

National Education Contingency Plan and Continuity of Learning Framework for identified Pacific Countries and Territories

**Education Contingency Plan
Federated States of Micronesia**

September 2020

Table of Contents

<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	<i>ii</i>
Introduction	1
Purpose.....	1
Overview of the Content	1
Situation Analysis	2
General background	2
Key Area 1: Students	3
General Background	3
Feasibility and Accessibility of Distance Learning	5
Key Area 2: Families and Communities	5
Community networks, CSOs, or NGOs	5
Experiences of families during the recent school closure	5
Key Area 3: Teachers	6
Accessibility of resources.....	6
Teacher Development and Support.....	7
Experiences of teachers during recent school closures.....	9
Key Area 4: Schools	9
Infrastructure to respond to health-related emergencies and demands for safety.....	9
Key Area 5: Enabling Environment	10
Implementation of Education Response based on COVID-19 Readiness Condition.....	10
Theory of Change	12
Strategic Action Plan	13
Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning	15
Approach	15
Results Framework	16
Risk Management Plan.....	28
Reference List	30

List of Tables

Table 1 Languages spoken per state in FSM

Table 2 Learning from another context on access to education during a health-related emergency

Table 3 International evidence on dropout during health-related emergency

Table 4 International evidence on teacher support during health-related emergency

Table 5 Distribution of schools across FSM

Table 6 FSM COVID-19 Readiness Condition Chart

List of Figures

Figure 1 Disaggregated data on total enrolment of students per education level in FSM

Figure 2 Distribution of schools across FSM

List of Abbreviations

AA	Associate of Arts
AS	Associate of Science
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BS	Bachelor of Science
COM-FSM	College of Micronesia-Federated States of Micronesia
COVID-19	Novel Coronavirus 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education for All
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
HF radio	High Frequency radio
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
NDoE	National Department of Education
NGO	Non-government Organisation
PICT	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
SDoE	State Department of Education
TV	Television
UNICEF	United Nation Children’s Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on education worldwide. It has been estimated that the crisis has affected the learning of 1.6 billion of learners, or about 91% of all students enrolled in education worldwide. As of August 2020, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) had no confirmed cases of COVID-19. The government of FSM has nonetheless implemented preventive measures, such as closing the international borders and initially discontinuing domestic travels. The National Department of Education (NDoE) implemented, as early as March 2020, school closures in all states except for Kosrae and Yap's outer islands schools. Schools in both Chuuk and Pohnpei states have closed since declaration of school closures in March 2020 and now have reopened with each State having some type of distance learning modality plans for their schools; while Yap State reopened the schools approximately two months after the March 2020 declaration of school closures. Public schools did not yet offer alternative modes of learning during the school closures except for some initiative at local level (e.g. In Chuuk state which opened the school later than others (early September), some outer island schools conducted catch-up lessons and schools in the main lagoon distributed paper-based learning packages prepared by school for a month).

NDoE collaborated with SDoEs and other sector partners, to develop an Education Contingency Plan and Continuity of Learning Frameworks to increase its preparedness for future health-related emergencies. The Education Contingency Plan is aligned with the overall national COVID-19 Contingency Plan, the School Emergency Protection Plan (2010), the FSM COVID-19 Contingency Plan, and the initial Covid-19 education response plans prepared by the State Department of Education (SDoE) were reviewed and analysed in order to develop this Education Contingency Plan for FSM.

Purpose

The Education Contingency Plan aims to ensure ongoing learning and well-being for all students and teachers from Early Childhood Education (ECE) level to secondary education level before/ during and after health-related emergencies, relevant to the specific context of the FSM.

Overview of the Content

This Education Contingency Plan starts with an analysis of the current education system in FSM, to ensure the Contingency Plan is relevant for the specific context of FSM. The situation analysis is structured around the following key areas: 'General Background', 'Students', 'Families and Communities', 'Teachers', 'Schools' and 'Enabling Environment'.

The section 'Education Sector Response to Public Health Emergencies' starts with the guiding principles, which formed the conceptual framework from this Education Contingency Plan. The Theory of Change provides an overview of the foundational principles, inputs, strategic outcomes, overall outcome and expected impact. The recommended actions are organised in the Strategic Action Plan per strategic outcome and differentiated by phase in the emergency (preparedness, initial response, ongoing response, recovery and learning).

Situation Analysis

General background

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) follows the education model of the United States of America. It provides free public education up to grade 8. Secondary education (grades 9-12) and ECE are not compulsory (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020), although consultations are currently taking place to extend the compulsory sector to include one year of pre-primary education. These non-compulsory levels of education are free for the 60% of students who opt to enroll.

The states are responsible for instruction, while the national government's role is to provide overall regulations for minimum service provision and support and assistance to the state governments (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020). Funding for education is allocated under the State Compact funds (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020). FSM receives technical assistance and financial aid from external donors to support its education sector (UNICEF; UNICEF), as well as appropriating locally-generated tax revenue

It is reported that the country has 17 indigenous languages; and 11 of these languages are actively used as first languages of communities. While each state has a 'majority state language', English is the official language used in FSM. It is also used as the medium of instruction in schools (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020) after Grade 4. Reports show that less than 2% of the student population has English as their first language (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020, Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2000). Vernacular languages are used as the main language for instruction in the early years of education up to grade 3 level. However, it is reported that some teachers used English or the majority state language of instruction in teaching learners in the primary level. Some of the more recent teaching resources are not available in vernacular language. This might especially be a challenge to support teachers and students in the early grades (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020). It is therefore important to consider the language used in the proposed distance learning programmes.

Table 1. Languages spoken per state in FSM (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2000).

State	Languages
Chuuk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chuukese• Satalwalese• Mortlockese• Western
Kosrae	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kosraen
Pohnpei	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pohnpeian• Pnglapese• Mwoakilese (Mokilese)• Sapwuafikese (Ngatikese)• Nukuoroan• Kapingamarangian

Yap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yapese • Ulithian • Woleian
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Key Area 1: Students

General Background

Based on the 2019 report of the Department of Education, the total population of students enrolled in basic education is 26,015, of which 13,166 (51%) are male and 12,849(49%) are female (National Department of Education, 2020). Given the limited difference in enrolment of boys and girls, data indicates that the overall population of male and female students enrolled are relatively similar. It can be interpreted that gender may not be an issue in terms of school levels in all levels of education (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020). Although the education gender gap is minimal in FSM, it is recommended to take potential different impact of health-related emergencies on boys and girls into account when designing the Education Contingency Plan.

Table 2. Learning from another context on access to education during a health-related emergency.

Evidence from previous health-related emergencies indicated that girls tend have lower access to distance learning programmes and have higher risks not to return to school after the crisis. During the Ebola crisis, for example, girls had increased responsibilities in caring and domestic tasks. This meant they had less time to study than boys and were more likely to drop out when schools re-opened (UNESCO, 2020a). In addition, girls have less access to distance learning resources. Worldwide, women are 25% less likely to know how to use ICT for basic purposes. This gap widens as the tasks become more complex. This means girls are likely to experience more challenges in accessing digital learning platforms (UNESCO, 2020a). Girls have furthermore a higher risk for gender-based violence during health-related emergencies, which has immediate and long-term implications on their learning and well-being (UNESCO, 2020a, Hallgarten, 2020). Limited access to reproductive health care increases the risk for pregnancies and dropping out of school. Evidence from Sierra Leona showed for example that because of the Ebola outbreak, adolescent pregnancies increased with 65% in some areas (Bandiera et al., 2019).

