



**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA**  
**NATION RELIGION KING**



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AND SPORT**

**Cambodia Education Response Plan to  
COVID 19 Pandemic**

**July 2020**



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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, necessary actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as adopting social distancing measures, have resulted in widespread and 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 3,210,285 students. In response, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), together with development partners and stakeholders, have made significant efforts to provide distance or e-learning for all students in Cambodia.

MoEYS, in collaboration with development partners, has developed this **Cambodia Education Response Plan to the COVID-19 Pandemic** with the aim of responsibly, effectively and efficiently responding to the current crisis. The Joint Technical Working Group for Education, including MoEYS and Education Sector Working Group members, has identified and agreed on objectives, activities and indicators for the Education COVID-19 response strategy. The response plan has been designed according to the specific needs resulting from the COVID-19 crisis.

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 they can support MoEYS to re-start learning, and the activities to prioritize once the school shutdown is lifted. As a coordination tool, it will ensure a harmonized response across schools, technical departments and institutions at the national and sub-national levels, and minimize duplication of efforts across education sector partners.

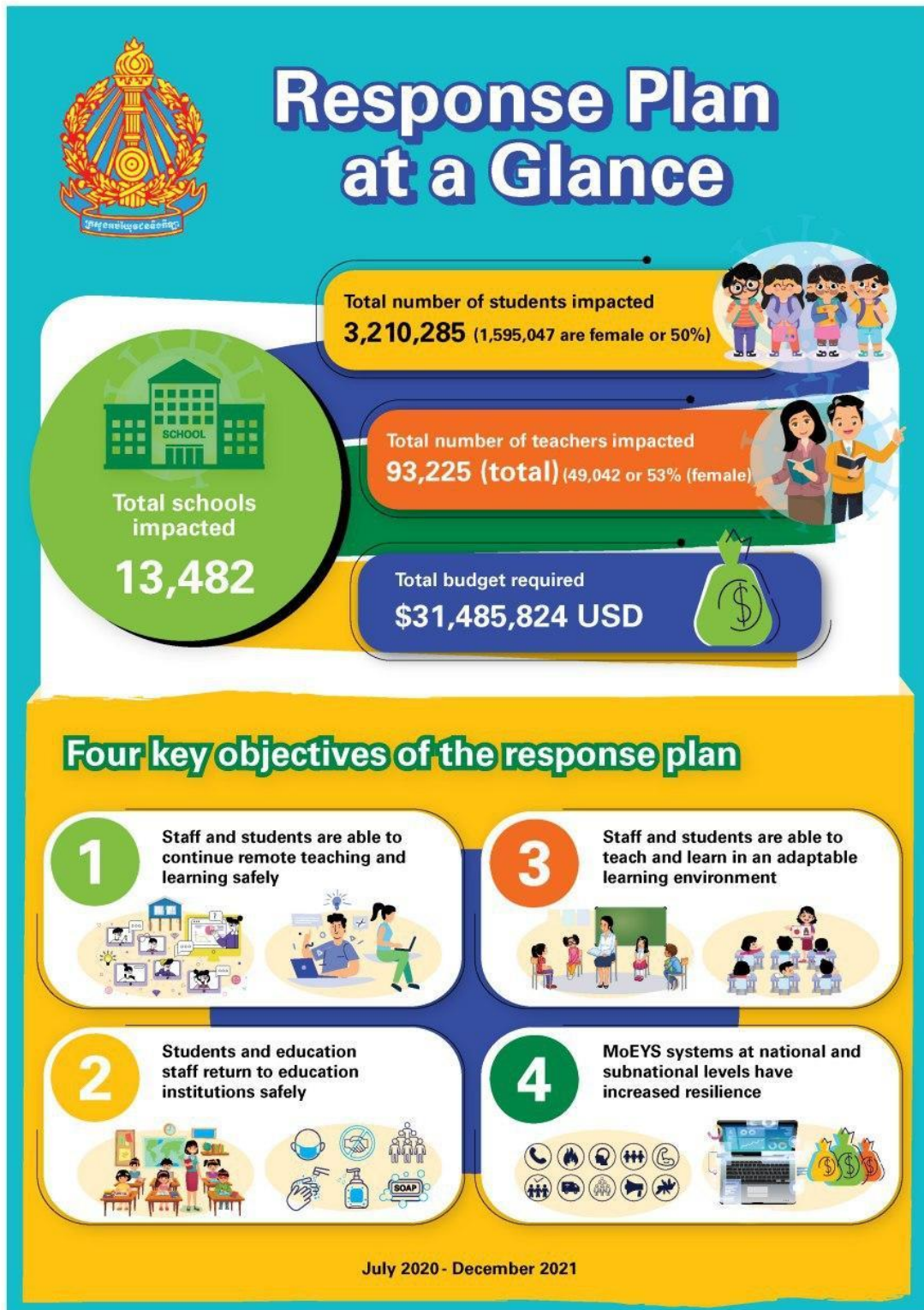
MoEYS encourages stakeholders to actively participate in the implementation of the Cambodia Education Response Plan to the COVID-19 Pandemic. MoEYS would like to express deep gratitude to all technical officials and development partners for providing technical and financial support to the development and implementation of the Cambodia Education Response Plan to the COVID-19 pandemic, with satisfactory outcomes.

Phnom Penh, 15 July 2020



**Dr. HANG CHUON NARON**  
Minister  
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

1. Response strategy at a glance



## 2. Background

### 2.1 Global context

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) a public health emergency of international concern under the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005), and on 11 March 2020 WHO declared it a pandemic. There are currently no licensed treatments or vaccines for the COVID-19 virus. Experimental treatments and vaccines are under development.

In addition to causing morbidity and mortality across the world,<sup>1</sup> necessary actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as adopting social distancing measures, have resulted in widespread and unprecedented global economic upheaval. According to current economic forecasts, the impact of COVID-19 is leading to the deepest global recession in eight decades, with a 5.2 per cent contraction expected in global Gross Domestic Product in 2020 despite unprecedented economic interventions by governments around the world. Developing countries are particularly vulnerable to the economic shock caused by COVID-19, resulting in an expected shrinkage of per capita incomes in 2020 that will likely cause millions of people to fall back into poverty.<sup>2</sup>

Linked to the health and economic impacts of the virus, children's education is being profoundly curtailed. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the learning of an estimated 1.1 billion children across 144 countries, representing approximately 68 per cent of total enrolled learners.<sup>3</sup> In addition, 80 per cent of people with disabilities live in developing countries where access to education is an ongoing challenge.<sup>4</sup> The impact on education is mainly the result of national school closures in many countries across the world, viewed as a necessary measure to control the spread of the virus. The impact of COVID-19 on education globally is so profound that gains made in recent years in expanding access to education and improving the quality of education risk being permanently compromised. This situation means that children who were already considered vulnerable prior to the COVID-19 pandemic are now even more so, while children and their families who were not previously classified as poor are now facing impoverishment. According to recent global estimates, the economic fallout from COVID-19 could push up to 86 million more children into household poverty by the end of 2020, an increase of some 15 per cent. This would result in an estimated 672 million children living below the national poverty line in low- and middle-income countries by the end of 2020.<sup>5</sup>

This global health crisis threatens to significantly slow progress towards many global goals, in particular the fourth Sustainable Development Goal: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This will result in a global learning crisis and global education inequalities, as the impacts will fall disproportionately on the poorest people.

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<sup>1</sup> Globally as of 13 June 2020 there have been 7,553,182 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 423,349 deaths reported to WHO: <https://COVID-19.who.int/>

<sup>2</sup> World Bank. 2020. *Global Economic Prospects*, June. Washington DC: World Bank.

