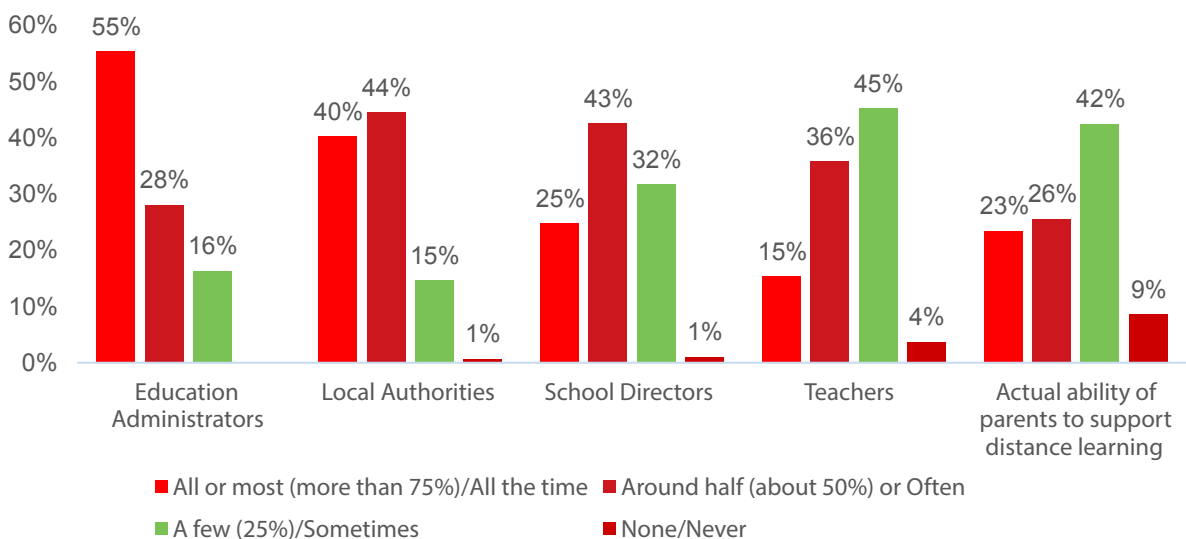
Perceptions of education beneficiaries' needs can affect policy formulation as much as actual needs. To gauge the perception of the supply side towards parental engagement, teachers (including teacher educators), school directors, education administrators and local authorities were asked to estimate the percentage of parents or caregivers able to support distance or home-based learning.

Figure 25: Relationship between highest level of education in a household and the amount of support caregivers are able to provide for distance learning



When the results were disaggregated by respondent type, the data showed some considerable differences between those most directly responsible for education service delivery, teachers and school directors, and education administrators and local authorities. As Figure 25 illustrates, education administrators and local authorities are confident that parents and caregivers are able to support distance learning (55 per cent and 40 per cent, respectively), and that they feel all or most (more than 75 per cent) of parents are able to support distance learning. A stark contrast when compared with school directors and teachers, who report that only 25 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively, of all or most parents were available to support distance learning.

Figure 26: Comparison of supply-side perception of parents/caregivers versus actual ability to support children in distance learning



The importance of the differences between these survey respondent types becomes even greater when considering the data reported by students and parents/caregivers. While the measurement scales used across the two survey respondent populations were slightly different, because of similar scale options we can translate the findings across the supply and demand sides. We see that school directors' and teachers' perceptions of parents/caregivers' ability to support their children during distance learning is closer to their actual ability. As Figure 26 illustrates, 25 per cent of school directors report that all parents are able to support their children. This is closest to what students and parents report, with data showing 23 per cent of parents/caregivers are able to support distance learning all of the time. Teachers believe that at least half of parents/caregivers (50 per cent or more) can support their children with distance learning, which is close to the reality, with 49 per of students and caregivers reporting that their parents or caregivers support their distance learning often or all of the time.

Supplementary measures to ensure continuous learning of vulnerable students

Cambodia took several early measures to invest in digital learning at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, global evidence and small-scale assessments in Cambodia indicate that, as in many countries, Cambodia too faced challenges in making sure that all students could stay connected to learning. The evidence and assessments raised important questions about equity and access. MoEYS and other education sector partners in Cambodia implemented additional measures to ensure that the most vulnerable students could continue learning during school closures.

This assessment tried to understand the types of measures that were taken in Cambodia to support vulnerable learners. The same question was included in both demand-side (students and caregivers) and supply-side (administrators, local authority, teachers and school directors) respondent surveys.

Figure 27: Supplementary measures to support distance learning of vulnerable students: Comparison of demand- and supply-side respondents

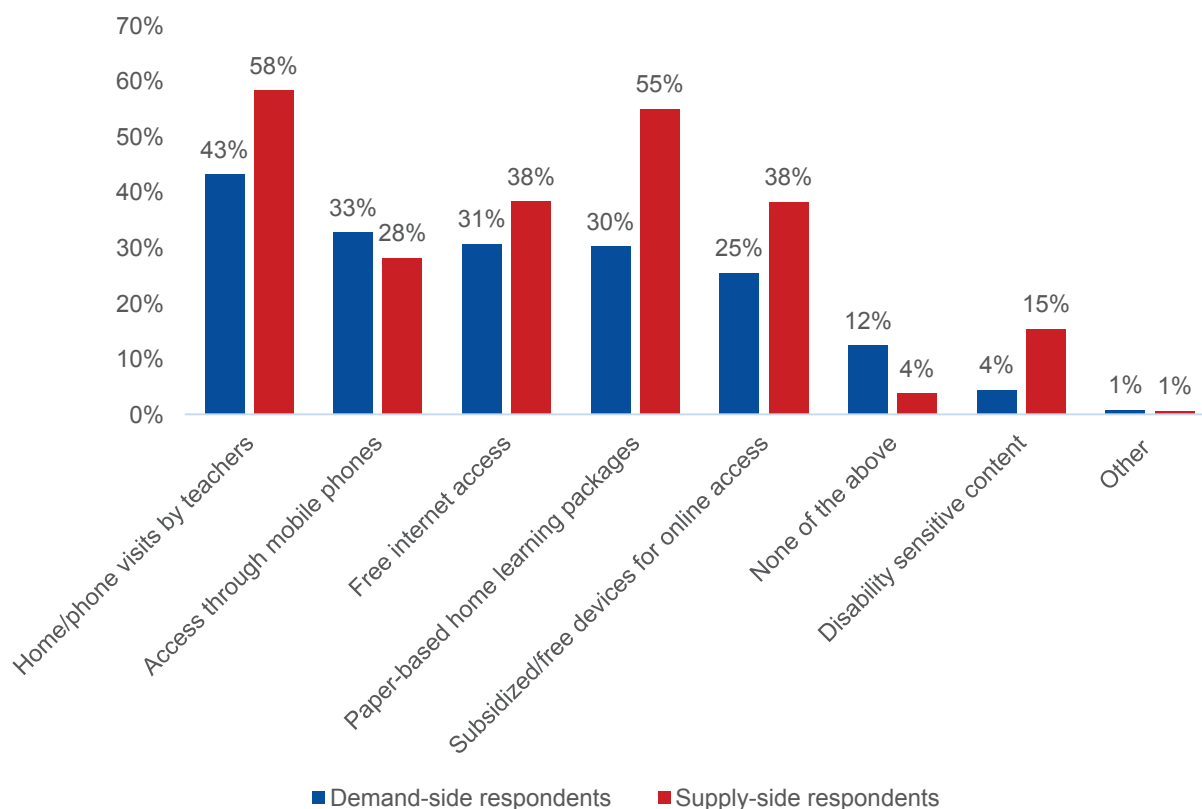


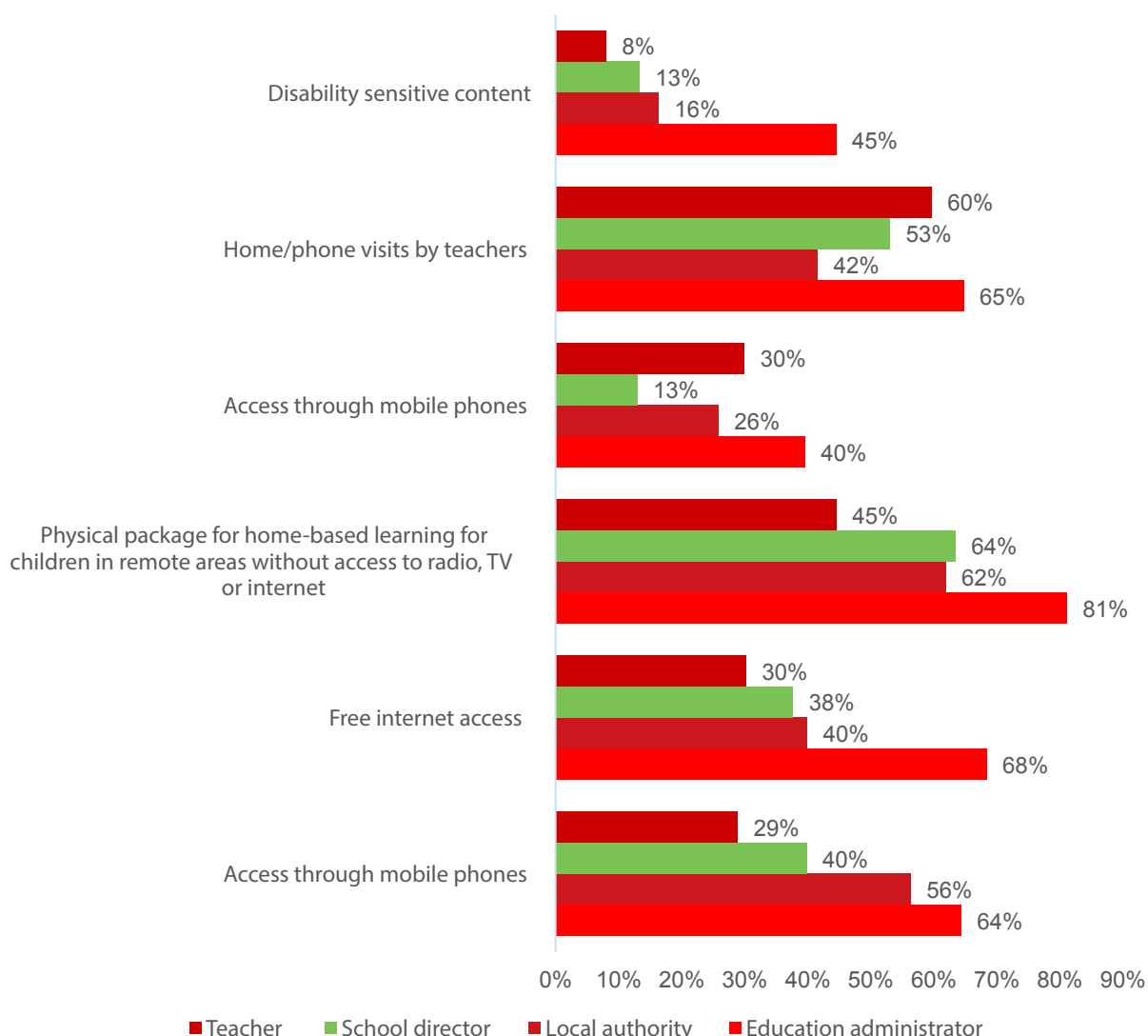
Figure 27 illustrates several supplementary measures reported to have been undertaken by MoEYS and schools (administrators, local authorities, teachers and school directors) to support vulnerable students to have equal access to distance learning efforts, and by students and caregivers. The data illustrates that there is a large variance between the different supplementary measures for vulnerable students that supply-side respondents reported implementing, compared to what the demand-side respondents reported receiving or being aware of.

The largest variances were observed between the provision of supplementary measures and access to paper-based learning packages (55 per cent versus 30 per cent), home/phone visits by teachers (58 per cent versus 43 per cent), subsidized/free devices for online access (38 per cent versus 25 per cent), and access to disability-sensitive content (15 per cent versus 4 per cent). Approximately 4 per cent of the supply-side respondents reported that none of the measures in the graph above were undertaken, while 12 per cent of students and caregivers reported not making use of any of the above measures.

The most frequent measures reported were provided by the supply-side stakeholders, including home/phone visits by teachers to follow-up on learning (58 per cent), paper-based home learning packages for children in remote areas without access to radio, TV or internet (55 per cent), free internet access to access online learning resources (38 per cent) and access to subsidized/free devices to use online learning resources (38 per cent).

The most frequently reported measures being utilized by students/caregivers include home/phone visits by teachers to follow-up on learning (43 per cent), access to online learning enabled through mobile phones (33 per cent), free internet access to use online learning resources (31 per cent) and physical packages for home-based learning (30 per cent).