Data on enrolment at the ECE and secondary level are relatively low compared with enrolment of students in primary education. The total enrolment of ECE students from 2016 to 2018 are 2,038; 2,139; and 2,087, respectively. While secondary education has a total enrolment of 4,574; 4,335; and 4,500, over the last three years (National Department of Education, 2018). Low enrolment in secondary level may be attributed to education being compulsory only up to grade 8 (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020).

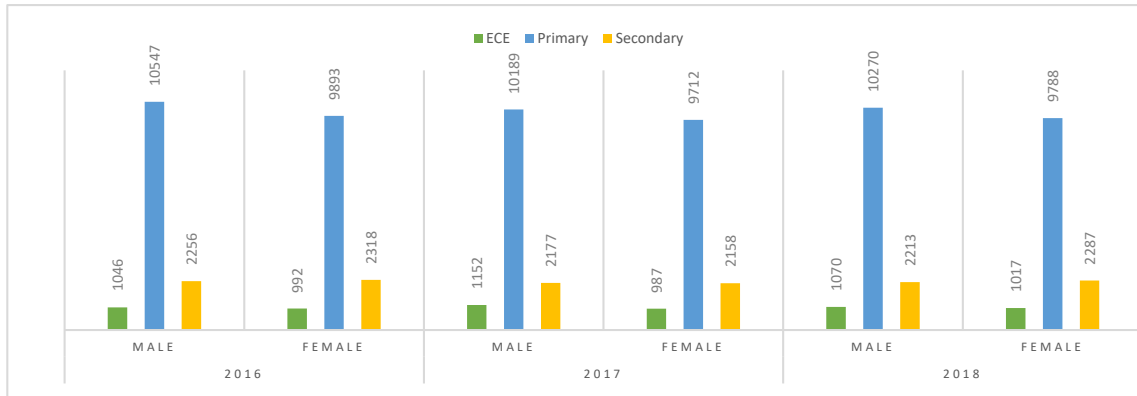


Figure 1. Disaggregated data on total enrolment of students per education level in FSM (National Department of Education, 2018)

It is reported that 40% of the students at the ECE and secondary level are out of school. It is however also reported that the number of out-of-school children is decreasing steadily at the ECE level. There is also a small reduction in the number of out-of-school students at the secondary level (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020).

It is important to consider existing education inequities and risks for drop-out of educational programmes during a health-related emergency, and ensure specific strategies for groups of children who are more likely to experience barriers or difficulties in learning. Ongoing analysis of educational inequities and barriers to learning should inform future revisions and iterations of this plan. NDoE representatives confirmed in the interview conducted in August 2020 that students who experience difficulties in learning due to physical, emotional and social challenges and impairments have the highest risk to drop out of school before completing basic education. It is also noted parents, especially those with a lower socio-economic status, might not receive enough support to encourage the learning of their children, which can also lead to dropping out of school. NDoE are also aware that transportation between home and school can be particularly challenging and a potential cause for dropping out of school (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020; UNICEF, 2017b).

Table 3. International evidence on dropout during health-related emergency.

Global data indicates for example that 1 in 5 children and young people were out of school before the COVID-19 pandemic. Children with disabilities were only half as likely to have ever attended schools compared to children without disabilities (Hayes et al., 2020). School closures are likely to widen this gap (Hayes et al., 2020). During health emergencies, children with disabilities have also limited or no access to rehabilitation, physical therapy or other services which would otherwise support their learning (McClain-Nhlapo, 2020). Children living in remote areas or from families with limited income are also more likely to experience negative impact from health-related emergencies on their learning progress. Evidence of the Ebola and COVID-19 crisis indicates that children from the most disadvantaged groups were likely to have less access to distance learning programmes which deteriorated learning crisis already existed before COVID-19, are affected more from the removal of in-school resources such as school meals and in-school safety, experienced more home-based and community violence and abuse and experienced more pressure to contribute to the family income (Hallgarten, 2020).

Feasibility and Accessibility of Distance Learning

NDoE representatives shared in an interview that a combination of different distance learning approach is most suitable for FSM. Depending on the availability of resources in the region, distance learning will include be a combination of paper-based learning and online learning, or paper-based learning which will be complemented with radio or television-based broadcast. Although specific data is not available, it can be assumed that not all students in FSM have access to electricity, internet, radio and television within their household. Paper-based distance learning approaches are a more viable option, if computers and printers are made available in all schools. Limited on campus learning, while practicing physical distancing is also considered for states with limited access to electricity, phone connection, internet, radio or TV. Based on a survey on internet accessibility by the by Pohnpei State Department of Education, it was confirmed that television and internet-based learning is feasible in Kosrae.

Key Area 2: Families and Communities

Community networks, CSOs, or NGOs

There are established community networks, non-government organisations (NGOs), and civil society organisations in FSM. In Kosrae, there is a strong network of women's group, youth group, parent group, and NGOs. These groups are under the umbrella organisation called the Civil Society of Kosrae. The network of organisations actively participates in different community and school initiatives. With the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the national government collaborated with the Red Cross, CSOs, and women's group in conducting awareness raising campaigns on COVID-19. Red Cross leads the house to house handwashing campaign across FSM. Volunteers, mostly high school students, distributed hygiene kits to each household and educate the citizens on proper handwashing to prevent the spread of diseases.

Reports show that efforts to increase parental and community participation in education have been challenging in FSM (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020). Parents and communities would be hesitant to participate in school-related activities. Reports suggest that this hesitation can be linked to limited support for principals to develop knowledge and skills in establishing and maintaining partnerships with the community (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020). The recent experiences with community support in COVID-19 prevention, might however show the potential of collaboration with the community in health-related emergencies.

Experiences of families during the recent school closure

There was no documentation of experiences from families during the recent school closure or education disruption due to COVID-19. The interviewees shared concerns that families and community members did not always follow the recommended prevention measures from the government strictly. It appeared that group and recreational activities still happened, despite recommendations to practice physical distancing. The interviewees therefore believed it is important to continue to invest time and effort in community awareness-raising, to create a 'buy-in' for an education response to future health-related emergencies.

Key Area 3: Teachers

FSM has a total teacher population of 1,753 teachers; 112 teachers in ECE level, 1,195 teachers in primary education, and 446 teachers in secondary education. Majority of teachers in ECE and primary education are female (National Department of Education, 2018). Most of the teachers are in Chuuk State; with a total population of 636 teachers from ECE to secondary education level. This was followed by Pohnpei State with 556 teachers; Yap State with 387 teachers; and Kosrae State with 174 teachers (National Department of Education, 2018).