<sup>3</sup> Global monitoring of school closures as of 25 May 2020, UNESCO Institute for Statistics data. Web reference: <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health>

<sup>5</sup> UNICEF and Save the Children. 2020. *Children in Monetary Poor Households and COVID-19: Technical Note*. Published May 2020: <https://www.unicef.org/documents/children-monetary-poor-households-and-covid-19>

## 2.2 National context

In Cambodia as of 30 June 2020, there had been a total of 141 confirmed cases. Of these, 130 patients have recovered to date.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) took the decision to close all educational institutions, including all public and private schools, on 16 March 2020. This decision, as in many other countries, was taken 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 3,210,285 students (1,595,047, or 50 per cent female) and 93,225 teachers (49,042 or 53 percent female). This does not include tertiary/higher education and non-formal education institutions. Of those students affected, 233,132 are in pre-school (116,096, or 50 per cent female); 2,023,473 are in primary school (970,053, or 48 per cent female); 618,968 are in lower secondary school (325,504, or 53 per cent female); and 334,712 are in upper secondary school (183,394, or 55 per cent female). Of those teachers affected, 5,414 are in pre-school (5,145 or 95 percent female); 44,914 are in primary schools (25,922 or 58 percent female); 27,738 are in lower secondary schools (12,451 or 45 percent female); 15,159 are in upper secondary schools (5,524 or 36 percent female);

The closure impacts teacher trainers and teacher trainees in 26 Teacher Education Institution (TEIs), with 720 teacher trainers (296 or 42 percent female), and 5,248 teacher trainees (3,268 or 63 percent female). The closure also impacts 124 higher education institutions (HEIs) across the country, including the 76 HEIs 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 non-formal education sub-sector, the closure impacts 351 community learning centres, of which 310 are managed by MoEYS and the rest by development partners. The closure impacts 9,377 students (6,064 female) and 1,694 education personnel (405 female).

Although the priorities identified in this response plan focus on addressing the particular set of challenges created by the impact of COVID-19 in the sector, these priorities are consistent and mutually reinforcing of Cambodia's Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2019-2023. The ESP focuses on two major policy priorities: Policy 1: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; and Policy 2: Ensure effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels.

As part of a carefully considered COVID-19 recovery strategy, and further elaborated in the Guidelines on Planning for School Re-opening, MoEYS will decide to re-open schools step-by-step, or fully, upon the release of the pandemic situational assessment by the World Health Organization and the Ministry of Health (MoH), and especially upon receiving approval from the prime minister. This will start with partial re-opening, before moving to full re-opening. School re-opening must be safe and consistent with Cambodia's overall COVID-19 health response, with all reasonable measures taken to protect students, teachers, staff and their families.

## 3. Cambodia situation analysis

### 3.1 Socio-economic impact of COVID-19

The global epidemiological and economic crisis unleashed by COVID-19 poses the greatest threat to Cambodia's development in its 30 years of modern history. According to the World Bank's May 2020

economic update,<sup>6</sup> the three most affected sectors—tourism, manufacturing exports, and construction—contributed more than 70 per cent of growth and 39.4 per cent of total paid employment in 2019. Therefore, in the current year, Cambodia’s economy is likely to register its slowest growth since 1994, contracting between -1 per cent (baseline) and -2.9 per cent (downside). Poverty could increase between 3 and 11 percentage points from a 50 per cent income loss that lasts for six months for households engaged in tourism, wholesale and retail trade, garments, construction or manufacturing. The fiscal deficit could reach its highest level in 22 years, and public debt is expected to rise to 35 per cent of gross domestic product by 2022. The government authorities have introduced emergency measures to contain the outbreak and provide fiscal assistance to affected households, workers and enterprises. To facilitate a robust recovery, the government will need to continue to ensure macroeconomic and financial sector stability and accelerate trade and investment reforms, as well as encourage faster adoption of digital technologies (World Bank 2020).

While Cambodia has been very successful in bringing down its official poverty rate—from over 60 per cent in 2004 to 13.5 per cent in 2014, and 10 per cent in 2016 as per the Rectangular Strategy—there are indications that substantial numbers of people remain vulnerable to poverty. A study by SIDA<sup>7</sup> discusses the emergence of large-scale vulnerability, where nearly 28 per cent of the population remains near-poor and highly vulnerable to falling back into poverty. Most households who escaped poverty did so by only a small margin. These people are insufficiently remunerated to protect themselves and their families, yet they fall outside targeted poverty assistance programmes and are thus often referred to as the missing middle. Any negative shock that reduced daily consumption per capita by Cambodian Riel 2,000 (US\$ 0.50) would double the poverty rate, according to the World Bank.<sup>8</sup>

### 3.2 Impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of the Education Strategic Plan

The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2019-2023 is underpinned by two medium-term education policies:

- **Policy 1:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all.
- **Policy 2:** Ensure effective leadership and management of education officials at all levels.

To ensure the effective implementation of education reforms at all levels, MoEYS has identified five key reform priorities included in the ESP 2019-2023.<sup>9</sup> These five pillars are listed in the table below in addition to six other education management reforms for MoEYS to prioritize in the ESP 2019-2023.

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<sup>6</sup> World Bank. 2020. *Cambodia Economic Update May 2020*:

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/843251556908260855/pdf/Cambodia-Economic-Update-Recent-Economic-Developments-and-Outlook.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> SIDA. 2019. *Multidimensional Poverty Analysis Cambodia*:

<https://www.sida.se/globalassets/sida/eng/partners/poverty-toolbox/cambodia-multidimensional-poverty-analysis.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> World Bank. 2019. *Recent Economic Developments and Outlook. Selected Issue: Investing in Cambodia’s Future: Early Childhood Health and Nutrition*:

<http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/pt/843251556908260855/pdf/Cambodia-Economic-Update-Recent-Economic-Developments-and-Outlook.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> The five key priorities in the minister’s mandate and other education management reforms are listed in Chapter IV, p. 55: Education, Youth and Sport Strategy Reforms of the ESP 2019-2023.

**Table illustrating major education reforms introduced under the Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023**

Reform	#	Reform description
MoEYS reform	Pillar 1	Implementation of the Teacher Policy Action Plan (TPAP)
	Pillar 2	Review curricula and textbooks and improve learning environments
	Pillar 3	Enforcement of inspection
	Pillar 4	Improve learning evaluations to meet national, regional and international levels
	Pillar 5	Higher education reform
Education management reform	1	Learning management reform
	2	Administration management reform
	3	Financial management reform
	4	Human resource management reform
	5	Policy and planning
	6	Improve the Education Management Information System (EMIS)
Teacher training reform at teacher education institutions		
School reform	1	Youth development reform
	2	Physical education and sport development reform
Promotion of digital education		
Gender mainstreaming		
Decentralization and de-concentration reform		

Under these two policies, MoEYS made important progress towards key education sub-sector objectives, as noted in the ESP 2019-2023, and education sector reforms. These include, but are not limited to, increased access to Early Childhood Education (ECE), increases in primary net enrolment rates (98 per cent) and completion rates (80 per cent).

School closures and the broader impact of COVID-19 on livelihood, child protection, health, student and teacher wellbeing and Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) financing, among other factors, however, pose a serious risk to MoEYS progress in meeting its ESP 2019-2023 objectives. The ESP 2019-2023 will be implemented in accordance with the policy and strategies of the Rectangular Strategy Phase IV, with functional, human and financial resources transferred gradually to provinces, districts, communes and schools. MoEYS is responsible for oversight of the technical aspects of the ESP implementation and monitoring. The minister, MoEYS leadership and senior management meet regularly through the Programme Management Committee to review sector progress and present an annual report to the Education Congress. The Congress reports relate to the ESP monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework.