Figure 28: Supplementary measures to support vulnerable students' learning: Supply-side respondent perspective



As elaborated in Figure 28, different supply-side respondents reported different measures in place to support vulnerable students' learning needs. The most frequently reported supplementary measures according to education administrators at central, provincial and district levels include: (i) physical package for home-based learning (81 per cent), (ii) free internet access (68 per cent), (iii) home/phone visits by teachers (65 per cent), and (iv) access to online learning enabled through mobile phones (64 per cent). Teachers and school directors more frequently reported home/phone visits (60 per cent of teachers and 53 per cent of school directors) and physical packages for home learning (45 per cent of teachers and 64 per cent of school directors), compared to other measures such as free internet access or online learning through mobile phones. This may indicate that school directors and teachers were not as aware of some broader digital infrastructure related support being provided to families compared to education administrators at central, provincial and district levels.

Data showed that students from ID Poor card households reported having more access than students from non-ID Poor card households to physical home-based learning packages (34 per cent versus 30 per cent), and subsidized/free devices to access online resources (28 per cent versus 25 per cent). They also reported having less access to distance learning platforms through mobile

phones (25 per cent versus 35 per cent), or to any of the supplementary measures (12 per cent versus 14 per cent) versus those from non-ID Poor card households (30 per cent).

The data illustrates significant variability in access to some supplementary measures across geographies. Overall, provinces located in the mountains tend to have access to fewer or no supplementary measures compared to other regions. Respondents in coastal regions reported accessing free internet, paper-based home learning packages, and online learning through mobile phones more than other regions. Home/phone visits were reported more frequently in the Tonle Sap regions compared to the others.

MoEYS/sector response to address distance learning challenges

Developing and administering the distance learning programmes – perspectives from supply-side respondents

While the distance learning programmes during the crisis helped students keep learning and provided opportunities for them to experience learning digitally, experiences globally indicate that all those involved still face a steep learning curve in developing, managing and implementing these programmes. The assessment tried to better understand the extent to which the supply-side respondents had concerns or issues implementing the distance learning programmes. The assessment also tried to analyse the key barriers they faced or experienced.

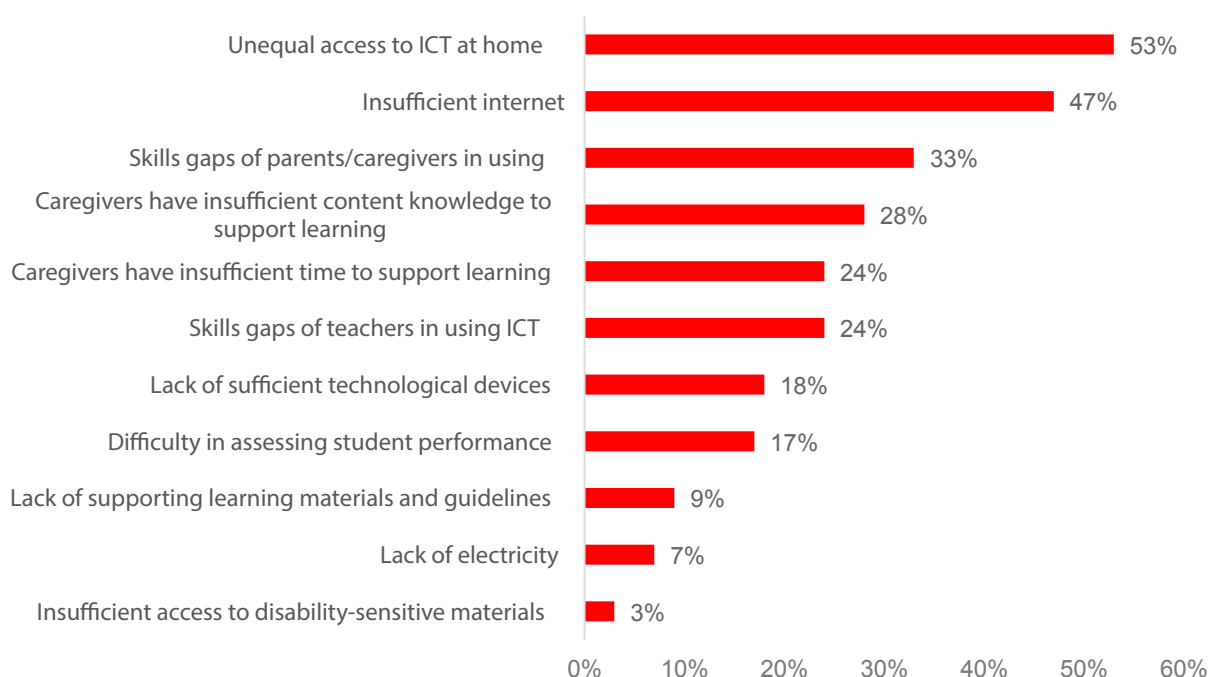
Table 26: Supply-side respondents' views on implementing distance learning programmes

Type of respondent	No, have no concerns implementing distance learning programmes	Yes, have some concerns implementing distance learning programmes	Total
Education administrator	5%	95%	910
Local authority	6%	94%	307
School director	7%	93%	1,081
Teacher	8%	92%	3,359
Total	7%	93%	5,657

P-value= 0.004

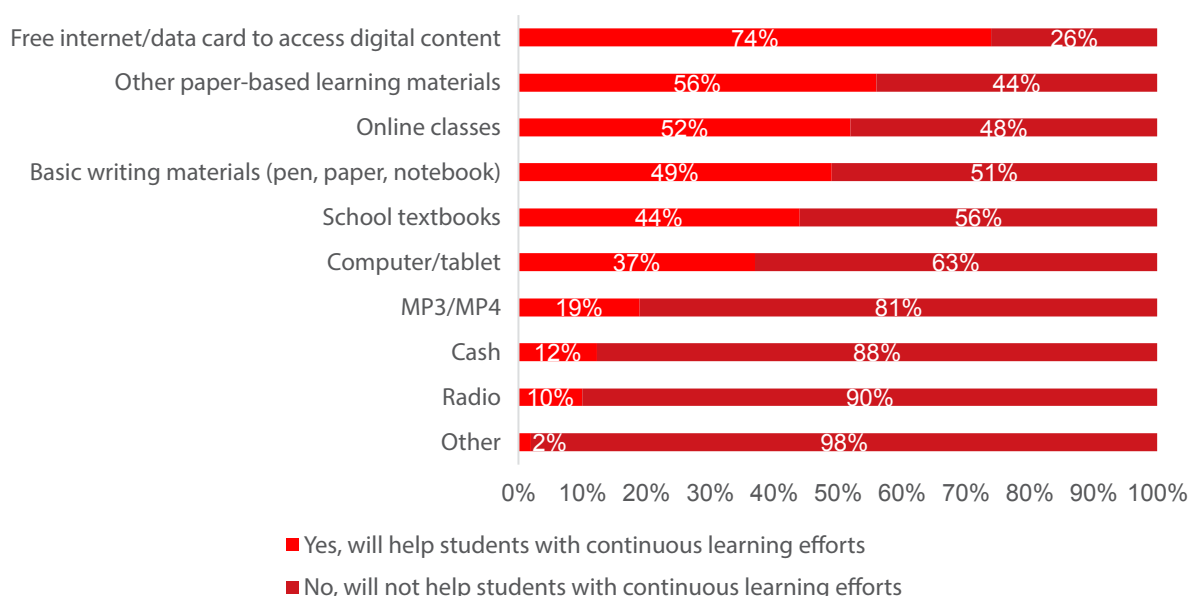
Table 26 illustrates that, on average, 93 per cent of the supply-side respondents experienced some issues implementing the distance learning programme, with 95 per cent of education administrators reporting some level of concern, followed by 93 per cent of school directors and 92 per cent of teachers.

Figure 29: Supply-side respondent perspectives on challenges to implementing distance learning programmes



As shown in Figure 29, supply-side respondents also reported some constraints that they experienced in developing, implementing and managing successful distance learning programmes. According to supply-side respondents, the key constraints to implementing successful distance learning programmes include unequal access to ICT infrastructure at home (53 per cent), insufficient internet (47 per cent), skill limitations of caregivers in using ICT (33 per cent), and insufficient caregiver knowledge to support learning (28 per cent).

Figure 30: Modalities of support identified by education administrators to overcome home-based learning challenges



Despite most of the respondents reporting being able to access distance learning programmes, education administrators at central, provincial and district levels shared their perspectives on how challenges related to implementing the home-based distance learning programmes could be addressed.

All education administrators at central, provincial and district levels shared that families and students would benefit from some form of additional home-based learning support (see Figure 30). The most frequently mentioned types of support were free internet/data cards to download e-learning (74 per cent), paper-based learning materials (56 per cent), continuation of online classes (52 per cent), and provision of basic writing supplies (49 per cent). The least frequently reported home-based learning support was radio (10 per cent), cash (12 per cent), and MP3/MP4 players (19 per cent). In some instances, these supply-side perceptions correlate with demand-side realities. For example, more than half (51 per cent) of demand-side respondents find paying for internet a barrier to accessing distance learning. However, in other instances demand-side respondents cited only having access to basic writing materials and school textbooks (30 per cent and 34 per cent, respectively).

Measures taken by educators to complement online/distance learning

While several measures were taken by schools to specifically address the needs of vulnerable learners, several complementary measures were also undertaken to provide additional support to students' online/distance learning efforts. Cambodia, like many other countries, transitioned from a mostly virtual learning model to a hybrid learning model. Assessment findings show that Cambodia has now adapted to a learning model that includes asynchronous online learning, with some additional face-to-face instruction or communication through different platforms.

Figure 31: Different types of teacher support provided to support continuous learning

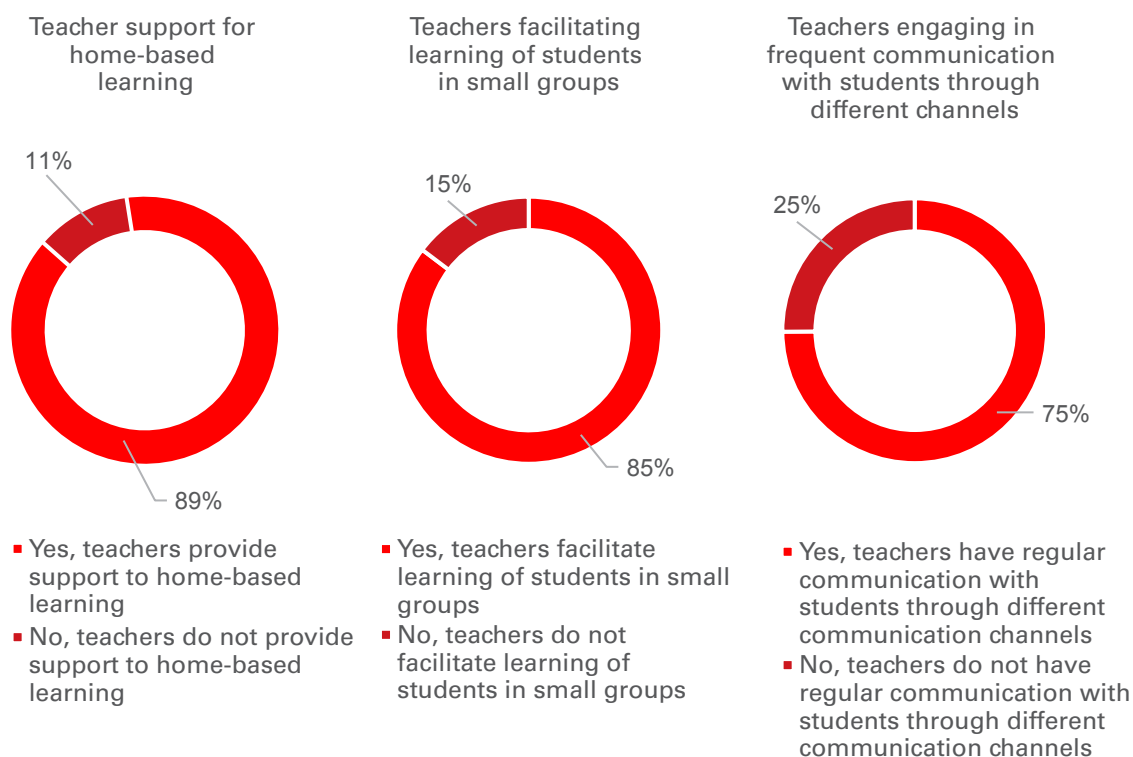
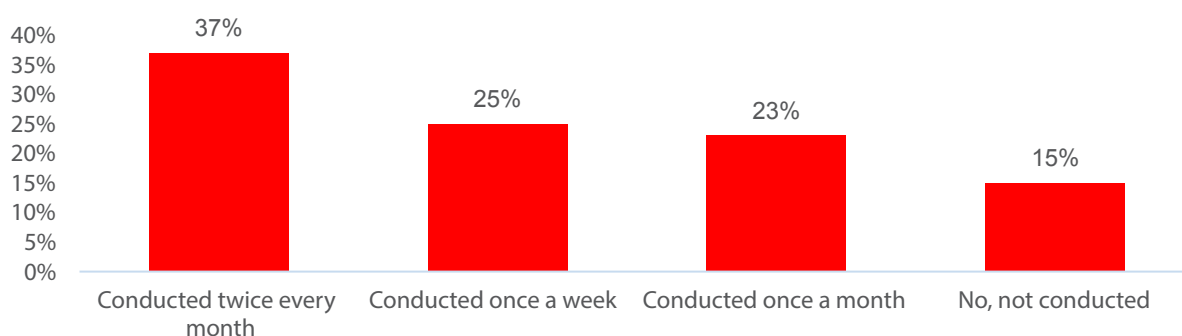


Figure 31 illustrates the variety of measures undertaken to support distance learning efforts: 89 per cent of school directors and local authorities indicated that they prioritized having teachers available to support students in their home-based learning efforts.