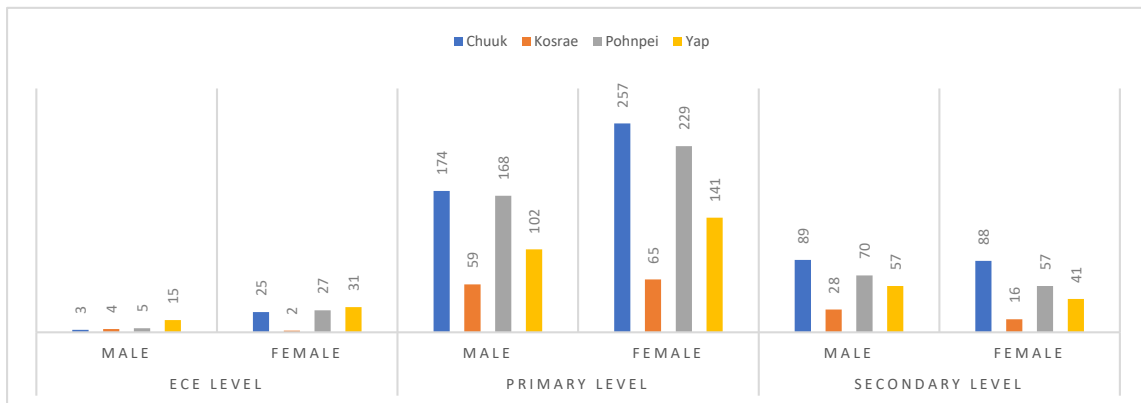


Figure 2. Disaggregated population of teachers in the Federated States of Micronesia (National Department of Education, 2018)

The reported data on teacher background and competence in 2000 indicated that many teachers in FSM are AA/AS degree holders. However, the degrees are not often in education related fields (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2000). This can be attributed to lack of employment opportunities for graduates of other degree programmes. Based on reports, majority of teachers (51.2%) have AA.AS degrees, 33.5% do not have a degree, 14% have completed BA/BS degrees, and only 1.3% are graduate degree holders. Results of the interview revealed that some graduates of non-education related degrees applied for a teaching profession because it is the only employment opportunity available in their community. State reports confirm that most beginning teachers lack educational backgrounds and do not have enough content knowledge to teach the assigned subject area (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2000).

In 2016, the government developed the Teacher Certification Policy to provide professional standards for teacher certification in the FSM. This aims to ensure that teachers in primary and secondary education are qualified based on the minimum education qualifications set by the government and have received certification from the National Department of Education (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2016). To date, the majority of teachers have the minimum qualification required to become teachers; 93% in ECE level, 89% in primary level, and 93% in secondary level. However, less than 50% of the teacher population have received a teaching certificate (National Department of Education, 2018).

Accessibility of resources

Provision of educational resources and school supplies to schools in Outer Islands can be a major problem during situations where shipping and airline operations are restricted across the country (UNICEF, 2017a). In these remote Outer Islands, the use of HF radios is considered as the most reliable tool for communication. The HF radios in the schools can potentially be used to communicate with school leaders and teachers during a school closure to provide updated information on the health crisis, communicate guidelines and decisions and provide support for teachers in designing distance learning programmes. It has been suggested in an interview with an NDoE representative that the best way to reach teachers is through the school principals. The school principals generally have easier access to phones, HF radio and email. Guidelines, tips and key messages for teachers can be passed along from principals to teachers.

Not all areas in FSM can receive radio transmission and not all households have access to TV. In areas with very limited access to internet, TV or radio, paper-based distance learning approaches are most suitable. However, transportation during a crisis situation can be severely restricted. Therefore, home learning packages and other paper-based distance learning resources with special attention to languages should be distributed in the preparedness phase. It is furthermore important to equip schools with a computer and printer to enable teachers in remote areas to develop their own paper-based distance learning resources.

As some states do have a wider coverage of internet, TV and radio, it has been suggested during interviews that a combination of different distance learning approaches is most suitable.

Teacher Development and Support

The National Department of Education (NDoE) recognised that in-service training for teachers is an 'effective and efficient' approach in increasing the quality of teaching. However, there is lack of coordination in the in-service teacher training to assess the needs of teachers systematically (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020). Teacher development and support to new teachers are provided through technical assistance conducted by programme specialists and school principals. The programme specialists and school principals plan and schedule the technical assistance for new teachers, usually in the form of classroom observations and school visits. Teacher development and support to teachers are prioritised based on the available resources. Based on the interview conducted, priority is given to those who need the service most. Short training sessions on the following topics are being planned and provided: differentiated instruction, ICT, and teaching pedagogy. The training on teaching pedagogy is part of the ongoing training for principals and teachers in Kosrae, and was organised by REL Pacific. The focus of the training is on classroom strategies. In addition, workshops funded by the government are sometimes organised, although not on a regular basis. The College of Micronesia offer courses for new teachers to help them improve their skills. In terms of pre-service teacher education, the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) started offering the BS Elementary Education in 2019. It is also reported that the country has a 'steady supply' of new teachers (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020). However, it has been reported that beginning teachers are not fully prepared to work in schools without the support of experienced teachers (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020).

Table 4. International evidence on teacher support during health-related emergency.

International evidence suggests teacher development and support prior, during and after health-related emergencies is crucial. Teachers are expected to switch from face-to-face, classroom-based teaching to alternative forms of education. Teachers are often not prepared or supported to briefly change their approach (UNESCO, 2020i). It is recommended reconsider pre- and in-service teacher training in the preparedness phase. It should incorporate digital literacy, ICT skills, curriculum differentiation, learner-centred pedagogy, universal design for learning (UNESCO, 2020i). Sustaining and nurturing teacher professional networks has proven to be effective in previous crisis situations (UNESCO, 2020i). Where face-to-face interaction is not possible, teachers have used internet and mobile phones to provide peer support and coaching (UNESCO, 2020i). This support should continue after schools re-open. It is likely teachers will need help to address potential learning gaps between students (Chaudhary and Niaz, 2020). However, not all teachers in RMI have access to internet and smartphones. There are still areas in the country where there is no electricity and internet connectivity. Teachers in urban areas are more likely to have access to smartphones and internet. Based on the interview conducted with PSS, school principals recommended to conduct trainings on online learning for teachers who will be using digital platforms for distance learning. PSS plans to conduct four days training on online learning in September to equip teachers in using digital platforms for distance learning. PSS also mentioned that it will utilise its Facebook page in uploading recorded video lessons for online learning. It is also important that teachers receive support in developing social-emotional competencies and resilience. This will equip them better to cope with their own stress and changing circumstances and to support the psychosocial wellbeing of their students (UNESCO, 2020i). However, there is no specific data on the current psychosocial support of students and teachers in RMI. This can be further researched in preparation of a potential next emergency.

Continued and high-quality teacher support is crucial to ensure access to education for learners and mitigate potential learning loss. Chaudhary and Niaz (2020) pointed out that when students return to and remain in school, well-trained teachers are able to overcome the expected learning loss. This suggests a shift in focus from exclusively trying the make-up for learning loss among individual students towards a focus on supporting school leaders and teachers to overcome learning gaps when schools re-open (Chaudhary and Niaz, 2020). This switch in focus is furthermore important as up to date, there is no evidence of any approach to distance learning which has the potential to reach all learners, especially those in remote, rural and disadvantaged areas. It has been argued that it is increasingly easier to reach teachers through online or phone-based approaches.