The ESP will have a mid-term review in 2021 and a final review in 2023 to assess the overall impact of the programme. These reviews will be informed by an independently prepared assessment report. MoEYS senior management will manage the assessments and review how effectively and efficiently the programme is contributing to the outcomes of the National Strategic Development Plan and the National Vision 2030. The mid-term review 2021 of the ESP 2019-2023 will enhance the credibility of the plan by examining the realization of educational achievement, the provision of inputs, programmes



and implementation strategies, and making necessary updates and adjustments to achieve the policy objectives.

Annual operational plans allow technical departments to carry out their activities in accordance with policies, strategies and programmes. The plans were set in the ESP 2019-2023, with funding from both MoEYS and development partners/non-government organizations (NGOs). Due to the COVID-19 situation and budget cuts, most activities have been postponed until next year.

To mitigate this risk, the MoEYS Cambodia Education COVID-19 Response Plan has activities under its key objectives that directly draw on relevant sub-components emphasized in the ESP response. The most noteworthy of these is digital education. Digital education reform was to have been the main theme of the annual 2020 Education Congress, scheduled for March 2020. While the congress was cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak, digital education has become a major MoEYS focus over the last few months, with the establishment of a variety of diverse continuous or distance learning programmes being broadcast through social media platforms, television and radio to help children continue learning during nationwide school closures. MoEYS however, realizes that the work does not stop with digital education, and it will therefore holistically integrate its technical departments responding to COVID-19 into the framework of its ESP reform agenda (see textbox).

To keep MoEYS on track towards the achievement of policies and reforms outlined in the ESP 2019-2023, the Education COVID-19 Response Plan, under its Implementation Plan, details how MoEYS technical departments, including but not limited to the Departments for **EMIS, Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, ECE, Primary Education, School Health, Curriculum Development, Teacher Training**, and Education Quality Assurance will be actively engaged in the adaptation and development of their policies and systems in a COVID-19 context within the framework of the broader ESP reform agenda. Digital education, as well as the two key reforms of de-concentration and decentralization will be critical tools in helping MoEYS mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on its ESP policy objectives.

### 3.3 Impact of COVID-19 on the education sector budget

The COVID-19 pandemic has had adverse impacts on the education sector budget, not only the government budget but also budget availability in private education institutions. The government has issued directives for budget reductions in all line ministries and the re-allocation of some budgets for immediate response to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the kingdom and among its citizens. The table below explains how the budget chapters have been affected by COVID-19 budget reductions, as instructed by the Royal Government of Cambodia.

**Table illustrating MoEYS COVID-19 budget cuts in 2020 (in Cambodian Riel - KhR)**

Chapters	Budget law	Budget cut		Revised budget after cuts	
		Total	%	Total	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>431,205,300,000</b>	<b>65,508,750,000</b>	<b>15.2%</b>	<b>365,696,550,000</b>	<b>84.8%</b>
60	191,499,600,000	22,897,025,000	12.0%	168,602,575,000	88.0%
61	239,705,700,000	42,611,725,000	17.8%	197,093,975,000	82.2%
<b>Central level</b>	<b>181,245,200,000</b>	<b>52,582,250,000</b>	<b>29.0%</b>	<b>128,662,950,000</b>	<b>71.0%</b>

60	78,863,600,000	17,355,450,000	22.0%	61,508,150,000	78.0%
61	102,381,600,000	35,226,800,000	34.4%	67,154,800,000	65.6%
<b>POEs</b>	<b>249,960,100,000</b>	<b>12,926,500,000</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>237,033,600,000</b>	<b>94.8%</b>
60	112,636,000,000	5,541,575,000	4.9%	107,094,425,000	95.1%
61	137,324,100,000	7,384,925,000	5.4%	129,939,175,000	94.6%

The MoEYS combined 2020 budget for Chapter 60 (Goods) and 61 (Services) was reduced by as much as 15.2 per cent, or a total of KhR 65,508,750,000 (\$16,377,188). At central level, deductions on Chapter 60 were KhR17,355,450,000 (\$1,794,012) affecting eight sub-accounts. Chapter 61 deductions were KhR35,226,800,000 (\$8,591,902), covering 13 sub-accounts. At provincial offices of education (POEs), deductions were KhR5,541,575,000 (\$1,351,604) and KhR7,384,925,000 (\$1,801,201) for Chapters 60 and 61 respectively, which account for 5.2 per cent of combined chapters.

For 2021, it is expected that the education budget will also be reduced, as the government's revenue generation will still be at low levels as the economy tries to recover. This may take some time.

### 3.4 Impact of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable children

**Increased risk of vulnerable children dropping out of school:** According to 2019 UNESCO Institute of Statistics data,<sup>10</sup> 186,109 primary-school-aged children are currently out of school. Some 83.5 per cent of students survive to the last grade of primary education, with survival rates for girls being higher than for boys, at 90.26 per cent and 85.82 per cent, respectively. Global evidence indicates that the longer school children are out of school, the less likely they are to return.<sup>11</sup> For the most marginalized children, missing out on school—even if only for a couple of weeks—can lead to negative outcomes that last a lifetime.<sup>12</sup> They are more vulnerable to child labour and less likely to break the cycle of poverty in the long term.<sup>13</sup> Global evidence shows that children who lack education have a lower life expectancy and experience poorer health outcomes. Hence, there is a need for Cambodia's response and recovery strategies to try to minimize school drop-out, especially for children already vulnerable or at-risk of dropping out.

**Increased risk of violence against children:** According to a UN policy brief on the impact of COVID-19 on children,<sup>14</sup> lockdowns and shelter-in-place measures create a heightened risk of children witnessing or suffering violence and abuse. Global literature shows that for girls, especially those living in poor households, the risks are even higher. When girls remain out of school they are at higher risk

<sup>10</sup> <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/kh>

<sup>11</sup> In Sierra Leone, protracted school closures led to a 16 per cent decline in re-enrollment rates once schools re-opened after the Ebola outbreak: ([https://downloads.ctfassets.net/0oan5gk9rgbh/6TMYLYAcUpjhQpXLDgmdla/dd1c2ad08886723cbad85283d479de09/GirlsEducationandCOVID-19\\_MalalaFund\\_04022020.pdf](https://downloads.ctfassets.net/0oan5gk9rgbh/6TMYLYAcUpjhQpXLDgmdla/dd1c2ad08886723cbad85283d479de09/GirlsEducationandCOVID-19_MalalaFund_04022020.pdf))

<sup>12</sup> Hunt F. 2008. *Dropping Out from School: A Cross Country Review of Literature*, CREATE PATHWAYS TO ACCESS Research Monograph No 16. Accessible at: [http://www.create-rpc.org/pdf\\_documents/PTA16.pdf](http://www.create-rpc.org/pdf_documents/PTA16.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> ILO and UNICEF. 2020. *COVID-19 and Child Labour: A time of crisis, a time to act*, ILO and UNICEF, New York.

<sup>14</sup> 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](https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/160420_COVID_Children_Policy_Brief.pdf)

of sexual exploitation and abuse.<sup>15</sup> This poses a risk, as violence against children is already a serious problem in Cambodia. According to Cambodia's Violence Against Children Survey 2013,<sup>16</sup> more than half of all Cambodian children experienced some form of physical violence prior to age 18 by an intimate partner, parent or adult relative, or community member. Roughly one quarter of Cambodian children are emotionally abused while growing up: almost 1 in 5 females and one quarter of males aged 18 to 24 years, and nearly 3 in 10 females and males aged 13 to 17 years, experienced emotional violence by a parent, caregiver or other adult relative prior to age 18. Rates of childhood sexual abuse are significant: 4.4 per cent of females and 5.6 per cent of males aged 18 to 24 years experienced some form of sexual abuse prior to age 18.