Teacher-facilitated small learning groups

Of the 11,917 respondents across different grade levels and geographic locations, the majority (85 per cent) indicated that teachers facilitated some form of small learning group sessions, albeit of varying frequency. Approximately 37 per cent of respondents indicated that teachers facilitated these learning sessions twice per month, followed by 25 per cent indicating that these sessions were conducted once per week (see Figure 32).

Figure 32: Frequency of teacher-facilitated small learning group sessions



Regular communication between teachers and students through various communication channels

The survey tried to analyse how frequently teachers were in touch with students through different communication channels, such as phone, WhatsApp, Telegram, etc., during school closures. As displayed in Figure 33, of all caregiver and student respondents, 75 per cent said teachers had been in touch with them: 58 per cent of these teachers were in touch at least twice weekly and 17 per cent of these teachers were in touch at least fortnightly. The remaining 25 per cent of the respondents indicated that teachers had not been in touch with their students. Interestingly, more students than caregivers reported that they were in touch with teachers through alternate communication channels. These divergent perspectives were particularly prominent when students reported that teachers had been in touch twice weekly.

Figure 33: Frequency of regular communication with students through communication channels

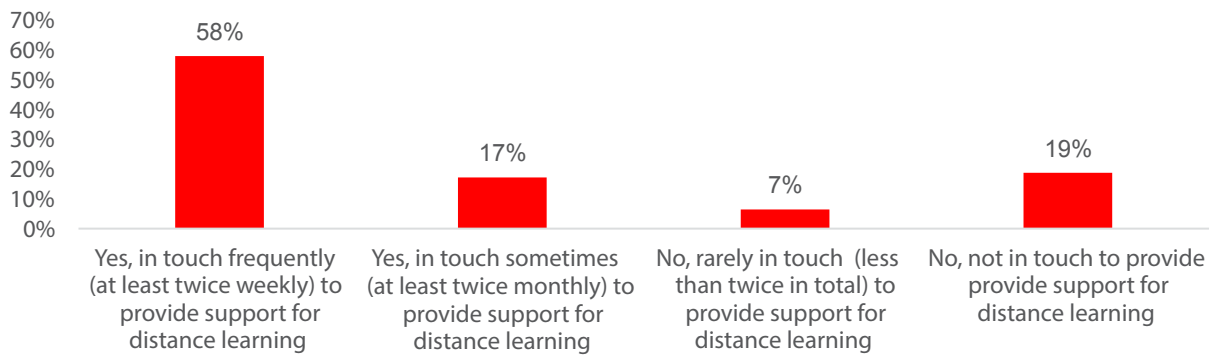


Figure 34: Frequency of communication between students and teachers, by school level

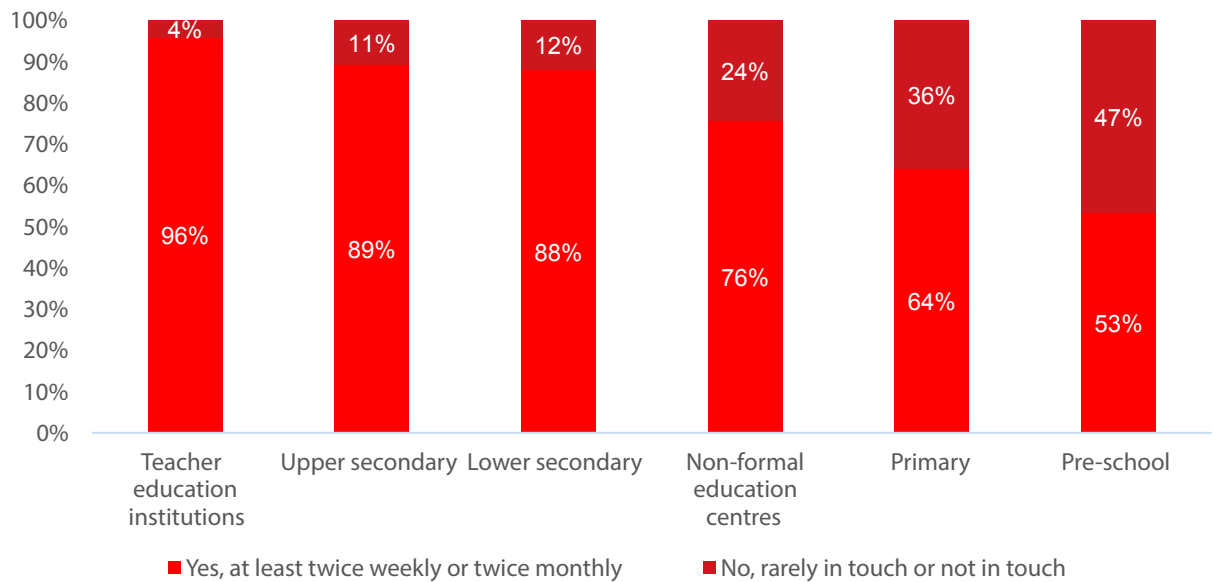
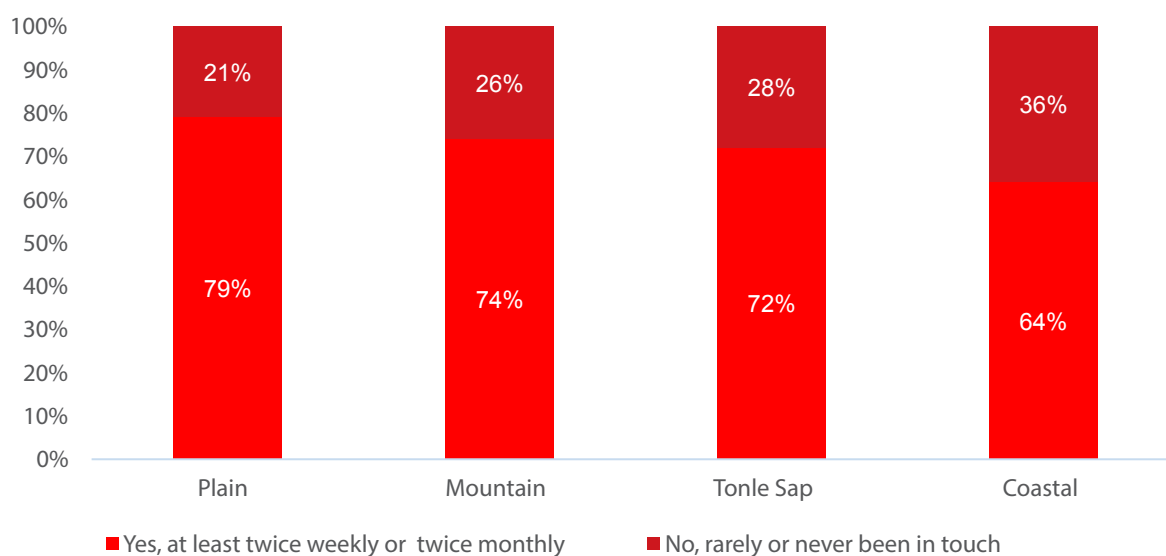


Figure 34 illustrates that across all grade levels, the majority of teachers were in touch at least twice weekly or twice monthly. TEIs reported being in touch with their teacher trainees most frequently: 96 per cent of the trainees said they were in touch with their teachers often, 86 per cent were in touch as frequently as twice per week, and 10 per cent twice per month. Overall, engagement levels through alternate communication channels where teachers were in touch either twice weekly or twice monthly were lower in primary and pre-schools (64 per cent and 53 per cent), compared with lower and upper secondary schools (88 per cent and 89 per cent) and NFE centres (76 per cent).

Figure 35 illustrates the frequency of communication between students and teachers, disaggregated by region. The most frequent teacher engagement was found to be in the plains region, with 79 per cent reporting that there was contact at least twice per month or more interaction and follow-up, while students from coastal regions reported significantly lower frequency of interaction with teachers: 36 per cent stated that they had rarely (only twice in total or less) or never been contacted by their teachers during school closures.

Figure 35: Frequency of communication between students and teachers, by region



Capacity development needs of educators

This section analyses current teaching-learning outreach efforts underway by schools (pre-primary to secondary), provincial and regional teacher training institutions, and teacher education colleges. It aims to determine the capacity development needs of teachers, school directors, teacher educators and education administrators at national and sub-national level to adequately support distance learning during school/TEI closures.

Knowledge, skills and capacities of different supply-side respondents to perform required job functions to support distance learning

Overall confidence in respondents' ability to perform job functions to support distance learning

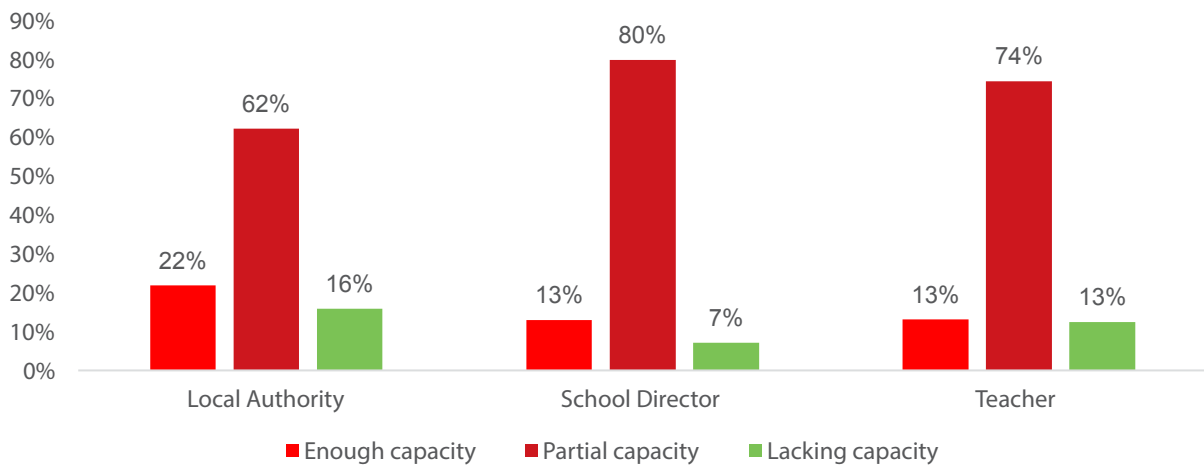
The responsibility of supply-side education stakeholders in ensuring the delivery of inclusive and equitable quality education remained unchanged during school closures. However, the skills and capacity needed to meet those responsibilities can change considerably. The assessment aimed to measure the attitudes of education stakeholders most directly responsible for student learning towards their ability to perform their job functions and support distance learning.



Only 13 per cent of teachers and school directors and 22 per cent of local authorities felt they had enough capacity to perform their job functions during school closures.

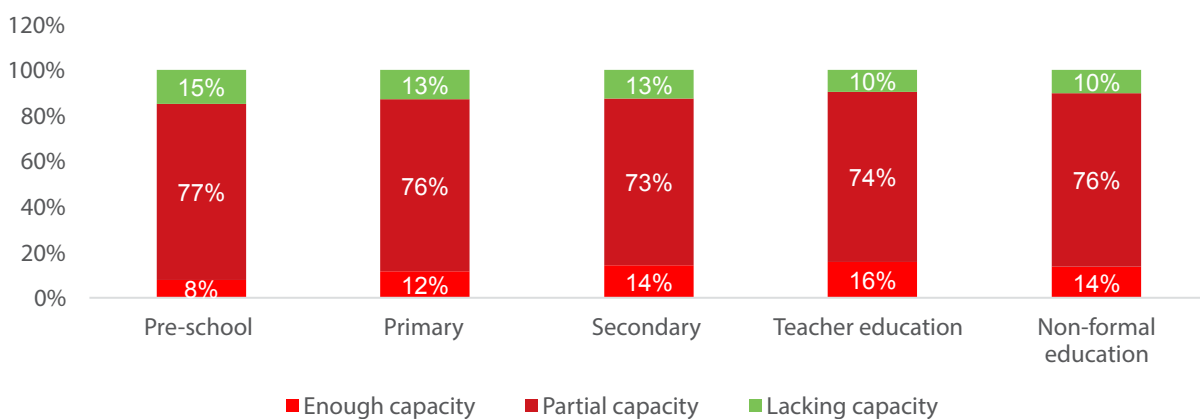
Figure 36 illustrates that respondents among local authorities, school directors and teachers did not feel they had enough capacity to perform their job functions. Data reported that for both teachers and school directors only 13 per cent felt they had enough capacity. Local authorities felt more confident in their ability to perform their job functions during school closures, with 22 per cent reporting they had enough capacity.