In addition to the new teaching requirements, many teachers have concerns about their income and job safety. In some contexts, teachers continue to provide face-to-face education for children of essential workers and for vulnerable groups of children. This potentially puts their own health at risk (UNESCO, 2020i). Safety of all involved stakeholders is a priority in the Education Contingency Plan. This includes informing teachers about risks and prevention measures, providing safety equipment and ensure employment and salaries for teachers in emergency situations (UNESCO, 2020i).

Experiences of teachers during recent school closures

During the recent school closures, some teachers were assigned to take on new roles. All vocational teachers for example are now assigned to teach the academic subject areas, since vocational classes are cancelled due to shortened instructional hours. This is part of the NDOE's response to provide additional classes as part of physical distancing measures when school reopens. However, the interview indicated that teachers felt that they are not qualified to teach these academic courses.

There is not further documentation of experiences from teachers during the past health-related emergency.

Key Area 4: Schools

FSM has a total of 185 schools across the country; 167 are public schools and 18 are non-public schools. Majority of schools are in Chuuk State (79 schools), followed by Pohnpei, Yap, and Kosrae (Table 1). Public schools in FSM are managed by the government, while non-public schools are either managed by non-government organisations (NGOs) or the private sector. All schools are required to undergo the annual accreditation stipulated in the Education Act (National Department of Education, 2018). It has been reported that schools in urban areas have become crowded due to migration from outer islands to state capitals. This resulted in shortages in resources, such as textbooks (UNICEF, 2017a).

Table 5. Distribution of schools across FSM (National Department of Education, 2018).

Type of School	Number of schools per State				Total
	Chuuk	Kosrae	Yap	Pohnpei	
Public school	72	7	34	53	167
Non-public school	7	1	6	5	18
Total	79	8	40	58	185

ECE Programmes (3 to 5 years old) are implemented across FSM under the administration of Division of Formal and Non-Formal Education of NDoE. The number of ECE centres differs in each state. There are seven ECE centres in Kosrae, 24 centres in Yap, 25 schools in Pohnpei offering kindergarten level, and 60 schools offering kindergarten in Chuuk. In Chuuk State, ECE was renamed as K5, catering students aged 5 years old (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020).

Infrastructure to respond to health-related emergencies and demands for safety

WASH facilities in schools are susceptible to extreme natural calamities such as typhoons. These calamities often damage the sanitary facilities in schools, which leads to temporary school closure. In Micronesia, there is no available data on the current situation of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in schools. There is also no available data on access to WASH for persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups (UNICEF, 2017a). Based on the interview with an NDoE representative, it can be assumed that all schools in Kosrae have WASH facilities and that

in the Outer Islands not all schools have sufficient WASH facilities. Detailed data on the status of these WASH facilities were not available.

It was furthermore mentioned that most schools in Kosrae have printers and library in each school. These schools in Kosrae are currently preparing to open schools and enable on-campus learning again. The schools will limit the number of students and are redesigning the classrooms to enable physical distancing.

According to the interviewees, only the high school campuses in FSM were used as temporary quarantine facility. This affected the schedule of reopening the school year for high school, as the schedule has been moved a month late than the planned schedule.

Key Area 5: Enabling Environment

Cross-sectoral mechanisms, specifically focused on COVID-19, were established by the government of FSM. At the national level, the National COVID-19 Task Force is in place; while at the state government level, State Risk Community Engagement was established. In the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, each government agency has allotted a budget to respond to the health-related emergency. There are also non-government organisations like Red Cross, and FSM and States International Developing Partners like International Organization for Migration (IOM), WHO and UNICEF and regional partners in SPC that provided support to the government in response to the health emergency in the country.

Implementation of Education Response based on COVID-19 Readiness Condition

FSM developed a COVID-19 Readiness Condition as part of its COVID-19 Response Framework. The readiness condition has four levels based on the transmission scenarios of World Health Organisation (WHO) (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020).

Table 6. FSM COVID-19 Readiness Condition Chart (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2020)

FSM COVID-19 Readiness Conditions	Transmission Scenarios
Condition 4: Zero Cases of COVID-19	The country has zero cases but COVID-19 threat exists
Condition 3: 1-10 Cases	There are one or more cases, imported or locally detected
Condition 2: >10-100 Cases	The country is experiencing cases clusters in time, geographic location and/or common exposures
Condition 1: >100 Cases	Larger outbreaks of local transmission are being experienced

It is recommended to align the COVID-19 Readiness Condition Levels with the differentiated phase of emergency response. The decision regarding the condition level and related actions, should be taken in close collaboration with all relevant Departments and experts. This is likely to be different, depending on the nature of the specific health-related emergency.

The Condition 4 is linked with the Preparedness Phase during a health-related emergency. While there are no reported cases of COVID-19 or any emergency in the country, it is recommended to plan and prepare for the education response. Key activities in this stage can include for example:

- Develop a strategic implementation plan to design a range of distance learning programmes to reach different target groups; which may be in the form of paper-based learning, phone-based approach, radio or television broadcast. Learning packages for different distance learning approaches to be implemented should be based on the availability of resources of both school and learners.
- Reduced on-campus learning may also be an option for continuity of learning of learners since there are still no reported cases of COVID-19. Ensure that schools follow the safe school protocols, such as implementation of physical distancing measures, regular cleaning and disinfecting of school facilities and resources.
- Ensure that all schools are equipped with WASH facilities and other resources needed in order to respond to health-related emergencies. This also includes providing of equipment needed in implementing distance learning approach to ensure continuity of learning.
- Support teachers by providing psychosocial support and in-service training programmes to help teachers provide high quality education during and after health-related emergencies.
- Conduct awareness raising activities to inform teachers, parents, and other caregivers on how to design safe and healthy learning spaces at home or at school.