**Missing needs of children with disabilities:** Statistics and data on people with disabilities are not readily available in Cambodia. For children with disabilities, access to school and the possibility of staying in school is far lower than for children without disabilities. According to EMIS, in school year 2019/20, an estimated 891 pre-school-aged children with disabilities enrolled in pre-school, of which 377 were girls. Furthermore, 11,934 children with a disability enrolled in primary school, of which 4,906 were girls. Data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics<sup>17</sup> 2018 on educational disparities linked to disability show that 73 per cent of Cambodian 14- to 16-year-olds without a disability have completed primary education, compared to only 44 per cent of their peers with a disability. The study showed a large gap between children with and without disabilities, with a 50 percentage point difference between the out-of-school rate of disabled and non-disabled children (57 per cent vs. 7 per cent, respectively). This was also reflected in the adjusted disability parity index of 1.88, which means that children with disabilities are two times more likely to be out of school than their non-disabled peers in Cambodia. A blog post by the Global Partnership for Education<sup>18</sup> summarized some of the challenges that children with disabilities faced during this pandemic. These need to be incorporated in the response planning efforts: (i) remote learning tools are not always accessible to learners with disabilities or those with complex learning needs, (ii) limited internet hinders learning even further, and (iii) lack of additional support and care (such as therapy, related care services, education support, etc.) impacts children with a disability.

**Missing needs of multilingual learners:** In Cambodia, the Khmer ethno-linguistic community makes up 96 per cent of the country's population of 13.4 million. There are 38,327 Indigenous people (around

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<sup>15</sup> During the 2014 West Africa Ebola outbreak, for example, pregnancy rates among teenagers in Sierra Leone doubled and many girls were unable to continue their education when schools re-opened. More information is available on the risks that girls face when remaining out of school in Paquette, D. 'Kids Around the World are Out of School: Millions of girls might not go back', The Washington Post, 13 June 2020. Accessible at: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/coronavirus-girls-education-west-africa/2020/06/12/84a23c44-a5a8-11ea-b619-3f9133bbb482\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/coronavirus-girls-education-west-africa/2020/06/12/84a23c44-a5a8-11ea-b619-3f9133bbb482_story.html)

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Women's Affairs, UNICEF Cambodia, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Findings from Cambodia's Violence Against Children Survey 2013. Cambodia: Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2014. Accessible at: [https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/sites/violenceagainstchildren.un.org/files/documents/political\\_declarations/east\\_asia\\_and\\_pacific/cambodias\\_violence\\_against\\_children\\_survey.pdf](https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/sites/violenceagainstchildren.un.org/files/documents/political_declarations/east_asia_and_pacific/cambodias_violence_against_children_survey.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> UNESCO Institute of Statistics. 2018. Education and Disability: Analysis of Data from 49 Countries: <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/ip49-education-disability-2018-en.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> McClain-Nhlapo, Charlotte, et al. 2020. *An Inclusive Response to COVID-19: Education for Children with Disabilities*, Global Partnership for Education, 11 May: [www.globalpartnership.org/blog/inclusive-response-covid-19-education-children-disabilities](http://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/inclusive-response-covid-19-education-children-disabilities).

3 per cent of the total population) from over 10 ethnic groups spread across five provinces.<sup>19</sup> In Cambodia, children from minority language groups face a particular set of challenges in gaining a quality education. Since 2014, MoEYS has supported the institutionalization of multilingual education (MLE) as a strategy to improve inclusive education in Cambodia. The Multilingual Education National Action Plan (2019-2023) was endorsed by MoEYS, but there is a continued need for the response efforts to be responsive to the needs of these multi-lingual learners.

### 3.5 Impact of COVID-19 on the health of school children

When children cannot go to school, they end up losing more than their opportunity to learn. With schools closed, many children have lost their routines and time with their friends, and some have lost access to health or nutrition services and the safety that school provides them. Thus, there are other factors that can further exacerbate and negatively affect the education system as a whole. Adequate nutrition is essential for school children's health. An unpublished report for UNICEF by the Economic Policy Research Institute (June 2020) entitled, 'Pre-existing Risk and Vulnerability Analysis: Considerations for the Integrated Family Benefit Package' cited a study by the World Food Programme in 2017 showing that one in five households could not afford a nutritious diet. More than 60 per cent of children aged 6 months to 24 months, and 80 per cent of children aged 6 months to 8 months were unable to meet the minimum acceptable diet.<sup>20</sup> School closures impact the school feeding programme, which provides 8,414 students (56 per cent female) with food scholarships in 443 schools. It also impacts the wider school feeding programme in 1,167 schools, which benefits 325,957 students (49 per cent female). It is difficult to predict how long school closures will last, so the health, food security and nutrition of the most vulnerable children must be prioritized, and where necessary coordination with other line ministries responsible for health and nutrition must be improved.

### 3.6 Impact of school closures on the health and wellbeing of children

According to a systematic literature review of 700 scientific papers and letters on COVID-19 transmission by children, children are unlikely to be the main drivers of the pandemic, and opening up schools and kindergartens is unlikely to impact COVID-19 mortality rates in older people.<sup>21</sup> There is overwhelming evidence on the negative impacts of school closures on children's physical and mental health, nutrition, safety and learning. Therefore, the decision of when to open schools should be made in the best interests of children and with overall consideration for public health. Such a decision should be based on context-specific evidence, and assessments of the benefits and risks to children in regard to education, public health and socio-economic factors.

### 3.7 Limited access to WASH facilities in schools and the impact on children's health

Clean water and proper sanitation, preventive measures and adequate awareness can significantly reduce the mortality burden of communicable diseases. National capacities for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) emergency response are limited. Only one in two Cambodians has access to safe drinking water, and fewer than one in four has access to a toilet. Most schools and students in Cambodia are situated in rural areas. Of the kingdom's 13,482 schools, 12,092 are rural, with the

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<sup>19</sup> UNICEF. 2019. Independent Evaluation of the Multilingual Education National Action Plan:

[https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/Cambodia\\_MENAP-Evaluation\\_Report-Volume-I-approved\\_15378.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/Cambodia_MENAP-Evaluation_Report-Volume-I-approved_15378.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> World Bank. 2020. Cambodia Economic Update May 2020:

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/843251556908260855/pdf/Cambodia-Economic-Update-Recent-Economic-Developments-and-Outlook.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Ludvigsson, J. F. 2020. *Children are Unlikely to be the Main Drivers of the COVID-10 Pandemic: A systematic review*. John Wiley & Sons Ltd: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/apa.15371>

remaining 1,390 in urban areas. Water and sanitation facilities are limited: 1,765 rural schools do not have any water supply and 4,292 rural schools do not have any toilets on the school premises. This poses a challenge to preventing the spread of diseases, and observing and adhering to recommended hygiene practices becomes difficult.

### 3.8 Impact of school closures on teachers and school personnel

While the effects of COVID-19 on the learning, health and wellbeing of children are well documented, school personnel, especially teachers, are also severely impacted by the pandemic. School closures and restrictions on public gatherings interrupted teacher training, as well as mentor support. The absence of face-to-face training, continuous professional support and robust monitoring and accountability systems in place will likely lower teacher effectiveness. While MoEYS was quick to respond through the launch of continuous learning programmes and the involvement of teachers, limited teacher capacity, especially in the areas of distance learning, will make it difficult for them to meaningfully engage with students. The problem is exacerbated in remote areas where teachers have limited access to technology and a restricted ability to meet with students and parents face-to-face. Similar concerns apply to school directors who need the resources to be able to better monitor and support teachers in the effective delivery of continuous, blended learning.

## 4. Current response efforts by the education sector

### 4.1 Response work by development partners

A COVID-19 mapping exercise is regularly carried out through the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) and NGO partners to collect information on key activities being supported by development partners and NGOs in response to the outbreak in Cambodia. The mapping document is being updated periodically to support timely information sharing among MoEYS, ESWG members and NGOs.