Figure 36: Respondents' attitude towards their ability to perform job functions and support distance learning



At the school level, there was little variance among school directors' attitudes towards their ability to perform their job functions and support distance learning. However, among teachers, the data illustrates an interesting correlation between teachers' school level and their level of confidence in their capacity to support distance learning. In the upper levels of education, teachers displayed more confidence in their capacities, with 16 per cent of teacher educators reporting enough capacity to support distance learning. This was followed by 14 per cent for both secondary school and NFE teacher survey respondents, 12 per cent for primary school teachers, and only 8 per cent for pre-school teachers (see Figure 37).

Figure 37: Teachers' attitude towards their ability to perform their job functions and support distance learning, by school level



Capacity development needs of teachers

Data reveals that when presented with different types of capacity development initiatives and asked to choose their top three, teachers had a clear preference. As Figure 38 illustrates, 57 per cent of all teachers would like to build their capacity in distance learning lesson plan and material development, followed by 55 per cent prioritizing using social media to support students and caregivers, and 40 per cent reporting developing their ability to use online learning.

Figure 38: Most frequently cited capacity development needs of teachers

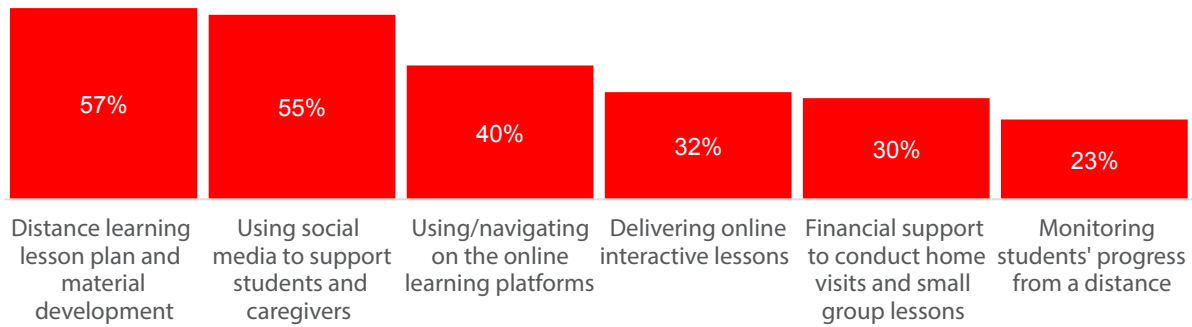
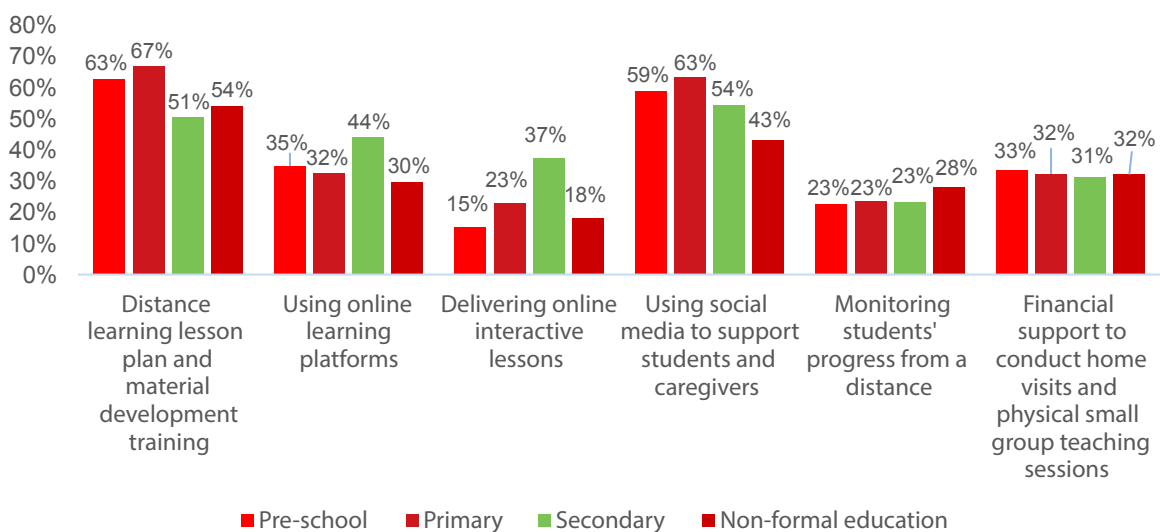


Figure 39 displays the types of capacity development priorities of teachers by school level. Teachers of all levels are prioritizing building their capacity in distance learning lesson plan and material development, and using social media to support students and caregivers: 67 per cent of primary teachers, 63 per cent of pre-school teachers, and 51 per cent of secondary school teachers. This highlights the difficulties teachers have had at all levels in developing lesson plans for use outside the classroom, either to supplement online classes, in small groups, or for individual student home-based learning.

Figure 39: Most frequently cited capacity development needs of teachers, by school level



The data in Figure 39 also reveals a high percentage of secondary school teachers who would like to build their capacities in using online learning platforms (44 per cent) and delivering online interactive lessons (37 per cent). As MoEYS continues to look for innovative ways of delivering quality equitable education, this data should be considered and used to prioritize training teachers at higher levels in how to leverage new technologies.

During school closures, all or nearly all professional development for teachers was postponed: 77 per cent of pre-school, primary, secondary, and non-formal education teachers did not receive any form of professional development during school closures. While this was in the best interests of all education stakeholders, it highlights the need for MoEYS and its partners to consider more innovative approaches to professional development and capacity building at all times.

Capacity development needs of local authorities and school directors

Table 27: Capacity development needs identified by local authorities and school directors

Capacity development initiatives	Local authority	School director
Distance learning lesson plan and material development training	45%	48%
Using/navigating online learning platforms	43%	33%
Delivering online interactive lessons	34%	32%
Using social media to support students and caregivers	41%	44%
Emergency response budget management training	10%	6%
Supporting teachers' professional development	12%	20%
Organizing safe and inclusive re-opening of schools	31%	30%
Crisis management response training	7%	10%

Table 27 illustrates that school directors and local authorities prioritized capacity development initiatives along similar lines as teachers, with survey respondents from those groups reporting distance learning lesson plan and material development training as their top priorities: 48 per cent of school directors and 45 per cent of local authorities. Due to different professional responsibilities, these two groups were presented with the additional selection options of: emergency response budget management, supporting teachers' professional development, organizing safe and inclusive re-opening of schools, and crisis management response training. Among these additional selection options, both school directors and local authorities reported that organizing safe and inclusive school re-opening was their highest priority: 30 per cent and 31 per cent, respectively, selecting that option.

Capacity development needs of teacher educators

Table 28: Capacity development needs identified by teacher educators

Capacity development initiatives	Teacher educators
Delivering online interactive lessons	59%
Using online learning platforms	52%
Distance learning lesson plan and material development training	50%
Using social media to support students and caregivers	27%
Monitoring students' progress from a distance	25%
Financial support to conduct home visits and physical small group teaching sessions	11%

Considering the differences in content, instruction delivery and beneficiaries between basic education levels and TEIs, it is not surprising that the data displays different capacity development priorities among teacher educator survey respondents. As Table 28 illustrates, 59 per cent of teacher educators want to improve their ability to deliver online interactive lessons, followed by 52 per cent wanting to build their capacities in utilizing an online learning platform, and 50 per cent wanting distance learning lesson plan and material development training.

These findings are supported by a separate study recently commissioned by the MoEYS Teacher Training Department in which 30 per cent of teacher educators responded that they were not confident in their ability to leverage ICT to make teaching and learning more effective. Data from that same survey found that teacher educators' second priority for professional development was developing skills and understanding of distance learning technologies and integrating technology into teaching and learning. That study, which focused specifically on teacher educators, also analysed professional development needs through focus groups and interviews with teacher educators, TEI directors, MoEYS central level, key development partners and NGOs. Results indicate that teacher educators need professional development in: pedagogical content knowledge or the theory and practice of teaching specific subject content with ICT identified as a priority; and technological pedagogical content knowledge or building teacher educators' ability to effectively use ICT in their teacher education courses, and specifically for blended and online approaches.

Capacity development needs of education administrators

National and sub-national education administrators play a crucial role in both operational and technical support in the implementation of the Education Strategic Plan's policy priorities. As such they have been vital to response and recovery efforts during the global health emergency. Administrators have risen to the challenge, taking on the work needed to help students stay safe and continue their education during COVID-19, by supporting targeted COVID-19 awareness campaigns, leveraging technology to create education content for all levels and hosting it across a variety of platforms, collaborating across technical departments to ensure content was accessible to differently abled students, and quickly adapting financing modalities and guidelines to ensure all of these activities were possible.

Capacity development needs of central level administrators

The abrupt nature of school closures and need for immediate support led to MoEYS education administrators lending their support in many new areas, leading to gaps in capacity. It is not surprising that the assessment data illustrates that 95 per cent of all education administrator survey respondents reported needing capacity development to help them perform their job functions during school closures.

Table 29: Capacity development needs identified by central level administrators

Capacity development initiatives	Yes, I need support	No, I do not need support
Distance workshop planning	67%	33%
Monitoring and evaluation	59%	41%
Organize safe and inclusive re-opening of schools	52%	48%
Video production	50%	50%
Managing online learning platforms	49%	51%
Quality assurance	35%	65%
Emergency response budget management training	34%	66%
Facilitate cooperation and alignment between schools	34%	66%
Report writing	26%	74%
Crisis management	21%	79%

Table 29 illustrates the types of capacity development most desired by central level education administrators. At the national level, the top four most desired areas to build capacity were: distance workshop planning (67 per cent), monitoring and evaluation (59 per cent), organizing a safe and inclusive re-opening of schools (52 per cent), and video production (50 per cent).

Capacity development needs of sub-national level administrators

Table 30: Capacity development needs identified by sub-national level administrators

Capacity development initiatives	Yes, I need support	No, I do not need support
Distance workshop planning	77%	23%
Organize a safe and inclusive re-opening of schools	65%	35%
Monitoring and evaluation	61%	39%
Managing online learning platforms	40%	60%
Quality assurance	39%	61%
Facilitate cooperation and alignment between schools	38%	62%
Emergency response budget management training	28%	72%
Crisis management	23%	77%

Table 30 displays the types of capacity development most desired by sub-national level administrators. Priorities were similar to those of their national level counterparts: distance workshop planning (77 per cent), organizing safe and inclusive re-opening of schools (65 per cent), monitoring and evaluation (61 per cent), and managing online learning platforms (40 per cent). It is important to note that due to the nature of the differing roles and responsibilities of national and sub-national administrators, the two groups were presented with slightly different options for capacity development initiatives.

The assessment found clear alignment between these two groups and the teachers and school directors they support. Education administrators and teachers are all prioritizing the need to build their capacity in delivering services from a distance. As MoEYS continues to explore new technologies and approaches to support distance learning and capacity development, it is important to consider the capacity needed to leverage these technologies. Another consideration regarding technology, capacity development and necessary skills could be to consolidate approaches and platforms. As the ministry recovers and leverages private and public investments for its technological infrastructure to rebuild stronger, deciding on one cohesive plan that uses the most appropriate platforms and ICT, without redundancies, would enhance its ability to equip staff with the skills they need to perform their job functions.

Awareness of MoEYS policy measures to support teachers

Since the early stages of the school closures, MoEYS has been actively issuing guidelines and policies on how to implement distance learning programmes and to support teachers, school directors and central and sub-national level administrators to ensure the engagement of students and preparedness to return to school.