In the event that one or more cases (Condition 3) of COVID 19 are reported in the country, it is recommended to implementing activities in the Initial Response Phase of the Strategic Action Plan. This includes for example the following key actions:

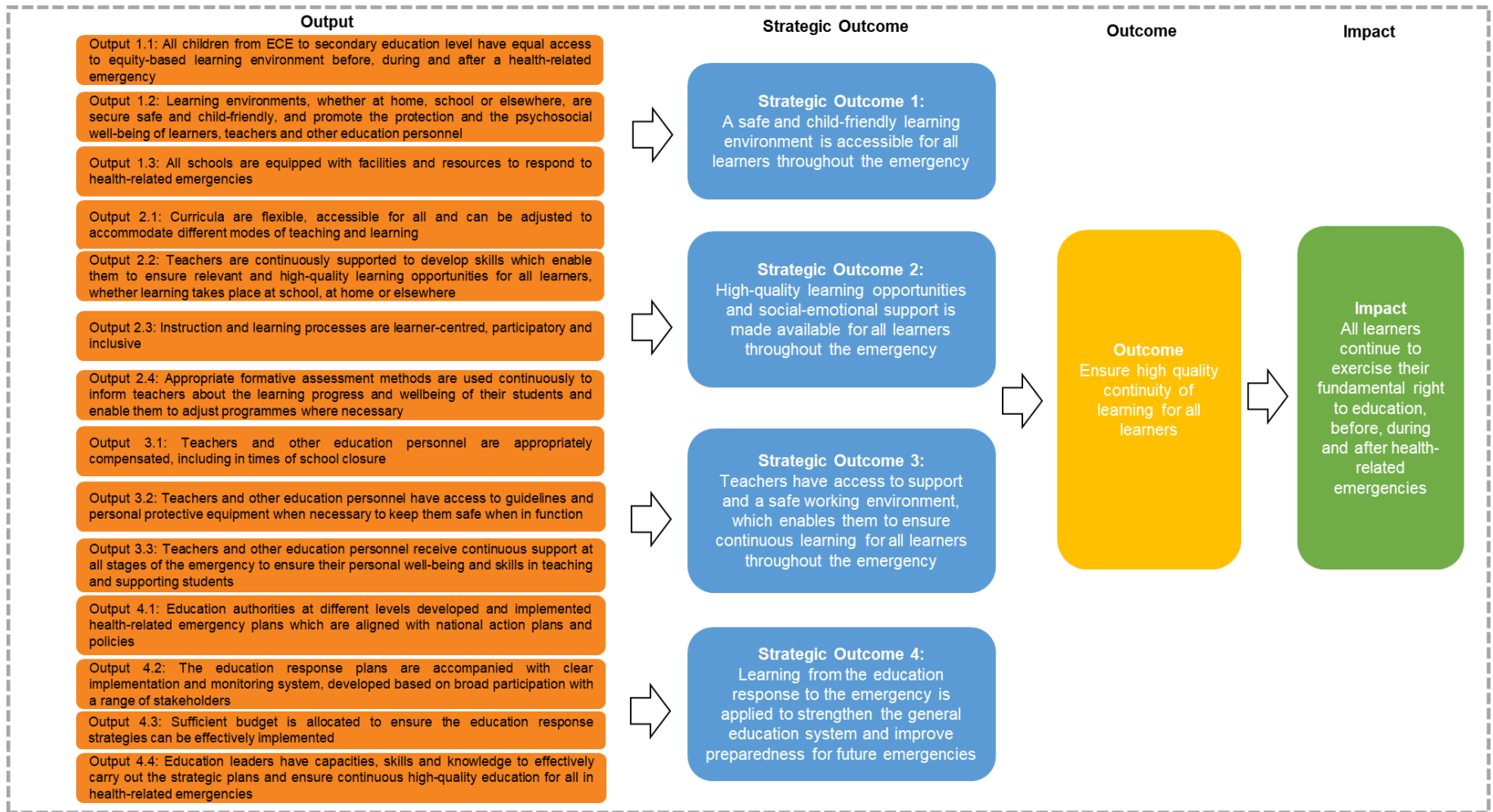
- Distribution of paper-based learning packages to homes or assigned community drop off points. This includes books, learning and play materials for pre-school children (Output 1.1).
- Review of continuous learning strategies and consider potential barriers for learners to access education during the crisis (Output 1.1)
- Provide teachers with continuous support through implementation of in-service teacher trainings and psychosocial support (Output 3.1).

If the transmission of COVID-19 has reached Condition 2 or 1, it is recommended to avoid or reduce on-campus learning until safety for all involved stakeholders can be ensured. Continuity of education should still be implemented using the different approaches of distance learning appropriate in the specific context based on geographic location and available resources. It is recommended to implement activities from the Ongoing Response Phase of the Strategic Action Plan in condition level 2 and 1, this includes for example:

- Monitor implementation of distance learning programmes and provide clear guidance to parents or caregivers on how to support their children at home (Output 2.3).
- Monitor the implementation of action plan and provide support where necessary (Output 4.2).

It is recommended to implement the activities from the 'Recovery' and 'Learning' phase when the immediate threat of the health emergency is over and gradually the education activities can safely resume.

Theory of Change



Strategic Action Plan

The Minimum Standards for Education from the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) formed the basis to develop the Theory of Change and Strategic Action Plan (INEE, 2012). INEE developed in consultation with education policy-makers, practitioners and academics a set of minimum standards to ensure a quality and coordinated education response to crisis situations. The minimum standards are based on a recognition to all children have a fundamental right to education. This right to education is often disrupted in emergency situations. The INEE minimum standards have been used elsewhere to formulate an education response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The INEE standards have been slightly adjusted in the Theory of Change to be used in case of a health-related emergency. The main adjustments include a more specific focus on ensuring safety of learners, teachers and other education personnel and safe school operations, relevant to health-related emergencies.

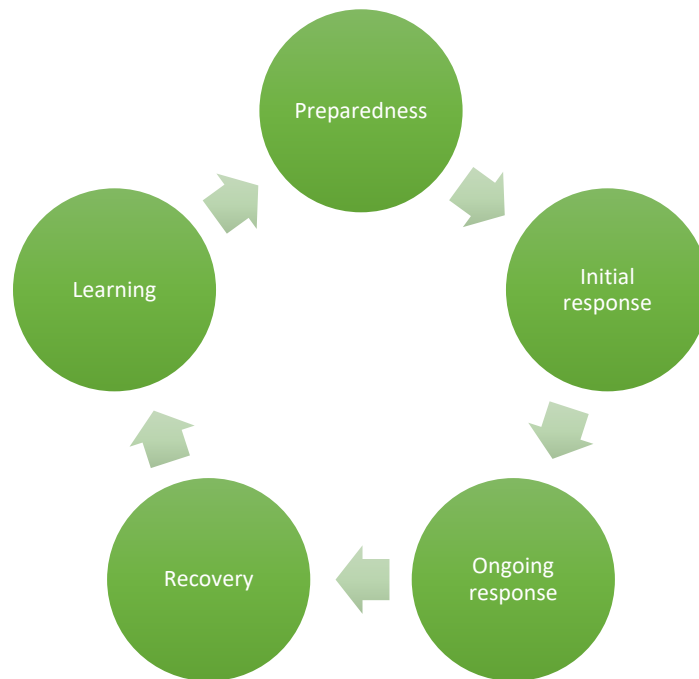
The ultimate objective of the Education Contingency Plan is to ensure all girls and boys can exercise their fundamental right to education through health-related emergencies. This is to be achieved through continuous access and participation in high-quality education programmes before, during and after health-related emergencies. The four strategic outcomes include:

1. All children have access to a safe and child-friendly learning environment
2. All children have high quality learning opportunities before, during and after health-related emergencies
3. A safe and supportive working environment enables teachers and other education personnel to adequately respond to the needs of all learners before, during and after health-related emergencies
4. Education systems are strengthened and improved to ensure the education sector is prepared to cope with health-related emergencies