As of 2 July, 17 organizations had provided inputs to the mapping matrix. To date, 69 activity interventions have been added to the mapping matrix, covering both the emergency response and recovery phases for COVID-19. The greatest area of support is in continuous learning at school level. Other key areas of support include: the production of information, education and communication (IEC) materials and associated risk communication activities; the provision of hygiene supplies to schools; the ID Poor cash transfer programme, including links with the MoEYS scholarship programme; technical assistance for the MoEYS national scholarship programme; the provision of school meals to children from poor households; and preparedness for safe school re-opening. These activities range across all education sub-sectors, including early childhood education, primary and secondary education, teacher training, non-formal education; and target national and sub-national beneficiaries and audiences. The total budget linked to the activities in the matrix is US\$6.8 million.

### 4.2 Provision of policy directives and guidance notes to ensure business continuity

MoEYS has implemented immediate actions and measures to respond to the threat of COVID-19, with a focus on assisting students with continuous learning. Key instructions, guidelines and directives have been produced and disseminated nationwide.

In January, MoEYS sent out a letter<sup>22</sup> to schools notifying them about the threat of COVID-19 and urging the adoption of good hygiene practice in schools. In mid-March, MoEYS closed schools in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, and later called for a closure<sup>23</sup> for all schools and education institutions across the country until further notice. The ministry also subsequently announced teleworking arrangements<sup>24</sup> for all education personnel.

In April, MoEYS issued a directive<sup>25</sup> 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 guideline<sup>26</sup> to support the implementation of distance learning in pre-schools, primary schools, secondary general education schools and targeted higher education institutions. The guideline supports 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.

In early June, MoEYS issued guidelines<sup>27</sup> on e-learning programmes at teacher training institutions. The guidelines set out principles, measures and necessary steps for all teacher training institutions to provide training and capacity development to teacher trainees, teacher educators and management teams.

#### 4.3 Provision of continuous learning programmes

The core strategic component of the MoEYS COVID-19 response was to develop distance learning services for children from ECE through to secondary education. Expanding online learning for all children across different education levels will continue over the coming months.

In March 2020, MoEYS began to prepare online lessons for Grade 9 and 12 students, 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 has developed distance learning content to reach students from early childhood to Grade 12, including those from ethnic minority communities and children with hearing difficulties.

These programmes can be accessed through Facebook and YouTube, and MoEYS recently developed a U-Learning platform. With support from a variety of development partners, MoEYS is now broadcasting distance learning programmes through a new dedicated education television channel (TVK2) and through radio. The TVK2 channel broadcasts content relevant to pre-schoolers through to upper secondary students,<sup>28</sup> while the current radio programmes focus on reaching parents and children engaged in pre-school and MLE, and students in pre-school and Grades 1–3. Efforts have

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<sup>22</sup> 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.

<sup>23</sup> MoEYS. No.13 on Directive on Getting Started Short-term Vacation and Early School Break for All Public and Private Educational Institutions across Cambodia. Issued 16 March 2020.

<sup>24</sup> MoEYS. No. 17. Guideline on further responses to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Issued 26 March 2020.

<sup>25</sup> MoEYS. No. 23. Directive on “Distance Learning” and “E-learning” programme for students from Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education. Issued 24 April 2020.

<sup>26</sup> MoEYS. No. 29. Operational Guideline for the Distance Learning Implementation. Issued 8 June 2020.

<sup>27</sup> MoEYS. No. 30. Guidelines on E-Training for Teacher Education in Teacher Training Institutions. Issued on 9 June 2020.

<sup>28</sup> TVK2 is currently broadcast across 54 cable television services in all 25 of Cambodia’s provinces, according to a report issued by MoEYS on 19 April 2020.

been made to integrate Cambodian Sign Language into primary and secondary online and television e-lessons to enhance inclusivity.

As of 26 June 2020, a total of 1,618 assets from ECE to Grade 12<sup>29</sup> had been produced, including: 1,303 e-learning videos, of which 219 were integrated with sign language and 30 were converted and printed in braille; and 270 MLE radio spots in three languages. Of the learning assets, 551 have been broadcast across various social media platforms, radio or other mentioned channels.

#### 4.4 Student access to continuous learning programmes

Notwithstanding the roll out of distance learning services, there are gaps in access, as many children from poor households and those living in remote locations are unable to either have regular internet access or do not have internet access at all. Some children and their families also face challenges accessing the education television channel and radio programmes, as many poor households do not own a television or a radio, or do not have a satellite dish or cable which would allow them to view the TVK2 education channel.

The latest figures, based on a large-scale nationwide survey,<sup>30</sup> indicate that 48.4 per cent of rural households in Cambodia own a television and 38.4 per cent own a radio. A 2016 survey (most recent large-scale figures available) shows 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 accessed information (30 per cent); this surpassed television (29 per cent) and almost doubled radio (15 per cent).<sup>31</sup> The total views for all e-learning videos on Facebook and You Tube have reached 11.1 million,<sup>32</sup> and it is estimated that on average 10,000 pre-school students, 69,000 Grade 4–6 students, and 70,000 secondary school students are reached with e-learning through these platforms.<sup>33</sup>

A rapid assessment by the MoEYS Primary Education Department (PED) on access to distance learning showed that 24 per cent of the 513,303 primary school students (Grades 1–6) in 2,858 primary schools surveyed have access to e-learning on television, and 22 per cent have access via Facebook. Of these, only 17 per cent viewed more than 50 per cent of the length of every video. The assessment concluded that only 24 per cent of teachers assigned homework for students, and only 7 per cent of students were engaged with teachers on question-and-answer sessions.<sup>34</sup> While MoEYS has

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<sup>29</sup> These numbers exclude primary education Grade 1–3 learning videos developed and published on different platforms.

<sup>30</sup> 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.

<sup>31</sup> Asia Foundation: 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.

<sup>32</sup> The 11 million views include total views for all assets combined, including pre-school, Grades 4–6 and Grades 7–12 published on Facebook or YouTube, which have been viewed for any length of time. For secondary education videos, the views reached 8.8 million, for primary education videos 2.2 million, and for pre-school videos 100,000.

<sup>33</sup> These average numbers are calculated by combining views on all videos published across one grade (on YouTube and Facebook) divided by the number of videos published for the same grade. Accordingly, an average 4.3 per cent of pre-school, 3.4 per cent of primary and 7.3 per cent of secondary school students view e-learning videos on these social media platforms.

<sup>34</sup> MoEYS. 2020. Report on distance learning and electronic learning. Primary Education Department. Issued 19 May 2020 (Khmer language document).

attempted to make its distance learning more accessible, with partnerships with the Cambodian DTV Network Limited (DTV Cambodia) for installing satellite dishes in hard-to-reach areas, and with Metfone for students and teachers to access free internet connectivity, anecdotal evidence shows that digital channels are not sufficient to reach all children in Cambodia.

The ESWG and MoEYS are planning to do a nationwide rapid assessment in the coming months to: (i) better understand the extent of the multi-dimensional impacts of COVID-19 on the education system; (ii) measure the level of access, quality and effectiveness of distance learning across different platforms for students; and (iii) identify current teaching and learning outreach efforts in schools and at teacher education institutions (TEIs). This will help to better understand the capacity development needs of educators to adequately support learners during school closures and beyond. Findings from this large-scale rapid assessment are expected to be available in August 2020 and will be drawn upon to inform interventions under the MoEYS COVID-19 response and recovery programme.

Other small-scale rapid assessments have been done by education sector partners to better understand the gaps faced by children in accessing continuous or distance learning services. MoEYS and UNICEF Cambodia, for example, jointly conducted a small-scale online survey<sup>35</sup> with 575 respondents from 21 provinces.