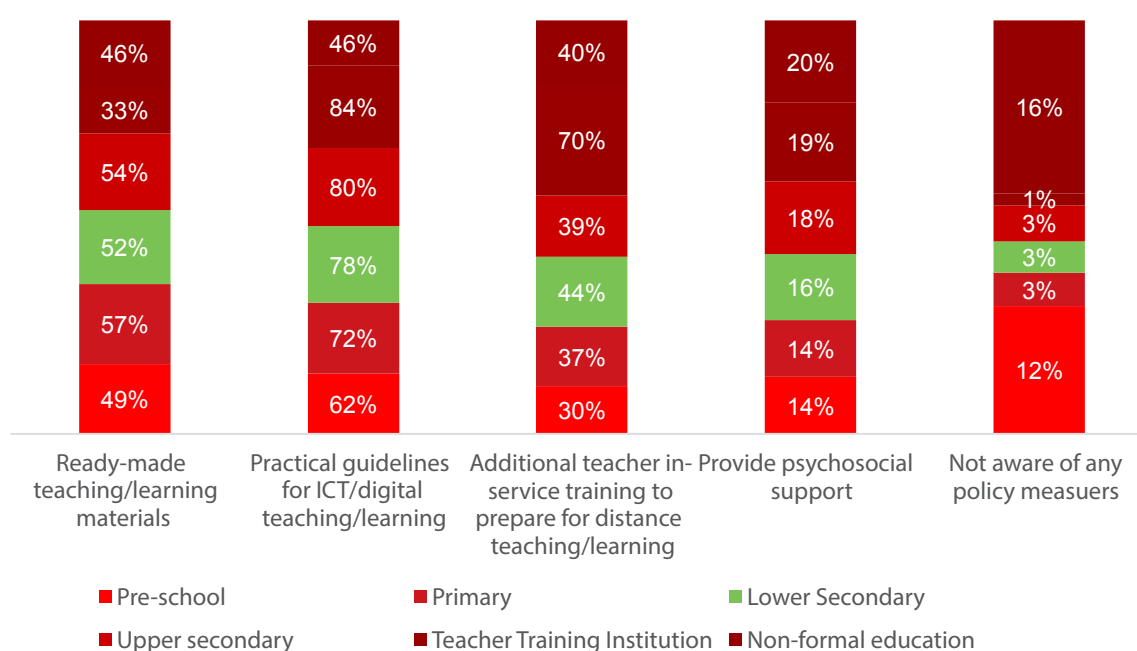
One of the aims of this needs assessment was to measure the level of supply-side stakeholders' awareness of MoEYS policies that support teachers during school closures. The results from all respondents (n. 5,689) revealed that the most known policy measure was practical guidance for ICT/digital teaching and learning, at 76 per cent. This was followed by 57 per cent of teachers confirming the use of the ready-made teaching and learning materials, 41 per cent reporting access to teacher in-service training to prepare for distance learning, and 20 per cent hearing about psychological support initiatives to mitigate the risks of stress caused by the changing environment and challenges COVID-19. Only 4 per cent of respondents were not aware of any policy measures to support them.

Table 31: Awareness of policy measures to support teachers during school closures by all respondents and by type of respondent

Measures/support	All respondents	Education administrator	Local authority	School director	Teacher	P-value
Ready-made teaching/ learning materials	57%	69%	61%	61%	52%	0
Practical guidelines for ICT/ digital teaching/learning	76%	90%	51%	76%	74%	0
Additional teacher in-service training to prepare for distance teaching/learning	41%	49%	36%	34%	42%	0
Provide psychosocial support	20%	33%	28%	19%	16%	0
Not aware of any MoEYS policy measures which would help support teachers during school closures	4%	1%	7%	4%	4%	0

Table 31 illustrates a detailed breakdown, by respondent type, of the awareness of policy measures taken to support teachers. Even though these policies and critical support measures are in place to support teachers, education administrators were more aware of the support (and sometimes school directors) than teachers. This finding means it is important to continue raising awareness among teachers of possible support channels and policies to support them during school closures, and when schools re-open. This will allow teachers to support students with continued distance learning, accelerated and remedial education until learning losses due to previous school closures are mitigated and eliminated over time.

Figure 40: Awareness levels of policy measures for teachers, by school type



Overall, awareness levels of policy measures taken to support teachers during school closures varied by type of policy measure and school level (see Figure 40). Most respondents were aware of practical guidelines for ICT/digital teaching/learning. Except for NFE school types, where only 46 per cent were aware, awareness for other school levels varied from 62 per cent among pre-schools to 84 per cent in teacher training institutions. Ready-made teaching/learning materials was also frequently shared as a policy measure that teachers were aware of, although this was less frequently shared by respondents in teacher training institutions (33 per cent). Awareness for teaching and learning materials ranged from 46 per cent of respondents in NFE centres to 57 per cent of respondents in primary schools.

Nearly 70 per cent of respondents from teacher training institutions were aware of additional in-service training to prepare for distance learning, while these figures ranged from 30 per cent in pre-schools to 44 per cent in lower secondary. The provision of psychosocial support to teachers was less frequently reported as a measure that was available to support teachers during COVID-19, ranging from 14 per cent to 20 per cent across all respondents. Nearly 16 per cent of respondents from NFE centres and 12 per cent of respondents from early childhood centres were not aware of any policy measures to support teachers. Figure 40 illustrates that awareness for other school levels (primary, secondary and teacher training) were overall much higher, with an average of 2 per cent of non-awareness.

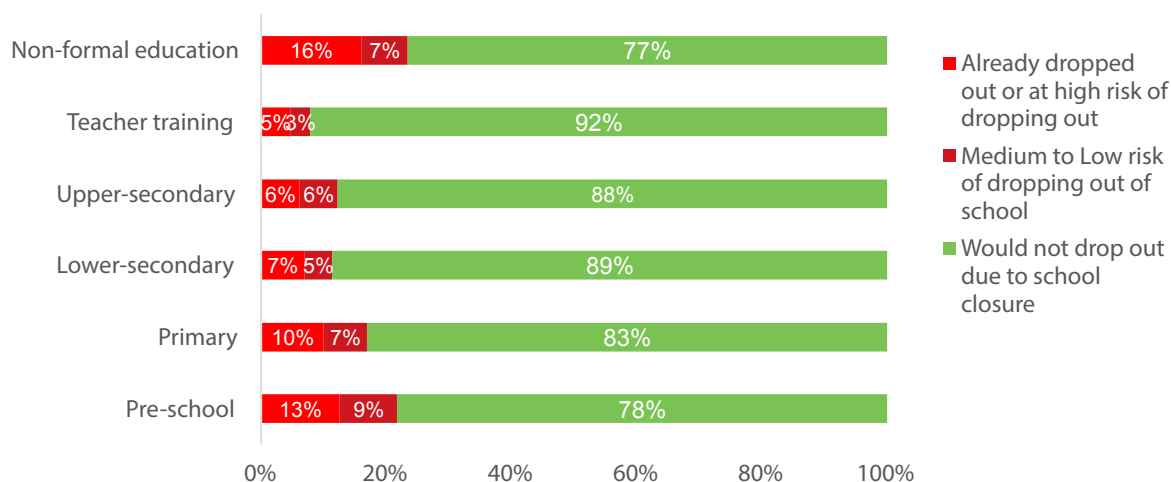
Increased risk of drop out due to extended school closures

Further to a media call hosted by WHO, UNICEF and UNESCO⁴⁸ on 15 September 2020, a media release highlighted that at the height of COVID-19, 192 countries shuttered schools, leaving 1.6 billion students without in-person learning. By mid-September, analysis by UNICEF indicated that 870 million students, or half the world's student population in 51 countries, were still unable to return to school. In the same analysis, UNICEF posited that the pandemic threatened to push at least 24 million students out of school completely.

An analysis of student and caregiver responses in Cambodia illustrates that the majority of students, 84 per cent, indicated they would not drop out or pull their children out of school due to COVID-19. Boys are perceived to be more vulnerable to dropping out of school than girls (17 per cent versus 14 per cent). Interestingly, 81 per cent of families with ID Poor cards indicated their continued commitment to their child's schooling compared to 85 per cent of non-ID Poor card holders. However, 19 per cent of ID Poor card holders demonstrated a higher risk of drop out compared to 15 per cent of non-ID Poor card holders.

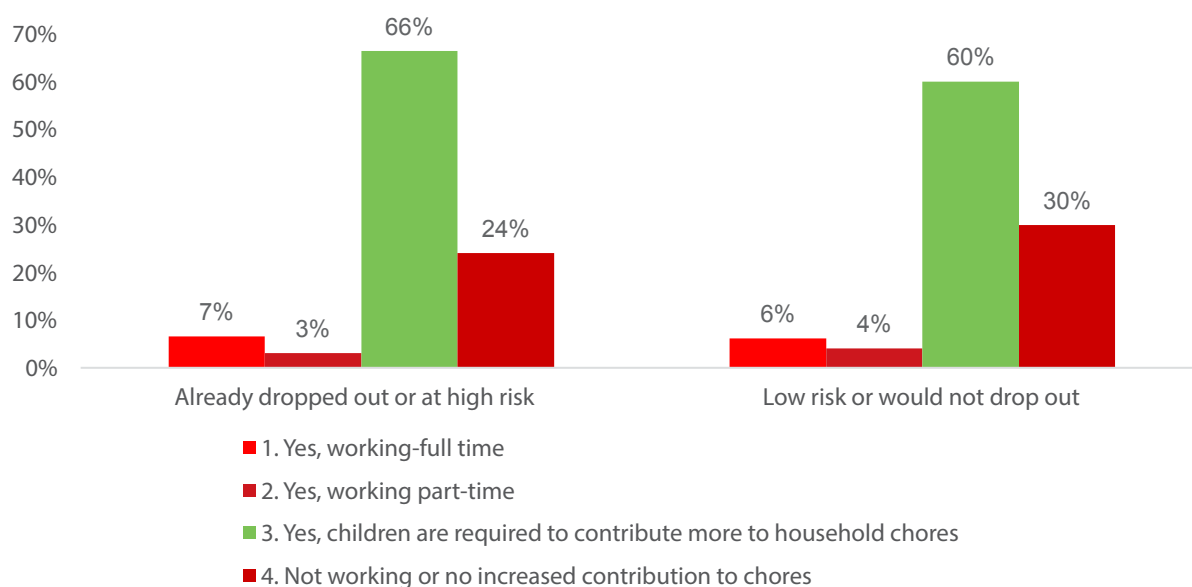
⁴⁸ UNICEF (2020, September 15). UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore remarks at a press conference on new updated guidance on school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19 [Press release]. Retrieved 1 October 2020, from <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unicef-executive-director-henrietta-fore-remarks-press-conference-new-updated>

Figure 41: Risk of school drop out, by school level



As elaborated in Figure 41, students enrolled in NFE programmes are at more risk of dropping out or have already dropped out (16 per cent), followed by early childhood centres (13 per cent), primary schools (10 per cent), lower secondary (7 per cent), upper secondary (6 per cent), and teacher training centres (5 per cent).

Figure 42: Working/additional home chore status of students in regard to high and low levels of potential school drop out



The working status of students during COVID-19 school closures was cross-tabulated with the risk of drop out. It was observed that 76 per cent of students who had already dropped out or reported a high risk of dropping out had either started working or increased their contribution to household chores. This was compared to 70 per cent of students who reported low or no risk of dropping out (see Figure 42).

Perspectives on safe school re-opening

Timing for school re-opening

Data collection for this assessment was completed immediately before schools re-opened across Cambodia. The findings in this section indicate that, while safety was a major concern at the time regarding the preparedness of schools to re-open, a substantial number of respondents on both the supply and demand sides of the education sector felt it was time to allow children back into schools and to continue face-to-face learning.



The majority of respondents reported that they would like schools to open either when it was safe (approximately 45 per cent) or as soon as possible (nearly 41 per cent).

Table 32: Perspectives on school re-opening, by respondent type and timelines

Respondent type	As soon as possible	At the beginning of academic year (November 2020)	January 2021	When it is safe
Caregiver	54%	8%	2%	36%
Education administrators (central, provincial and district levels)	26%	11%	9%	54%
Local authority	82%	4%	8%	7%
School director	40%	9%	16%	34%
Student	41%	8%	3%	48%
Teacher	28%	12%	5%	55%

As Table 32 illustrates, teachers (55 per cent) and education administrators (54 per cent) believed that schools should re-open only when it was safe. Caregivers (54 per cent) and students (41 per cent) reported wanting schools to re-open as soon as possible, followed by school directors (40 per cent), teachers (28 per cent) and education administrators (26 per cent).

When results were disaggregated, men/boys were slightly more keen to have schools re-open: 43 per cent responded as soon as possible compared to 39 per cent of women/girls. However, women/girls were also more concerned with safety: 49 per cent indicated schools should re-open when it was safe versus 42 per cent of men/boys.

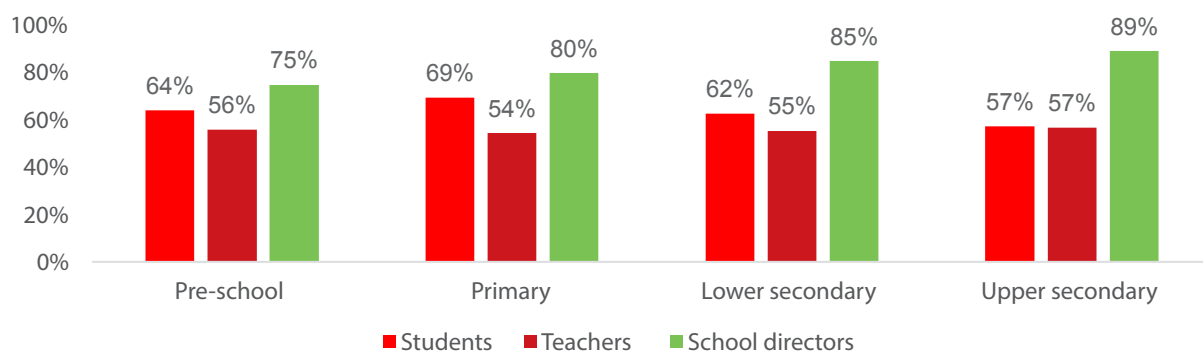


When asked if respondents thought it was safe to re-open schools immediately, 64 per cent either strongly agreed or agreed, while 27 per cent were neutral and only 9 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Perspectives on immediate school re-opening

The highest percentage of local authorities (87 per cent), school directors (81 per cent) and education administrators (80 per cent) were found to be in favour of immediate school re-opening, agreeing or strongly agreeing that it was safe to re-open schools immediately. This was followed by 66 per cent of caregivers, 60 per cent of students and 56 per cent of teachers.