The Strategic Action Plan (see attached Excel Sheet) provides a detailed overview of key activities per output from the Theory of Change. The activities are differentiated per phase in the health-related emergency:

- *Preparedness*: The phase before an emergency. It is a continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, evaluating and taking action to ensure effective response and coordination during an emergency
- *Initial response*: The immediate response to an emergency. It involves a rapid analysis of the nature of the emergency, reviewing and updating the contingency plan based on this analysis and deciding, in collaboration with experts, on the best course of action
- *Ongoing response*: The continued response to an emergency, once the nature of the emergency is known and key decisions are taken to cope with the educational impact of the emergency. It involves implementation of the (adjusted) contingency plan, monitoring, communication with the field and providing technical and other support where needed. This phase also includes preparing for the recovery phase.
- *Recovery*: The phase immediately after the crisis, when there is no more immediate risk for the safety of learners, teachers, community members and other stakeholders. It involves actions to return to 'normal' or 'near-normal', whilst ensuring the safety of everyone involved.
- *Learning*: The final phase of the cycle. It happens when education routines are back to normal or nearly normal. It involves analyzing data about the emergency and education responses which was collected throughout the crisis. The results of this data analysis help

to strengthening the education contingency plan for future emergencies. It leads into the preparedness phase



The activities are furthermore differentiated per implementation level (National and regional actions and School-based actions). Where relevant specific actions are added per level of education. The activities in the Strategic Action Plan are based on consultation with the national education partners, the INEE minimum standards for education (INEE, 2012) and the UNESCO Education Sector Issue Notes in response to COVID-19 (UNESCO, 2020i, UNESCO, 2020g, UNESCO, 2020e, UNESCO, 2020d, UNESCO, 2020a, UNESCO, 2020c, UNESCO, 2020f, UNESCO, 2020h, UNESCO, 2020b).

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Approach

This chapter provides a tentative Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework, which needs to be further refined by the national education partners. This section provides a brief overview of the key guiding principles of the MEL framework. The next section includes the results framework with indicators and means of verification. The last sections provide an overview of potential risks and mitigation strategies.

Guiding principles:

- **Continuous:** The monitoring starts in the preparedness phase and continues through all phases of the emergency. This ensures that throughout the emergency data is collected on challenges in the implementation of the contingency plan, strategies to cope with these challenges and examples of local good practices are collected. This data will provide valuable insights to review and update the education contingency plan, to respond better to future emergencies and improve the general education system ('Build Back Better')
- **Participative:** To ensure relevance and increase effectiveness, a range of stakeholders should be included in the design of the education contingency plan and implementation strategy. Collecting the voices and perspectives of a broad range of stakeholders and beneficiaries will ensure the learning from the education response is context-specific and relevant.
- **Results-based:** The main aim of the MEL framework is to improve education contingency planning to respond to future emergencies and ultimately to increase continued access to high quality learning for all children before, during and after emergencies

Results Framework

The results framework provides a matrix of outputs, indicators, key activities, and means of verification. The key activities indicated per indicator are aligned with the strategic action plan developed.

Strategic Outcome 1: A safe and child-friendly learning environment is accessible for all learners throughout the emergency

#	Output	Indicator	Key Activities	Means of Verification
1.1	All children from ECE to secondary education level have equal access to equity-based learning environment before, during and after a health-related emergency	Number of children supported with Distance/home-based learning disaggregated by level of education	Gathering and analysing of disaggregated data of all learners, including disadvantaged groups of learners Development of different models of distance learning based on Universal Design Principles	EMIS Report of NDoE, including access to remote learning during an emergency, disaggregated by education level, gender, linguistic background, socio-economic background and geographical location
		Monitoring mechanism for distance learning in place to assess the use and the effectiveness	Development of tools to monitor effectiveness of distance learning approaches	Monthly report on distance learning
		Strategic implementation plan for different approaches of distance learning is developed and implemented	Development of strategic implementation plan to design a range of distance learning programmes Implementation of strategic plan developed	Availability of strategic implementation plan for implementation of different approaches to distance of remote learning, including consideration and mitigation of barriers to accessing learning during an emergency Progress reports of schools, SdoEs, and NdoE on the implementation of the strategic plan

		Paper-based learning packages per grade level are developed and distributed to learners who do not have access to online learning	Development of paper-based learning packages Distribution of paper-based learning packages. This includes distribution of books, learning and play materials to home and community drop off zones for pre-school children	Report of schools on the schedule of delivery of paper-based learning packages and list identified drop off zones Monitoring report of teachers on the implementation of paper-based learning approach for learners
		Number of schools conducted initiatives to recover lost learning time (catch up course)		Report on schools on the measures taken to recover lost learning time
1.2	Learning environments, whether at school, home or elsewhere, are secure, safe and child-friendly, and promote the protection and the psychosocial well-being of learners, teachers and other education personnel	Number of schools that oriented teachers, parents and caregivers are oriented on safe and healthy learning spaces at home or at school	Organise awareness raising activities to inform teachers, parents, and other caregivers on how to design safe and healthy learning spaces at home and in school	Reports of schools on conducting orientation with teachers, parents, and caregivers on safe and healthy learning spaces Monitoring plan of schools
		Number of households, learners, and teachers provided with psychosocial support and/or social and emotional learning	Establishment of mechanisms for psychosocial support and social and emotional learning for households, learners, and teachers	Availability of psychosocial support plan from NDoE, SDoEs, and schools Report of schools on the implementation of psychosocial support programmes for parents, caregivers, learners, and teachers

1.3	All schools are equipped with facilities and resources to respond to health-related emergencies	Number of schools implementing Safe School Protocols (COVID-19 prevention and control)	Development of Safe School Protocols Provision of Guidelines to teachers, education personnel, parents and learners on Safe School Protocols	EMIS report of National Department of Education Reports from local authorities, health sector, and partner organisations
		Number of equipment purchased and distributed such as printers, copy machines, computers, laptops, and mobile phones to support different approaches of distance learning	Rapid assessment of available equipment per school Procurement of equipment to support different approaches of distance learning Distribution of equipment to identified schools	Availability of equipment for distance learning at the school level Reports from NDoE, SDoEs and schools
		Number of personal protective equipment (PPE), cleaning and disinfecting supplies, hand soaps, sanitizers and alcohols purchased for school use	Inventory of available school supplies such as PPE, cleaning and disinfecting supplies, etc.	Availability of materials in schools Financial reports from schools, SDoEs, and NDoEs

Strategic Outcome 2: High-quality learning opportunities and social-emotional support is made available for all learners throughout the emergency