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 where they live (10 per cent); unawareness of television or radio schedules for continuous learning programmes (22 per cent) and no time to learn due to daily chores or taking care of their siblings (18 per cent). Note that accessing video lessons on a regular basis will require smartphone internet data at a cost of around \$1/week, a significant barrier to many families.<sup>36</sup>

The MoEYS-UNICEF small-scale online survey found a common concern among students and caregivers who have the means to access the continuous learning materials was learning outcomes, examinations and the future of their children's education. In terms of learning outcomes, the majority (62 per cent) think they are learning less than when schools were open; 3 per cent think that they were not learning at all; 26 per cent think that they are learning the same amount as before school closures; and 9 per cent think that they are 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.

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<sup>35</sup> The survey was conducted online between 21 May and 21 June. The findings are preliminary and currently unpublished. The results were analysed from 575 respondents, 37 per cent of whom were from rural areas and 58 per cent from urban areas, with the remaining 5 per cent not specifying. The 575 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).

<sup>36</sup> Data based on current figures from Mobitel Company, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. 10GB for \$1, validity 7 days: <https://www.cellcard.com.kh/en/promotions/best-internet-offers/> retrieved 25 June 2020.



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.<sup>37</sup> 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. The challenges 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. Some students mentioned that they were not ready for online learning, that the learning process was complicated, and that they felt stressed. The monitoring report indicated that only 20 per cent of MLE students in the north-eastern provinces of Ratanakiri and Mondulakiri had a radio at home to access distance learning.

According to a rapid gender analysis for COVID-19 done by CARE International, girls may benefit less from online learning, especially where families have limited devices and access to remote learning technologies. Due to gender norms and roles, girls may be expected to devote more time than boys to unpaid care work and caring for younger siblings, older populations, and those who are ill within the household rather than focusing on education.

#### 4.5 Impact of continuous learning programmes

Continuous learning programmes are being utilized by children across Cambodia, some with support from their parents and teachers. The extent to which these programmes alone are impacting on student learning outcomes, however, is currently difficult to assess. This is for several reasons: (i) these programmes were developed in response to the COVID-19 emergency and there has been insufficient time to fully assess their impact; (ii) these programmes require students to adopt a different learning methodology (e-learning in place of face-to-face classroom-based learning) representing a significant shift for children, including in their learning experience; (iii) the production of continuous learning programmes is new to MoEYS and teachers, and therefore there is an element of 'learning by doing' in preparing these assets (which does however offer opportunities to improve the quality of continuous learning assets) and (iv) parental engagement in their child's use of these programmes, as well as small-group time with a teacher, is understood to be a significant determinant of a child's learning experience, particularly for children in lower grades. The PED survey data, presented in the previous section, shows that sustained efforts are required to increase student interaction with all aspects of continuous learning to achieve a meaningful impact.

All teachers at the primary school level are now developing bi-weekly reports that track the progress of distance learning and teaching. These reports are developed by each school, compiled by the school directors, and sent through district offices of education (DOEs) and POEs to MoEYS, which then compiles overall results. This bi-weekly report on e-learning records student access to distance learning programmes via television, smartphone, Facebook and Telegram, as well as actual learning that is taking place through various mediums and by teachers providing homework or students contacting teachers to ask questions. The report collects information on the number of teachers who facilitate small group learning among their students, teachers who provide worksheets to students,

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<sup>37</sup> 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.

and teachers reviewing and providing feedback on the worksheets. The latest PED report indicates that 65 per cent of the teachers shared MoEYS teaching videos with their students, 74 per cent facilitated small groups in homes or villages, and 73 per cent of teachers provided students with worksheets and reviewed and provided feedback on the returned worksheets.<sup>38</sup>

#### 4.6 Involving teachers and schools in response efforts

In recognition of the crucial role that teachers play in supporting students to learn by distance, at an early stage of its COVID-19 response MoEYS established a set of guidelines outlining teachers' roles and responsibilities in this area. Through the initial MoEYS directive on distance learning,<sup>39</sup> a full list of platforms (both online and television) broadcasting continuous learning programmes was provided. Directions were given to school directors and teachers to: (i) establish online learning groups<sup>40</sup> with students and parents or caregivers; (ii) provide information on how to access continuous learning programmes; (iii) ensure students could access additional paper-based learning materials/textbooks; and (iv) conduct home visits to facilitate and monitor distance learning activities. MoEYS later released the more detailed continuous learning Guideline of Distance Learning No. 29,<sup>41</sup> which further articulates the role of teachers and other education professionals in support of distance learning. Importantly, teachers are expected to provide weekly paper-based resources to their students, and meet their students weekly to provide their marked worksheets/workbooks and issue new ones for the week ahead.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that many teachers are responding constructively to the requests from MoEYS for them to support continuous learning. Teachers are equipped with basic COVID-19 prevention measures and are conducting the tasks requested by MoEYS in accordance with public health advice. Some teachers have set up online learning groups using Telegram and Messenger social media platforms, comprising between 5 and 10 students. Some are also conducting MoEYS recommended weekly outreach visits to their students to support small group learning activities where they provide feedback on students' homework assignments. Teachers in a number of schools are using assessment tools to measure the learning of their students. Recent school visits also indicate that many schools are proactively and regularly providing paper-based worksheets on a weekly basis for their students, in accordance with MoEYS instructions. Many teachers are conducting interactive classes online, using smartphones to stream the lessons. This is seemingly the most common equipment used.

Despite the innovation being initiated by teachers in response to the extraordinary situation created by COVID-19, challenges remain in terms of reliability of internet access and access to financial support for teachers' outreach work. The large-scale rapid assessment, mentioned above, should provide further insight into the extent of teachers' support to their students for distance learning.

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<sup>38</sup> MoEYS. 2020. Report: E-learning III figures from PED from 01 July 2020. These numbers are from 6,862 primary schools, which is 95 per cent of all primary schools in Cambodia; 79 per cent of teachers or school staff from the 6,862 schools provided information to the report.

<sup>39</sup> MoEYS. 2020. Directive No. 23 on 'Distance Learning' and 'E-learning' Programme for Students from Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education. Issued on 24 April.

<sup>40</sup> Through Telegram, Messenger or WhatsApp.

<sup>41</sup> MoEYS. 2020. Continuous learning guidelines for 'Distance Learning' and 'E-learning', No. 29. Issued on 8 June.

#### 4.7 Awareness raising within the education community on COVID-19 safety and prevention

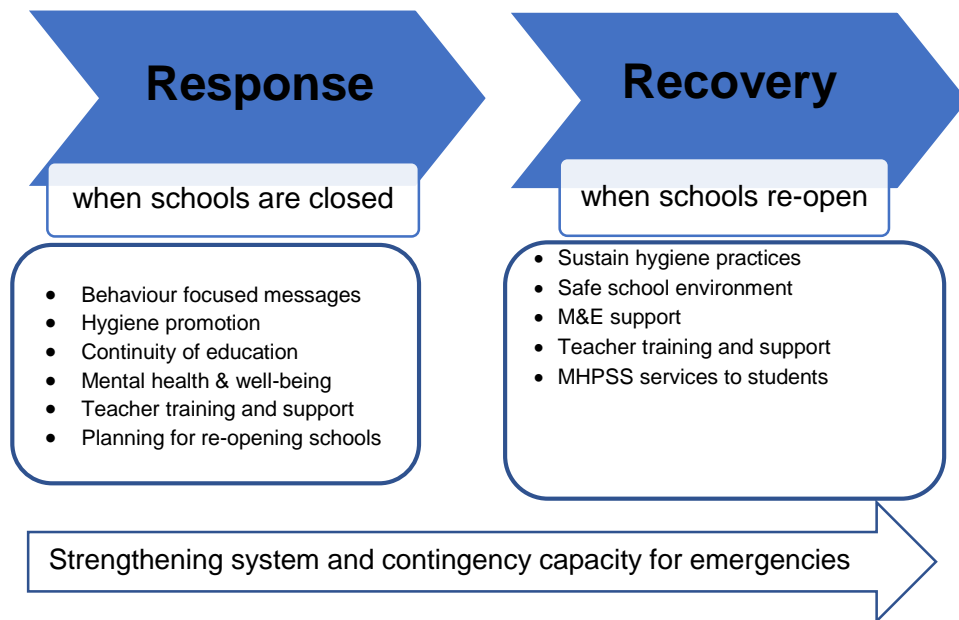
Since the beginning of the COVID-19 emergency, the Royal Government of Cambodia, through different line ministries and in collaboration with development partners, has engaged in nationwide Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) in response to the COVID-19 emergency. The response has included the production of IEC materials and associated risk communication activities, including posters, videos, booklets, songs and social media messaging on topics such as hand washing and hygiene, social distancing, continuous learning, early childhood development, positive parenting, protection and safety. Information has been disseminated through various platforms, including community outreach, printed posters and banners, billboards, social media platforms, official websites, and through existing government structures from national to sub-national levels, including schools and teachers. IEC materials created by different partners are shared weekly among ESWG members so they can be disseminated and used widely.