Figure 43: Percentage of respondents who either agree or strongly agree it is safe to return to school, by school level



When disaggregated by school level, Figure 43 illustrates that 64 per cent of respondents with pre-school aged students and 69 per cent with primary school students agreed or strongly agreed that it was safe to re-open schools immediately, while only 56 per cent of pre-school teachers and 54 per cent of primary school teachers agreed or strongly agreed that it was safe.

The trend continued among secondary schools: 62 per cent of lower secondary and 57 per cent of upper secondary students, compared to 55 per cent of lower secondary and 57 per cent of upper secondary school teachers thought it was safe to open schools immediately. Views of the safety of immediate school re-opening were significantly high among school directors across all school levels, and increased for higher levels of education: 75 per cent of pre-school, 80 per cent of primary, 85 per cent of lower secondary, and 89 per cent of upper secondary school directors strongly agreed or agreed that it was safe to re-open schools immediately, 69 per cent of boys/men thought it was safe to re-open schools while 59 per cent of women/girls thought it was safe.

MoEYS school re-opening report

MoEYS and a research team from the Department of Policy conducted a study on school re-opening in Cambodia during the COVID-19 pandemic. Using an online survey administered to schools at all levels across the country, as well as focus group discussions, the Department of Policy's research focused on location and timing of school re-opening, school preparedness in relation to the MoEYS school re-opening framework, and schools' ability to support digital learning as a blended approach.

The School Re-opening Report had similar findings to this assessment with regard to education stakeholders' attitudes to returning to school: 20 per cent of teachers and students reported being very satisfied about returning to school soon, 75 per cent of both groups reported being satisfied with school re-opening soon, and approximately 5 per cent reported they were only slightly satisfied with schools re-opening soon.

Access to WASH facilities in schools is of key concern when considering readiness to re-open during the pandemic. Both this assessment and the Department of Policy report found that while MoEYS was well positioned for students to return to school safely, further work needed to be done to increase access and gain a better, more targeted, understanding of which facilities and supplies were needed. Comparing the two reports: 69 per cent of students, school directors and teachers reported having access to functioning WASH facilities with water and soap in this assessment versus 89 per cent of teachers and students reporting access to hand washing facilities, and approximately 98 per cent from each group having access to soap at school in the MoEYS School Re-opening Report.

As concerns for COVID-19 prevention remain, MoEYS has decided to use a blended approach to re-opening schools, where teachers and school directors will continue to be asked to support student learning from a distance. To measure the ability of a school to be successful in using a blended approach, the MoEYS School Re-opening Report asked school directors and teachers what types of ICT were available at their schools. Encouragingly, almost 97 per cent of schools reported having a computer, however only 51 per cent reported having internet network access.

Conclusions and recommendations

7

The COVID-19 Joint Education Sector Needs Assessment was done to generate evidence that would inform future response and recovery policies, and to target interventions where they were most needed and would be most effective. MoEYS and the Education Sector Working Group wanted to determine the most effective approaches to implementing future strategies and policies, and where to focus available resources.

The conclusions and recommendations in this section were formulated in a collaborative manner, largely through a one-day workshop with participants from MoEYS technical departments, the Education Sector Working Group and NGOs. The assessment working group circulated the findings to all relevant stakeholders to ensure those unable to attend the workshop had the opportunity to provide input to the development of the conclusions and recommendations.

Access, effectiveness and reach of distance learning efforts

1

Continue to use multiple distance learning delivery modalities to provide more flexible and equitable opportunities for students to learn

Findings show a significant digital divide in Cambodia, with uneven access to technology, ICT equipment and online applications such as Zoom and Whatsapp. While MoEYS has already established multiple delivery channels, there is a need to continue targeted efforts to complement digital with non-digital/low-tech delivery of distance learning. The study found that a large percentage of students is contributing to household chores or part-time and full-time work. Therefore, it may be more effective for MoEYS to continue asynchronous learning⁴⁹ (TV, radio, online, take-home learning packages) as this provides flexibility for students doing remote learning. As so many resources are available through different media – online/TV/radio, etc., there is a need for better organization of content so students and parents are able to search for specific content easily, for example by topic, by date, by grade level, etc.

However, as online engagement by students varies within and across grade levels, MoEYS could consider complementing it with some standardized/structured synchronous instruction, such as small group learning sessions with teachers or peer learning groups that are carried out in all schools across the nation, regularly and in line with pre-determined requirements.

⁴⁹ Synchronous learning is online or distance education that happens in real time, often with a set class schedule and required login times. Asynchronous learning does not require real-time interaction. Instead, content is available online for students to access when it best suits their schedules, and assignments are completed to deadlines (<https://thebestschools.org/magazine/synchronous-vs-asynchronous-education/>).

2

Continue to simplify and prioritize curricula and learning goals for different grade levels

There is a continued need for MoEYS to work collaboratively across key departments, such as the Curriculum Department, Education Quality Assessment Department, and other front-line service delivery departments like the Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary and Non-Formal Education departments to determine grade-level priority learning concepts and learning standards. While current distance learning efforts for primary and secondary grade levels prioritize key subjects, there is also a need to connect instruction with formative assessments.

If distance learning continues in the new school year, the assessment working group recommends that it be based on a simplified curriculum for each grade level, and should focus on key concepts, skills and competencies required to: (i) enable learning progression to ensure readiness for the following school year, (ii) succeed in high-stakes/external exams, (iii) leverage this opportunity to teach life skills needed for the future (for example, resilience, adaptability, creativity, communication and collaboration, alongside empathy and emotional intelligence),⁵⁰ and (iv) further establish inter-disciplinary connections in learning due to limited instructional time (for example, combining an analytical narrative on analysing charts/graphs will not only address math/science concepts, but also support students in other disciplines such as language/social studies, etc.). By prioritizing subjects for distance learning, MoEYS could also consider the criticality of the subject/concept for students' future learning, the extent to which they need active or dynamic teacher interaction/engagement (for example, sports/music), and in-person equipment (for example, laboratories), and to what extent future learning within this subject depends upon current building blocks.

3

Invest in more dynamic real-time feedback collection on distance learning

Overall, there is a need to monitor student attendance in distance or online learning as the findings indicate that this is not well established. As the current MoEYS directives do not require measurement of student engagement in distance learning, there is no proxy indicator to gauge student learning. Distance learning will continue to play an important role even after the start of school year 2020/21, therefore MoEYS could consider putting measures in place to collect more regular and standardized data on student engagement through distance learning (both online and other delivery modalities). Some tracking measures that could be put in place include: (i) regular catch-ups/touch points (possibly once per week) between teachers and students, (ii) student attendance during live/synchronous

⁵⁰ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/03/4-ways-covid-19-education-future-generations/>

instruction, for example the number of videos accessed, time spent watching videos, and (iii) assessment of online or take-home assignments, including tracking of timely completion and submission of assignments. In rolling out these measures, there needs to be improved clarity in the roles and responsibilities of different education stakeholders, i.e., teachers, school directors, and district and provincial education administrators in collecting, reporting and analysing this data.

4

Two-way engagement required for more effective distance learning programmes

Given the limited access to online and TV learning modules and limited active learning engagement time, there is a continued need for MoEYS to use various strategies to promote student engagement through distance learning and outreach efforts. The online and distance learning programmes in Cambodia could be strengthened with improved two-way (teacher-student) or student-driven learning. In developing content for all grade levels, MoEYS could consider additional methods to enhance engagement, such as:⁵¹ (i) improved media features in videos (text, animation, video quality), (ii) ability to engage with teachers or peers in learning, (iii) proportion of courses online versus offline approaches, (iv) quality of online instruction delivery, (v) use of problem-based or project-based approaches to learning, (vi) student opportunities to practice skills or concepts, and (vii) quality of content produced.

The findings show a lack of consistent feedback to students by teachers, which is necessary to develop new knowledge and skills through self-learning.⁵² Based on the learning standards envisaged for different grade levels by MoEYS at central level, MoEYS should equip all teachers with the tools and resources required to assess students against these standards. Through the distance learning programmes, teachers need to conduct formative assessments to identify any learning gaps and respond to these learning gaps by modifying their delivery of distance learning. This two-way engagement of giving feedback to students on learning will enable both the student and teacher to collaboratively work and accelerate learning despite limited in-school instructional time.

51 https://insightpolicyresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NSAES_COVID19_Whitepaper_Final_508.pdf

52 https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/learning_assessments_during_covid-19_final.pdf

5

Improving accessibility of basic teaching-learning materials for students

The findings showed that access to basic learning materials such as paper, pens, notebooks, school textbooks, reading materials or other reference materials was low across all grade levels. Students/caregivers cited paper-based learning as the most frequently used distance learning methods by students, therefore, there is a need for schools to mobilize basic learning materials for students to ensure continued learning during the pandemic. Schools could use their school operating funds flexibly in the current and upcoming school year, and other funds to consolidate, safely deliver and/or allow students to pick up a package of basic learning materials.

6

Differentiated distance learning approaches for early-childhood and primary students required

The findings showed that younger children in pre-schools and primary grade levels demonstrated lower utilization of MoEYS distance learning initiatives than those in higher grade levels. There is a need for differentiated distance learning strategies to address the needs of different age groups, particularly younger learners. Primary and pre-school students need special support and guidance from caregivers, more accessible content, and teaching-learning styles that provide social interaction, which cannot be replicated online or through distance learning.

As a result of these needs, the onus falls disproportionately on caregivers to actively help students to learn. It is recommended that early childhood and early primary years be prioritized for school re-opening. During school closures, it is recommended that distance learning strategies for primary and early primary include: (i) techniques of the 'flipped' classroom, where children engage through immersive learning experiences, such as through interacting with their natural settings and surroundings, and then bring this learning to online or paper-based learning, (ii) empower parents and caregivers with confidence and skills to facilitate learning through play and encourage free unstructured play, (iii) deliver paper-based early learning materials, kits and play-based learning content if risk of transmission is low, piggy-backing on existing community structures, and (iv) schools provide specific support to parents to engage in activities for early years.

Results show that parental engagement is high in Cambodia, but at varying levels, especially across grade levels. The nature of parental engagement in education has changed in the context of the pandemic, with parents having to engage in the ‘instructional core’ – the interactions between content, students and educators.⁵³ Recommendations to draw on more active parent engagement strategies include: (i) modify distance learning content to make it more accessible and tailored for parents, as it is currently tailored to teachers (for example, sharing activities and problems students could do around their homes that involve math, as opposed to a teacher-centric approach to learning), (ii) modify existing MoEYS parenting programmes to include components on parental facilitation skills, especially at primary and pre-primary levels, (iii) leverage low-technology approaches such as SMS, family visits, or weekly phone calls to instil ‘touch points’ or ‘feedback loops’ with parents on learning, (iv) update existing MoEYS parenting guidelines and integrate more topics for caregivers, including ICT management, (v) leverage local community structures such as commune committees for women and children to act as community liaison points to meet with parents, especially parents of young or vulnerable learners to check on student wellbeing and to encourage learning during school closures, and (vi) continue to use current communication for development strategies to advocate parents and communities on the importance of quality learning during school closures and to improve parents’ access to information and knowledge about distance learning platforms.

As the findings show that parents with higher education qualifications are able to engage more actively in their students’ learning, there is an opportunity to overcome barriers in adult learning and enhance participation in the context of COVID-19. In Cambodia, there is potential to further integrate adult literacy in its COVID-19 response and recovery plan, and to strengthen the systems for alternate/NFE provision with targeted curricula and relevant teaching materials for more meaningful adult literacy teaching and learning.

⁵³ <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Parent-perspectives-in-Botswana-during-COVID-19-FINAL.pdf>

8

Continue to foster shared value partnerships to enhance infrastructure and make online education more accessible

There is an opportunity for MoEYS to accelerate efforts to realize its medium-term digital education strategy as stipulated in the Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023. While smart phone penetration is seemingly high in Cambodia, there is still limited access to internet subscriptions on phones or other devices, due to financial and connectivity constraints. While commendable efforts have been made already by MoEYS, there is a continued need for MoEYS, in cooperation with the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, to increase accessibility of its digital content through public-private partnerships – particularly to improve quality and access to fixed, mobile and residential broadband services. Some initiatives that have been successful in other countries include cost-subsidization with telecommunication companies for connectivity, free/subsidized data costs by service providers like SMART and Metfone to access MoEYS digital education content, and infrastructure investment in electricity and internet in remote and hard-to-reach areas.