#	Output	Indicator	Key Activities	Means of Verification
2.1	Curricula are flexible, accessible for all and can be adjusted to accommodate different model of learning	The curriculum is reviewed and updated to ensure feasibility for distance learning	Review of curriculum to check adaptability for distance learning	Availability of an updated curriculum, with a balance between academic skills, psychosocial wellbeing and protection and notes on where flexibility is possible in times of education disruption due to an emergency
		Number of teachers capacitated on how to adjust the curriculum when	Capacity building for teachers to adjust and reduce the curriculum based on the specific context in times of crisis	Availability of guidelines for teachers which clearly communicate which elements are considered as core curriculum that have to be covered

		education is disrupted due to an emergency		and which elements can be approached more flexible Availability of guidelines for teachers on the focus during the specific emergency (focus on enhancing prior knowledge and skills, introducing new content, focus on core curriculum only, ...) Reports of technical support for teachers (either training sessions, workshops, key messages by phone or through the school principals)
		Basic emergency specific content is added to the curriculum	Development of curriculum content on specific emergency Distribution of curriculum content to school principals and teachers	Distribution of curriculum content on the specific emergency (key information about the health emergency, prevention measures, ...)
2.2	Teachers are continuously supported to develop skills which enable them to ensure relevant and high-quality learning opportunities for all learners, whether learning takes place at school, home or elsewhere	The support and training needs of teachers to respond to education disruptions are mapped out	Identification of support and training needs of teachers to respond to education disruptions	Detailed situation analysis report of the training and support needs of teachers Availability of school-based teacher support plans
		Pre- and in-service teacher development courses are reviewed and updated to equip teachers with key skills to respond to education disruptions due to emergencies	Development of pre- and in-service teacher development courses to ensure teachers have skills to respond to education disruptions due to emergencies	Updated pre- and in-service teacher development courses, which include digital literacy and ICT skills, Universal Design or Learning, child-centred pedagogy, play-based learning, curriculum differentiation, designing (distance) learning programmes, developing low cost teaching and learning aids with local materials and formative assessment

		Effective communication and support structure is established to provide continuous support for teachers throughout all phases of the emergency	Establishment of communication and support structure for teachers Development of communication guidelines to support teachers throughout the emergency	At national level: Guidelines on how to continuously connect with teachers throughout the emergency (phone-based, social media communication groups, message through school principals, ...) Reports of technical support provided to teachers At school level: Reports of school-based support for teachers (for example mentoring and coaching, peer collaboration, in-school training sessions)
2.3	Instruction and learning processes are learner-centred, participatory and inclusive	Teachers have knowledge and skills to design learner-centred, participative and inclusive learning opportunities throughout all phases of the emergency, including distance learning, catch-up course and regular school classes	Conduct of in-service teacher training on designing learner-centred, participative and inclusive learning.	See also output 2.2 Observation and reflection reports from school principals, local education leaders, mentors or teachers themselves about the delivered lessons throughout the emergency
		Number of teachers that are trained on the different distance learning approaches or adjusted on-campus learning during education disruption caused by a health emergency	Capacity building of teachers on the different distance learning approaches and adjusted on-campus learning	Availability of national, state and school-based plans, with detailed information on which education model to use and how to implement it

		Number of schools that have necessary equipment and resources to safely implement the selected distance learning or on-campus teaching approaches	Assessment of available equipment and resources in schools to implement selected distance learning and on-campus teaching approaches Distribution of basic equipment to identified schools	Distribution of basic equipment list for schools, including guidelines on how to locally resource equipment, apply for funding or raise budget from the community or private partners Reports and observations of available equipment and resources by local education leaders
2.4	Appropriate formative assessment methods are used continuously inform teachers about the learning progress and wellbeing of their students and enable them to adjust programmes where necessary	Number of schools that conduct formative assessment strategies	Development of formative assessment strategies for distance learning Training of teachers on formative assessment strategies Monitoring of implementation of formative assessment strategies at the school level	Updated curriculum of pre- and in-service teacher development, which includes formative assessment Observation and reflection reports from school principals, local education leaders, mentors or teachers themselves on the use of formative assessment techniques to keep track of the learning of students before, during and after a crisis
		Summative assessment strategies are adjusted to ensure safety and equal accessibility	Review and adjustment of summative assessment strategies	Availability of a clear strategy on how to adjust summative assessment if necessary and reduce barriers to participation

Strategic Outcome 3: Teachers have access to support and a safe working environment, which enables them to ensure continuous learning for all learners throughout the emergency

#	Output	Indicator	Key Activities	Means of Verification
3.1	Teachers and other educational personnel are appropriately compensated, including in times of school closure	Teachers and educational personnel are continued to be paid throughout school closure due to health-related emergencies, including for teachers who are unable to work due to problems with health, care responsibilities, and/or internet connectivity	Update legal frameworks where necessary to ensure teachers continued to be paid throughout school closure Establish an appropriate system for teachers and education personnel	Payment schedule and documents of salaries of teachers and other education personnel

3.2	Teachers and other education personnel have access to guidelines and personal protective equipment when necessary to keep them safe when in function	Number of schools provided with basic kit of personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep teachers and other personnel safe	Procurement and distribution of basic kit of PPE for teachers and other education personnel	Availability of list of necessary PPEs, updated with crisis specific information Procurement documents and distribution accounts of PPE Availability of guidelines on how to locally produce PPE
		Teachers know how and when to use the PPE	Orientation on the proper use of PPE	Availability of guidelines on how to use PPE properly
3.3	Teachers and other education personnel receive continuous support at all stages of the emergencies to ensure their personal wellbeing and skills in teaching and support learners	Number teachers that received in-service teacher training on technical support throughout the crisis to enable them to implement alternative forms of education	Provision of technical support to teachers to facilitate distance learning and prepare for re-opening of schools	Reports from technical support from experts within education departments and mentors/coaches at school
		Teachers have access to psychosocial support when necessary	Provision of psychosocial support to teachers and education personnel	Distribution of list with existing psychosocial services to schools Availability of a helpline for teachers to access counselling support and refer/discuss child protection concerns

Strategic Outcome 4: Learning from the education response to the emergency is applied to strengthen the general education system and improve preparedness for future emergencies

#	Output	Indicator	Key Activities	Means of Verification
4.1	Education authorities at different levels developed and implemented health-related emergency plans, which are aligned with national action plans and policies	Education authorities at national, state and community level developed Education Contingency Plans in collaboration with a range of stakeholders	Review of the national action plan on health-related emergencies	Availability of Education Contingency Plans

4.2	The education response plans are accompanied with clear implementation and monitoring system, developed based on broad participation with a range of stakeholders	A range of stakeholders are consulted regularly to develop an implementation strategy and continuously monitor the implementation	Regular consultation meeting with key stakeholders to develop an implementation strategy and to monitor its implementation	<p>Availability of a contact list of representatives of various national departments, commissions and working groups, community networks and non-government organisations, teacher professional unions and parent groups</p> <p>Reports of consultation meetings to collaboratively identify education priorities during emergencies and potential barriers to participation</p> <p>Availability of a protocol for communication and coordination between various stakeholders and departments</p>
		The implementation of the education contingency plan is regularly monitored, and lessons learned are documented and analysed to prepare for future emergencies	<p>Development of implementation and monitoring framework</p> <p>Regular monitoring of the implementation of plans</p>	<p>Availability of an implementation and (refined) monitoring framework</p> <p>Monitoring reports, including challenges in the implementation of the plan, lessons learned and identification of local good practices. The reports include furthermore disaggregated data on teachers and students concerning implementation and accessibility of teaching approaches during the emergency. This can be added to existing EMIS data collection structures</p>
4.3	Sufficient budget is allocated to ensure the education response strategies can be effectively implemented	Education Contingency Plans at different levels (national, state and school-based) include a clear budget plan and balance between physical elements (printer, computer, communication devices, ..) and qualitative elements (teacher	Review and development of budget plans for education response	Availability of feasible and balanced budget plans