#### 5. 5. Key objectives of the response plan

The Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) for Education, which includes MoEYS and ESWG members, identified and agreed on objectives, activities and indicators for the Education COVID-19 Response Plan. 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 consequence on school systems during school closures, and after school re-opening. The four planned outputs/objectives include:

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



### 5.1 Staff and students are able to continue remote teaching and learning safely

The first objective of the Education COVID-19 Response Plan is to provide remote or continuous learning for all students during school closures. Aligning with MoEYS Guidelines #23 and #29 on continuous learning, MoEYS and partners will continue implementing activities to maintain continuity of learning for students at all levels of education. Additionally, dissemination of timely and accurate risk communication will be essential for parents, students and teachers to ensure information on and access to appropriate health, hygiene and wellbeing measures during distance learning.

The core focus will be to continue the ongoing delivery of good quality, relevant and inclusive distance learning services to children across the country, in urban, rural and remote areas. This support will be provided to girls and boys engaged in pre-school through to secondary education, and will draw on a number of broadcasting platforms, such as online/internet, television and radio, as well as print materials and direct teacher support to students. Adaptations will need to be made to ensure learning materials are accessible for children with a disability. As identified in a number of rapid assessments, due focus on print materials and teacher engagement is needed to reach the majority of students.

It is anticipated that the provision of distance learning will continue throughout 2020 and up to the full school year of 2020/21, if school re-opening occurs later than the start of the 2020/21 school year, or if students go back to school in a phased manner.

During the periods of school closure, the following objectives will be prioritized:

- Continuous learning is provided to pre-primary, primary, lower and upper secondary students
- Vulnerable children are prioritized in continuous learning programme planning and implementation
- Support is provided to teachers and schools to provide continuous distance learning to students during school closures

- Cross-sectoral issues, including child protection, mental health, WASH and health are considered during school closures.

The planned outputs include:

- Early childhood, primary, lower and upper secondary students have access to distance learning through print, digital technology, radio, television and school/teacher support
- Most vulnerable children (including children with disabilities, struggling learners, poor children, children from ethnic minorities, migrant children, children in rural, hard-to-reach communities) have access to distance learning opportunities
- Teachers and schools are equipped with knowledge, skills and resources to support distance learning in their communities
- Teachers and students are aware of child protection, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), health, and WASH services in their schools and communities

## 5.2 Students and education staff return to education institutions safely

Pursuant to the MoEYS guideline on planning for school re-opening, planning will be underpinned by the following objectives:

- Maintaining the health, safety and wellbeing of the whole school community<sup>42</sup> is of paramount importance
- Engage with stakeholders within the education institution's community and beyond to build confidence within the community about children returning to school and staying in school
- Ensure that all education institutions can re-open safely once sanitary conditions and social distancing measures allow, in a way that ensures the wellbeing of the whole school community
- Staff and students maintain the health and safety standards that allowed for re-opening in the first place
- Maintain communication channels with the community around improved school hygiene practices and efforts to maintain standards.

The planned outputs include:

- Key policies, procedures and financing plans needed to resume safe operation of education institutions, including strengthening distance learning practices, are developed
- Prior to education institutions re-opening, back-to-school planning and campaigns are planned and implemented using participatory methods, engaging the whole school community, including children and young people
- Prior to schools re-opening, all school facilities are cleaned and disinfected, safe water and hygiene facilities are adequate and accessible
- The education community returns to safe learning environments where the wellbeing and protection of students and education staff are ensured
- Essential infrastructure investments in schools are prioritized to ensure access to adequate WASH facilities in ECE, primary and secondary schools.

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<sup>42</sup> Whole school community refers to children, caregivers, teachers, school management, community leaders and committees, and local education authorities.

### 5.3 Staff and students are able to teach and learn in an adaptable learning environment

The Cambodia situation analysis revealed that the country currently suffers from a high drop-out rate, particularly in lower and upper secondary education, and that learning quality remains a major challenge. The World Bank Cambodia's May 2020 Economic Update highlights that COVID-19 and the accompanying school closures will likely result in student learning lagging behind, due to learning losses and increases in the risk of school drop-out in the medium term. To mitigate these risks, it is imperative that once staff and students are back in school, they are able to teach and learn in an adaptable learning environment that equips them with the tools and resources to succeed.

Under this objective, MoEYS will prioritize support to at-risk, vulnerable students who are at the greatest risk of lagging behind and/or dropping out. This will involve developing and operationalizing mechanisms, such as: an early warning system that helps schools identify at-risk students in a COVID-19 context; preparation for successful re-entry through remedial programming; an effective accelerated curriculum, and teaching and learning materials; and a school calendar and examination schedule that lays conditions for success. Students will be assessed on re-entry to school for teachers to identify learning gaps, refer them to remedial programming, and provide targeted support so they can catch up to grade level on time. Schools and staff, especially teachers, will need to be given autonomy to manage the curriculum and schedules based on local conditions. This will not be possible without adequate support for teachers, who will need to have access to continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities at the school, cluster and teacher training institute levels, with the latter to be delivered preferably through a distance or blended modality to keep teachers at schools once they have re-opened. New, relevant CPD modules should be developed if required. Under this objective, MoEYS will focus on the following outputs:

- Identification and enrolment of, and outreach to, at-risk, vulnerable students through the adaptation and operationalization of early warning systems at the school-level in a COVID-19 context
- Schools and teachers are prepared to meet the learning needs of students, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups through the development of a remedial programme on key subjects and a suite of formative assessment tools that will equip teachers to provide targeted support to students
- Schools are able to successfully transition from distance learning to face-to-face learning through the development of an accelerated curriculum, teaching and learning materials, academic calendar and examination schedule for the school year 2020/21.

### 5.4 MoEYS systems at national and sub-national levels have increased resilience

Given the uncertainty surrounding the trajectory of COVID-19, and the high likelihood of a resurgence of cases, it is critical for the education system, including schools, communities and families to ensure rapid response efforts are underpinned by a mid- and long-term, multi-risk and sustainability-oriented approach. MoEYS has already taken important steps by building the foundation for a blended model of learning through the production of continuous learning content, and monitoring systems at the central and sub-national levels. However, as new surveys and assessments reveal, many children either do not have access to distance learning,<sup>43</sup> or have trouble adopting it.<sup>44</sup> The current distance learning modalities lack regular student-teacher interaction, which negatively impacts student

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<sup>43</sup> Save the Children. 2020. Understanding Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of Children About COVID-19.