Capacity development needs of educators

1

Need for improved and more effective dissemination of policy responses in the education sector during COVID-19

Due to the abrupt and unexpected nature of the school closures, MoEYS at central level developed and circulated several policy responses through letters, directives or guidance notes to different stakeholders. However, findings show that not all policy responses are reaching the targeted or intended stakeholders, and monitoring and accountability of various policy responses could be strengthened. There is a need for any future policy responses to be disseminated to all relevant stakeholders through media which are most accessible. Clear monitoring and reporting mechanisms of all policy responses need to be further developed and enforced at all levels of the education system, with clear responsibilities for education administrators and educators at central, sub-national and school levels.

2

Educators require access to technological devices, ICT connectivity and digital skills to facilitate distance learning

Reach and accessibility of ICT devices, as well as connectivity for educators, continues to be low, thereby becoming a barrier to successfully implementing, moderating or monitoring distance learning initiatives. It is recommended that MoEYS make available SIM card and internet data card connectivity for all its educators to access digital learning content and facilitate engagement with families and students.

Digital upskilling across all education stakeholders is required for them to use these devices to teach and communicate effectively. MoEYS at national level, led by the Department of Information Technology, in strategic partnership with private/other content developers, can develop interactive on-the-job orientation/learning modules for educators, and provide support for educators to incorporate various technologies in delivering distance learning programmes. For example, this could be a mix of accessing online platforms, using internet/email, SMS, Whatsapp/Telegram groups, Zoom, MS Teams and the Google suite of applications. The Department of Information Technology could develop some additional modules to improve education administrators' digital skill capacity to better quality assure, monitor and report on distance learning efforts at the school and community levels.

3

Set clear expectations of teachers and provide timely support to deliver successful distance learning programmes

With COVID-19 school closures interrupting the normal curriculum, as well as measuring student progress MoEYS must set clear guidelines for a revised curriculum and what content teachers are expected to cover. This will in turn allow teachers and MoEYS to appropriately assess student progress and mitigate the risk of measuring students using content which has not been presented to them. In addition to clarifying the curriculum, it is important to consider the requirements and accountabilities of teachers. While setting such requirements, MoEYS should consider the increased workload of teachers caused by school closures and blended learning.

Concurrently, MoEYS at central level needs to make provision for dynamic, real-time professional development for teachers⁵⁴ to cope with the new demands of distance learning. MoEYS should consider establishing interactive mechanisms for peer-learning through Facebook, Krou page/Telegram/Whatsapp groups, as well as technical support to develop lessons plans and assignments and to deliver teaching in a 'hybrid' format. Active support from school directors and/or school cluster groups is important, as well as other blended

⁵⁴ <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/331951589903056125/pdf/Three-Principles-to-Support-Teacher-Effectiveness-During-COVID-19.pdf>

approaches such as pre-recorded online and TV videos. These can equip teachers to cope better with distance learning requirements. Other recommendations include hotlines and helpdesks moderated by education administrators at central level, as well as experienced school directors, teachers or technical grade leaders either via telephone or on social media platforms.

4

Conduct more detailed needs assessments of educators to respond to school re-opening and to help students catch up on learning

As teachers and students return to school, distance learning will continue as part of a blended approach. MoEYS will look to leverage advancements made in certain aspects of distance learning (for example, digital learning) during school closures. A thorough needs assessment of supply-side education stakeholders is needed before the new school year begins to understand what skills are immediately needed to support a blended learning approach of both in-person and distance learning, as well as where skill gaps lie. Teachers will need to fully leverage advancements made in effectively using technology in their classrooms.

Depending on MoEYS strategies to support students' return to learning (for example, low-stake learning assessments, identifying at-risk students, extended instructional time, catch-up programmes, remedial education and accelerated education programmes),⁵⁵ clear implementation strategies and related capacity development needs must be identified, developed and addressed. This will ensure that educators can adequately support students' return to school.

5

Vertically align capacity development initiatives across education stakeholders and foster educator-to-educator collaborations between private and public schools

Given that the needs identified across all supply stakeholders – school directors, teachers and sub-national education, are quite similar, there is a need to create complementary capacity development initiatives for supply-side education stakeholders in different roles. This will create a harmonized approach to building skills throughout all levels of MoEYS. MoEYS administrators at central and sub-national levels could facilitate collaboration between private and public schools for professional development on delivering distance learning programmes.

⁵⁵ https://inee.org/system/files/resources/AEWG_COVID19_Pathways%20for%20the%20Return%20to%20Learning-screen_0.pdf

6

Adapt TEI curricula for distance learning

The pandemic presents an opportunity to institute systems strengthening measures to prepare future teachers to respond swiftly to emergencies using technology. Training teachers on effective pedagogical techniques suitable for distance learning will require TEIs to shift away from a curriculum that focuses on in-person instruction. The revised curriculum should consider building teachers' skills in delivering online interactive lessons, using online platforms, and developing distance learning lesson plan materials. In the immediate/short-term, MoEYS could consider more online/virtual modalities for delivering lessons for trainees' own professional development.

7

Upgrade teacher educator ICT skills

Upgrading teacher educator ICT skills is specifically relevant to the COVID-19 context and will remain relevant as MoEYS plans to shift teacher training to online learning in a post COVID-19 context. Teacher educators must upgrade their knowledge on the theory and practice of teaching specific subject content with ICT, and build their ability to effectively use ICT in their teacher education courses.

8

Prioritize infrastructure investments in TEIs

With the shift to at least some online learning in TEIs, a needs and cost analysis of ICT should be conducted in all TEIs across Cambodia to determine a risk-informed infrastructure system. This will allow MoEYS and its partners to upgrade ICT infrastructures where needed and help begin to troubleshoot solutions for TEIs in the most remote areas.

Multidimensional impacts on the education system

1

Create a sustainable Risk Communications and Community Engagement approach and target dissemination at less-responsive stakeholders and most-vulnerable stakeholders geographically

The Cambodian Government and its partners have had tremendous success with the work undertaken up to this point in risk communication and community engagement. Awareness of COVID-19 and proper prevention measures were found to be high among most education stakeholders. With this success it is important to consider that many of the advancements in awareness and knowledge have been the result of a surge of both government, development partner, NGO and private interest in this area due to the rise of COVID-19.

While these short-term gains are impressive, to affect long-term behavioural change MoEYS, the Cambodian Government and their partners should consider how to formulate sustainable risk communication and community engagement efforts, as resources begin to shift away from creating awareness to more pressing needs. One approach would be to use this assessment as a basis to create a more targeted plan for stakeholders that have not been as responsive to existing efforts, especially parents and caregivers, and to focus on less practiced behaviours such as cleaning and disinfecting surfaces more regularly. This approach should consider which media are the most relevant to the targeted stakeholders.

2

Triangulate data on access to WASH facilities from the Education Management Information System and this assessment

The high numbers of students who reported having access to hand-washing facilities at school in this assessment do not correlate with the MoEYS Department of Education Management Information System categorization of schools that do not meet certain minimum access standards (Three Star Approach). The MoEYS Department of Education Management Information System and Department of M&E, along with MoEYS partners, should conduct further research using all available data. This would allow efforts to focus on enhancing access to WASH facilities where they were most needed. Prior to conducting further research, this assessment's data on WASH facilities and data from the Education Management Information System should be cross analysed by geographical region, to focus further efforts and better understand where improved access is most needed.

3

Encourage schools to prioritize access to WASH facilities in their school operating funds and conduct further analysis on school resources dedicated to WASH

Funding and budgetary concerns around WASH facilities were not directly part of the scope of this assessment. However, a school's prioritization of its operating fund and the resources already dedicated to upgrading and maintaining proper hygiene facilities directly affects access, and as such should be highlighted. Using this assessment and analysis of Education Management Information System data on WASH as a baseline, MoEYS departments of School Health, Finance, Early Childhood, Primary and General Secondary Education should collaborate to encourage schools that do not meet acceptable hygiene standards to prioritize WASH facilities in their school operating fund.

Thoroughly analysing resources (funding or otherwise) that have been dedicated to upgrading and maintaining proper hygiene facilities will allow gaps to be identified. Such an analysis could be coupled with a geographical and school-level analysis of where gaps in funding and facilities are highest. This could contribute to the efficient use of upcoming Global Partnership for Education school block grants.

4

Identify and prioritize inclusive WASH facilities

This assessment found differences in access to WASH facilities at schools and homes for students with a disability. This indicates the need for a prioritization of inclusive WASH facilities. MoEYS should use these assessment findings to support the incorporation of investment in inclusive facilities in the response plan. MoEYS should work with other appropriate Cambodian ministries, such as the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation, and their partners, to ensure that to the extent possible students reporting a disability have access to acceptable WASH facilities at home and at school.

5

Create clear nutritional guidelines and expand social protection programmes

This assessment noted a reduction in levels of access to food during school closures. Malnutrition is a serious threat to children's ability to attend school and to learning at school when they attend. In developing countries, 500 million school days are lost to ill health each year, largely due to preventable diseases and malnutrition.⁵⁶

To combat the reduced access to food and increases in malnutrition, the assessment working group recommends MoEYS create nutritional guidelines that integrate the resumption of a safe school meal programme with school nutrition interventions. This would include promoting healthy diets, nutrition screening and referrals, micronutrient supplementation, deworming, healthy food sold in canteens at schools, and clean and hygienic preparation of food. Efforts should be concentrated, but not limited to, lower levels of education, such as primary and pre-primary, as those students' access to nutrition has been the most affected.

Broader social protection programmes and the provisions made by the government to address food shortages, and their link to livelihood and protection programmes, should be revisited and expanded in the areas most affected.

6

Increase student awareness of risk factors

Levels of increased exposure to violence, abuse and exploitation, as reported by secondary students, were much lower when compared to the perceptions of increased risk of supply side education stakeholders. While this is an encouraging finding, the UN warns against the heightened risk of children being exposed to violence and abuse during lockdowns put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.⁵⁷ Previous research found that more than half of children in Cambodia had experienced some form of violence prior to age 18.⁵⁸

This situation raises the question of how different groups of education stakeholders understand risks children are exposed to differently. It is imperative that all education stakeholders have a common understanding of the various risks that students in Cambodia face, in order

⁵⁶ UNESCO, WFP, UNICEF, WHO. The Importance of Investing in the Wellbeing of Children to Avert the Learning Crisis.

⁵⁷ United Nations (2020). Policy brief – Impact of COVID-19 on Children. Accessible at: https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/160420_COVID_Children_Policy_Brief.pdf

⁵⁸ Ministry of Women's Affairs, UNICEF Cambodia, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2014). Findings from Cambodia's Violence Against Children Survey 2013. Cambodia: Ministry of Women's Affairs. Accessible at: https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/sites/violenceagainstchildren.un.org/files/documents/political_declarations/east_asia_and_pacific/cambodias_violence_against_children_survey.pdf

to appropriately mitigate those risks. Investing in students' understanding of the definition of various risk factors and raising their awareness of increased exposure will help to ensure issues can be equally understood and identified by all education stakeholders. MoEYS and its partners should continue raising awareness through the MHPSS and violence against children information campaigns that have been integrated into back-to-school campaigns, while seeking media which are most accessed by students.

7

Monitor and track students' wellbeing and continue to enhance psychosocial first aid training

Assessment findings indicate some increased risk of student exposure to violence, abuse or exploitation during school closures and COVID-19. The long-term economic effects of COVID-19 throughout Cambodia and the continued need for schools to support student learning from a distance using various online platforms are both situations which could lead to increased exposure to violence, abuse or exploitation of students, based on what was reported during this assessment.

MoEYS should set up a clear and cohesive system to monitor student wellbeing, to support students and create interventions which mitigate increases in these risks. The assessment working group recommends setting up mechanisms for teachers to support parents and caregivers to monitor children's wellbeing. MoEYS should consider situations in which students are exposed to violence, abuse or exploitation at home or school and create alternative methods of support appropriately.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put unexpected and undue stress on Cambodian education stakeholders, who reported increased mental health and psychosocial difficulties. Psychosocial first aid training should continue to be delivered by social workers. MoEYS and its partners should consider training school personnel in how to provide MHPSS to students. MoEYS and its partners should look to leverage existing mechanisms, such as school-based management or school counselling programmes, to integrate MHPSS training for school personnel. The MoEYS positive discipline teacher training programme is one good entry point for incorporating MHPSS capacity building for teachers and school directors.