		development, development of guidelines and example lessons for distance learning, ...)		
		Potential funding sources are identified and analysed, including available national education budgets, funding from international organisations and NGOs or exploring private-public partnerships.	Identification of possible funding sources to implement continuity of learning	Situation analysis report of potential funding sources for the implementation of the Education Contingency Plans
4.4	Educational leaders have capacities, skills and knowledge to effectively carry out the strategic plans and ensure continuous high-quality education for all in health-related emergencies	Risk management units at the NDoE provide technical support to plan, coordinate, implement and monitor emergency response initiatives in the education sector	Risk management units are capacitated to provide technical support in planning, coordinating, implementing, and monitoring of emergency response initiatives	Terms of Reference of the risk management unit Activity reports of the risk management unit
		Education authorities at different levels have increased capacity of effectively implement the Education Contingency Plan	Identification of support needed by local education leaders to effectively carry out the strategic plan Capacity building of education authorities at different levels	Capacity needs analysis report Capacity building reports, facilitated by the risk management unit, through face-to-face or online workshops or developing guidelines

Outcome	Output	Description	IQBE	UNICEF	UNICEF (Micronesia Production)	GPE AF	Other	Total
1. Safe, equity-based and continuous learning environment	1.1	<u>Access to continuous learning:</u> All children from ECE to secondary education level have equal access to equity-based learning environment before, during and after a health-related emergency	453,000		22,500	311,100	250,000	1,036,600

	1.2	<u>Learning enabler:</u> Learning environments, whether at home, school or elsewhere, are secure, safe and child-friendly, and promote the protection and the psychosocial well-being of learners, teachers and other education personnel				28,600	250,000	278,600
	1.3	<u>Safe school facility</u> All schools are equipped with facilities and resources to respond to health-related emergencies		35,000		83,600	61,300	179,900
2. Quality of learning continuity	2.1	<u>Curricula</u> Curricula are flexible, accessible for all and can be adjusted to accommodate different modes of teaching and learning	62,000				52,900	114,900
	2.2	<u>Data management on teachers</u> Teachers are continuously supported to have relevant data and resources which enable them to ensure relevant and high-quality learning opportunities for all learners, whether learning takes place at school, at home or elsewhere	62,000			103,700	130,000	295,700
	2.3	<u>Pedagogy</u> Instruction and learning processes are learner-centred, participatory and inclusive	62,000				52,900	114,900
	2.4	<u>Assessment</u> Appropriate formative assessment methods are used continuously to inform teachers					112,740	112,740

		about the learning progress and wellbeing of their students and enable them to adjust programmes where necessary						
3. Teacher support mechanism	3.1	<u>Teacher's condition</u> Teachers and other education personnel are appropriately compensated, including in times of school closure					21,468,064	21,468,064
	3.2	<u>Teacher's resource support</u> Teachers and other education personnel have access to guidelines and personal protective equipment when necessary to keep them safe when in function					168,000	168,000
	3.3	<u>Continous teacher training</u> Teachers and other education personnel receive continuous support at all stages of the emergency to ensure their personal well-being and skills in teaching and supporting students				15,000	32,000	47,000
4. System Strengthening	4.1	<u>Strategic plan</u> Education authorities at different levels developed and implemented health-related emergency plans which are aligned with national action plans and policies					41,800	41,800
	4.2	<u>Evidence generation</u> The education response plans are accompanied with clear implementation and monitoring system, developed based on				80,500	61,300	141,800

		broad participation with a range of stakeholders						
	4.3	<u>Financing</u> Sufficient budget is allocated to ensure the education response strategies can be effectively implemented					41,800	41,800
	4.4	<u>Policy maker's capacity building</u> Education leaders have capacities, skills and knowledge to effectively carry out the strategic plans and ensure continuous high-quality education for all in health-related emergencies					179,000	179,000
Other cost		<u>Contingency cost, grant management cost, etc.</u>				127500		
Total			639,000	35,000	22,500	750,000	22,901,804	24,220,804

Risk Management Plan

Risk	Mitigation strategy
Funding (both government and external) is not available/ or sufficient to implement the contingency plan	Identification of possible savings and/or re-programming of other education funds. Maintain and enhance ongoing discussions across partners (utilise LEG and other modalities) to advocate for the programme with clear linkages to partner mandates. Monitor and generate evidence and provide regular updates to demonstrate accountability.
Poorly coordinated education response to the emergency	Develop clear communication and coordination networks, strategies and protocols in the preparedness phase. Monitor and adjust the coordination structure and protocol and document lesson learned to improve coordination in future emergency situations
The education response to the emergency is not based on assessment data, and therefore not relevant for the specific context	<p>Conduct a situation analysis in the preparedness phase to identify local resources, potential barriers to access learning during an emergency, feasibility of different alternative education models and education priorities during an emergency.</p> <p>Conduct a rapid assessment in the initial response phase to gather emergency specific data, update the situation analysis and adjust the contingency plan where necessary</p>
Learning discontinues during the emergency	<p>Plan and prepare for a range of teaching and learning alternatives (limited on-campus learning, distance learning: paper-based, online, phone-based, TV/radio)</p> <p>Ensure teachers have the skills and resources to implement the planned teaching and learning alternatives</p>
Groups of children do not access education during emergencies	<p>Collaborate with a range of stakeholders at different levels to anticipate potential barriers to access learning and participation and develop strategies to overcome these barriers</p> <p>Ensure all developed education approaches and materials are designed based on the Universal Design for Learning Principles</p> <p>Provide technical support for education leaders, teachers and community members on inclusion and equity in education</p>
Poor psychosocial wellbeing of teachers, learners and/or parents and caregivers limit learning opportunities on the short and long term	<p>Map available psychosocial support services and distribute contact lists among schools</p> <p>Set up a helpline or other support mechanism for teachers to access counselling support and refer/discuss child protection concerns</p>

	<p>Establish mentor systems for regular check-ins with teachers, learners and parents or caregivers. Mentors can for example be peers, colleagues for the same or neighbouring school, community volunteers, local education leaders</p>
<p>Increased (gender-based) domestic and community violence and abuse during extended periods of school closure</p>	<p>Capacity building of teachers to recognize signs of violence and abuse</p> <p>Develop and share protocols on how to act when violence and abuse are identified</p> <p>Establish helplines and/or other reporting mechanisms for violence and abuse. Ensure reports are followed up and references or connections are made with professional support services</p>
<p>Assessment of learning reinforces inequity amongst learners</p>	<p>Establish learning assessment procedures which are inclusive, fair, safe and consider potential barriers and inequities in accessing assessment during emergencies</p> <p>Encourage formative assessment and ensure teachers have skills to continuously assess learning to improve their teaching strategies</p>

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