8

Monitor possible rises in absenteeism and create a tailored approach as students return to school

Although the risk of dropping out of school was reported as aligning with trends during a non-emergency situation, attendance and enrolment need to be closely monitored, considering continued economic hardships. One indication of the immediate impacts of the declining economy on Cambodian education stakeholders is pre-school and primary students reporting higher risk of dropping out. This is unusual, as past trends in Cambodia show that secondary students are generally more at risk of leaving school for economic gains. Considering this indicative finding and the likelihood of continued economic hardship, MoEYS and its partners should use the Education Management Information System to closely monitor absenteeism and drop-out rates, and adapt their approach to keeping students in school. Any approach should consider different risks students experience in geographical regions and across different school levels.

The World Bank Cambodia's May Economic update warns that extended school closures will likely lead to learning loss and an increased risk of higher student drop-out rates. In line with the MoEYS Cambodian Education Response Plan to COVID-19, it is recommended that learning environments remain adaptable and tailor their approaches to teaching and learning to meet the differing needs of students who have suffered from various levels of learning and motivational loss due to extended school closures.

9

Strengthen school management committees' and local authorities' roles in school attendance

Internationally, communities play an important supporting role in successful schooling programmes. In Cambodia, community involvement in local schools is through school management committees and school support committees. These committees have representatives from local authorities, the school, the community and parents, and are effective tools for engaging the community and ensuring accountability. Strengthening these existing mechanisms by enhancing their ability to counsel students and families at risk of dropping out will be an effective way to support increased attendance both during and after the global health emergency.

In Cambodia, as all over the world, drop-out rates are often highest at key educational transition points. While the effective transition rate from primary to lower secondary school is relatively high for Cambodia at 89.4 per cent,⁵⁹ there is concern that this rate will decrease as education stakeholders experience economic hardships brought on by the pandemic. MoEYS should work with school management and support committees, and local authorities, to ensure there are campaigns that stress the importance of students transitioning from primary to lower secondary, and from lower secondary to upper secondary. This could be

59 UNESCO Institute of Statistics <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/kh#slideoutsearch>

done as part of back-to-school efforts, and would begin to mitigate the risk of student drop out at these points before it occurs.

10

Improve the MoEYS scholarship programme, aiming to reach the most vulnerable

MoEYS could utilize government data of households enrolled in other social protection programmes in Cambodia to incentivize them to continue their children's education. Improving flexibility in targeting such social protection programmes by other ministries in Cambodia would also help ensure that MoEYS could provide scholarships to those most in need. In the immediate term, MoEYS, in collaboration with other relevant line ministries, could promote on-demand ID Poor registration by households with children of primary/secondary school age, and in this regard make changes to the ID Poor/on-demand ID Poor data collection and assessment tools. Some medium-term recommendations include actions by MoEYS to promote cross-referral mechanisms, and the coordination and use of common tools and delivery systems among different programmes. This would be with a view to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery. The changes will have to be embedded in ongoing efforts to develop and design a family package of integrated social assistance programmes by the government. There is also a need to explore and develop a comprehensive database management system to correctly identify poor and vulnerable people by linking the system to the ID Poor system, and to the MoEYS scholarship programme in a consistent way. In the longer term, digital technologies could help support an increasingly harmonized social protection system, which could facilitate better coordination across ID Poor, the National Social Security Fund and other cash transfer and social assistance programmes.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ https://set.odi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/covid-19-_cambodia_july-2020-final-1.pdf

Annexes

Annex 1: Sample size target versus reached by population type

Education Institution Type	# of Institutions /directors	Sample size for directors	Surveys collected/ achieved	# of enrolled students	Sample Size for students	Surveys collected/ achieved	# of teachers	Sample size for teachers	Surveys collected/ achieved
State preschools	4,409	101		233,132	1,317		5,414		
Community preschools (CPS)	3,064	N/A	76	62,414	1,309	2,491	1,309	718	343
Primary Education	7,282	365	647	2,023,473	1,322	1,822	44,914	762	1,085
Lower Secondary Education	1,247	294		324,986	1,320	1,868	14,404	750	728
Upper Secondary Education	544	226	367	628,694	1,320	1,162	28,493	760	934
Non-Formal Education (NFE) Centres/ Programmes	332	N/A	N/A	9,377	814	559	564	458	172
Teacher Education Institutions (TEI)	26	N/A	N/A	5,248	1,186	1,307	1,322	298	290
TOTAL		1,158	1,090	3,287,324	8,588	9,209	97,773	4,434	3,552⁶¹

⁶¹ Slightly different than the total teachers surveyed in this assessment (n. 3,608 versus 3,552) because for 56 teachers the grade level of teacher between lower and upper secondary was not able to be determined as they reported teaching both.

Annex 2: Data collection coverage of districts by MoEYS and NGO partners

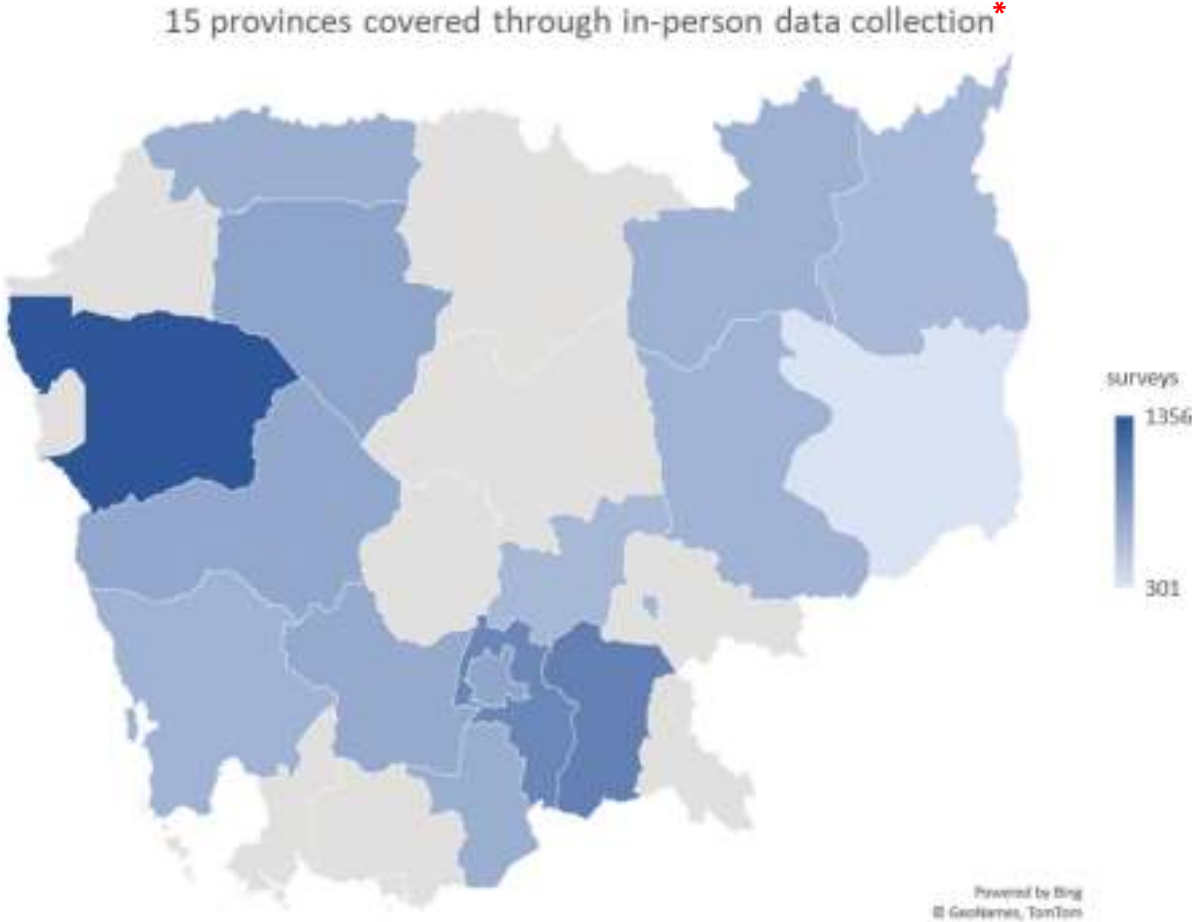
PROVINCE	DISTRICT	RESPONSIBLE PARTNER FOR DATA COLLECTION
Battambang	Battambang	MOEYS
Battambang	Koah Kralar	WORLD VISION
Battambang	Samlaut	Khmer NGO for Education (KHEN) / MOEYS
Battambang	Sampeuv Loun	VSO CAMBODIA / KHEN
Battambang	Sangkea	Finn Church Aid (FCA)
Kampong Cham	Chamkar Leu	SAVE THE CHILDREN
Kampong Cham	Kampong Cham	MOEYS
Kampong Cham	Koh Sotin	SAVE THE CHILDREN
Kampong Cham	Steung Trang	MOEYS
Kampong Speu	Barset	MOEYS
Kampong Speu	Chbar Morn	MOEYS
Kampong Speu	Oral	MOEYS
Kampong Speu	Thporng	MOEYS
Kandal	Kandal Stung	HHC
Kandal	Leuk Dek	MOEYS
Kandal	Lovea Em	MOEYS
Kandal	Sa-ang	MOEYS / HHC
Kandal	Takhmao	MOEYS / HHC
Koh Kong	Khemrak Phoumin	MOEYS
Koh Kong	Kiri Sakor	SAVE THE CHILDREN
Koh Kong	Mondul Seima	SAVE THE CHILDREN
Koh Kong	Thmar Baing	SAVE THE CHILDREN
Kratie	Chhlaung	CHILDFUND CAMBODIA
Kratie	Kratie	MOEYS
Kratie	Sambo	CHILDFUND CAMBODIA/ KAFDOC/ SIPAR
Kratie	Snuol	Good Neighbors Cambodia (GNC)
Mondul Kiri	Keo Seima	CARE
Mondul Kiri	O Raing	CARE
Mondul Kiri	Pichreada	CARE
Oddar Meanchey	Anlung Veng	VSO CAMBODIA
Oddar Meanchey	Banteay Ampil	Food for Hungry Cambodia (FHC)
Oddar Meanchey	Samrong	VSO CAMBODIA
Oddar Meanchey	Trapaing Prasat	Food for Hungry Cambodia (FHC)
Phnom Penh	Chbar Ampeuv	WORLD VISION
Phnom Penh	Dang Kor	MOEYS
Phnom Penh	Mean Chey	MOEYS

PROVINCE	DISTRICT	RESPONSIBLE PARTNER FOR DATA COLLECTION
Phnom Penh	Po Senchey	MOEYS
Phnom Penh	Russey Keo	MOEYS
Phnom Penh	Sen Sok	MOEYS
Prey Veng	Kampong Trabek	CHILDFUND CAMBODIA/ WOMEN/ SIPAR
Prey Veng	Po Rieng	MOEYS
Prey Veng	Prey Veng	MOEYS
Prey Veng	Sithor Kandal	MOEYS
Prey Veng	Svay An Tor	MOEYS
Pursat	Kandieng	MOEYS
Pursat	Krakor	MOEYS
Pursat	Pursat	MOEYS
Pursat	Veal Veng	SAVE THE CHILDREN
Ratanak Kiri	Andaung Meas	PLAN INTERNATIONAL
Ratanak Kiri	Banlung	MOEYS
Ratanak Kiri	O Chum	VSO CAMBODIA
Ratanak Kiri	Veunsai	PLAN INTERNATIONAL
Siemreap	Angkor Thom	PLAN INTERNATIONAL
Siemreap	Chi Kreng	WORLD VISION
Siemreap	Kro Lanh	MOEYS
Siemreap	Pourk	MOEYS
Siemreap	Siemreap	MOEYS
Siemreap	Srey Snom	MOEYS
Siemreap	Svay Leu	Food for Hungry Cambodia (FHC)
Stung Treng	Siembauk	VSO CAMBODIA
Stung Treng	Siempang	PLAN INTERNATIONAL
Stung Treng	Stung Treng	VSO CAMBODIA
Stung Treng	Thala Barivat	PLAN INTERNATIONAL
Takeo	Borei Chulsa	WORLD VISION
Takeo	Daunkeo	MOEYS
Takeo	Kiri Vong	MOEYS
Takeo	Samrong	MOEYS

Annex 3: Number of face-to-face surveys targeted per province at the selected schools (clusters and achievement percentage)

Province	Surveys targeted (in-person at school level)	Surveys collected (in-person at school level)	Achievement %
Battambang	1246	1356	92%
Kampong Cham	665	618	108%
Kampong Speu	695	723	96%
Kandal	878	976	90%
Koh Kong	649	655	99%
Kratie	814	648	126%
Mondul Kiri	399	301	133%
Oddar Meanchey	652	688	95%
Phnom Penh	724	753	96%
Prey Veng	996	1034	96%
Pursat	718	730	98%
Ratanak Kiri	679	613	111%
Siem Reap	720	762	94%
Stung Treng	674	666	101%
Takeo	712	698	102%

Annex 4: 15 provinces covered through in-person data collection



* Blue shaded provinces are where data collection took place in person