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50725690/students-struggle-with-home-based-learning-survey/>

performance. The overall purpose of this objective is to ensure that the immediate COVID-19 response measures can contribute to, and reinforce, the resilience of the national education system, and support the ESP's focus on equitable access to inclusive quality education for all children, with improved learning outcomes. It provides the opportunity to strengthen the education system's crisis preparedness, response and recovery mechanisms, and to improve its planning, monitoring and accountability systems. MoEYS and development partners will focus on the following outputs under this objective:

- Strengthened capacity of MoEYS and education stakeholders, at the central and sub-national level, on pandemic preparedness, response and recovery through the development of COVID-19 response plans
- Improved planning, monitoring and accountability systems to ensure quality, inclusive learning through enhanced capacity of EMIS and school-based data management systems to track student and teacher attendance and performance; and for teachers, recruitment and deployment during a crisis
- Strengthened MoEYS distance learning programme for teachers and students to ensure continuous learning through a gap analysis, and development and dissemination of new, improved learning assets for students and teachers.

## 6. 6. Assumptions and Risks

### 6.1 Assumptions

In developing this National Response Plan, assumptions were made using existing data, where possible, and based on consultation with technical departments and development partners. The main assumptions are:

#### **Delivery capacity:**

- MoEYS central, sub-national and local staff will be able to continue working normal hours and be able to visit their usual place of work
- MoEYS central, sub-national and local staff all have reasonable access to online resources at their place of work or a reasonable alternative; and all (>95 per cent) have a Telegram account
- MoEYS budget and other external financial support (e.g. development partner contributions) remain unaffected, and promised new contributions are delivered
  - Scholarships and other supports are able to be maintained
- All existing MoEYS staff remain in the education service; no *significant* staff shortages are created by COVID-19 illness
- All expected channels of communication within Cambodia (telephones, online, messaging) remain substantively unchanged

#### **Needs:**

- The plan focuses on the needs of teachers and learners in the public school system in early childhood, primary and secondary grade levels. The plan will aim to address the needs of teacher educators and teacher trainees in teacher education institutions.
- Education sector partners have the capacity to support the implementation of the plan, including through participation in JTWGs, making funding available, and through the development of common tools and guidance
- All students will require continuous learning support. This requirement will be greater for students from households identified as vulnerable.

- Access barriers (travel, telephone signal coverage) will be a significant problem in more remote areas, but these can be overcome using local solutions
- Sub-national and school-level staff are able to use existing and adapted materials (such as early warning system criteria) to identify and prioritize vulnerable students
- The most vulnerable students are those most at risk of dropping out of education
- The economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are not so severe as to force families to keep children out of school for financial reasons
- The most vulnerable households will require paper-based teaching and learning materials as well as support to access other media
- Teachers are sufficiently healthy (physically and mentally) to deliver their teaching roles, including with any psychosocial support available

**WASH, safety and protection:**

- Schools listed as having existing WASH infrastructure have those facilities in good working condition
- Cambodia’s access to hygiene supplies (soap, disinfectant, etc.) remains unaltered and no significant price changes occur
- Clear guidance continues to be offered from MoH on correct and safe procedures
- Advice on social distancing measures remains substantively unaltered or measures are relaxed over time

**Information:**

- The Royal Government of Cambodia is able to ensure that accurate and timely information about COVID-19 protection and prevention measures is distributed, and that schools and households with children are properly informed and guided
- Distribution of resources to remote areas is possible by adapting to local circumstances

**Monitoring:**

- Travel remains unrestricted to a level that allows for monitoring and evaluation of the plan
- Existing internal and external monitoring and inspection systems (district training and monitoring teams, POE regular inspections) are able to continue according to their expected implementation schedules.

**6.2 Risks**

In developing this National Response Plan, risks were identified using existing data, where possible, and based on consultation with technical departments and development partners. The main risks identified are:

**Delivery capacity**

<b>RISK</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Travel restrictions limiting capacity of MoEYS central, sub-national and local staff to maintain their normal working hours and locations	Low	Medium
Economic impacts of COVID-19 reduce or delay delivery of expected funding	Medium	High
Disruption of communication networks	Low	High
Teachers with low ICT capacity to deliver e-learning and other interventions	Medium	Medium
Access barriers of teachers for online resources and training (lack of smartphone, lack of signal, lack of internet credit)	High	Medium



Other duties of MoEYS central, sub-national and local staff affect timely interventions of National Response Plan	Medium	High
Standards of teaching and learning materials (e-learning and other) are not sufficient to meet the needs of response	Medium	High
Schools are unable to open for a full SY 2020/21 (start of school year is delayed)	Medium	High

## Needs

RISK	Level	Impact
Insufficient capacity and funding to implement the response plan	Medium	High
Most vulnerable households cannot be reached by normal means; these households are unable to access paper-based teaching and learning materials	High	High
Students vulnerable to migration problems are unable to attend school	Medium	Medium
Economic conditions for families makes school unaffordable and leads to dropout	Medium	High
Teachers require significant support (health, psychosocial) to continue their professional duties	Medium	Medium

## WASH, safety and protection

RISK	Level	Impact
WASH facilities in schools are not fit-for-purpose	Low	High
Economic impact of COVID-19 affects supply and/or costing of WASH materials	Low	Medium
Misinformation on WASH guidance	Medium	Medium

## Information and monitoring

RISK	Level	Impact
Travel restrictions stop visits to and between schools	Medium	High
Internal and external monitoring and inspections are restricted	Medium	Medium
Misuse and misappropriation of COVID-19 funds (fraud, corruption and other poor practices)	Low	Medium

### 7. 7. Key considerations

Guided by the overall leadership of H.E. Minister of Education, MoEYS will continue to use a **system-strengthening approach** to build national capacities to deliver and manage the response/recovery efforts and continue to galvanize partnerships to mobilize and channel quality resources. It will leverage its partnerships with national and sub-national governments, ESWG members, NGOs (both international and national), civil society, the private sector and education stakeholders themselves for tangible results during the different phases of the pandemic.

Communities in Cambodia play a vital role in education and underpinning the response plan is the **accountability to affected populations (AAP)**. All education sector partners will ensure accountability to affected populations through consulting and actively involving communities, teachers

and students in all aspects of the response and recovery activities. The education sector partners will actively seek feedback from beneficiaries and adjust programmes accordingly.

The urban and rural poor, migrant, and internally displaced populations are especially at risk as they tend to live in overcrowded settings, making it almost impossible to practice social distancing. In the context of Cambodia, children with disabilities and casualties due to remnants of war, child labour and working children, children in residential care institutions, children living or working on the streets, married teenagers, and children in conflict with the law should be included as **vulnerable population groups**. Affected by the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, those children often lack access to remote/distance learning options and remain in isolation and marginalized.

Key strategies to promote the **accessibility and inclusion of children with disabilities** in the education response will be prioritized. Some actions include: (i) sign language and subtitles for video content for children with hearing impairments; (ii) radio programmes for children with visual impairments; (iii) provision of learning devices/equipment and connectivity; and (iv) print media in braille for children with visual impairments. In addition to parents' efforts to support their children in distance learning, **teachers also play a critical role** in deepening the impact of continuous or distance learning programmes in Cambodia's COVID-19 response and recovery context.

The Education Sector is seeking to respond to COVID-19 emergencies in an **integrated manner**, advocating for education as a natural entry point for emergency responses across the sector. The Education Sector will be piloting a number of initiatives, including child protection and MHPSS activities, with a specific focus on preventing the abuse and exploitation of adolescent girls, addressing the high rates of drop out, retaining children in learning activities during school closures, and ensuring existing schools have minimum WASH facilities prior to the safe return of children to school.

With multiple agencies responding at once, it is critical that there be a **common understanding and agreement** in geographic and thematic areas of response. With good coordination, through information sharing, management and analysis, the ESWG and JTWG work to mitigate duplication and in so doing build holistic interventions for the greatest number of children.

The response plan strives to **build the resilience of communities** through the Coronavirus response and recovery activities, for example through the establishment of school emergency plans, the dissemination of health messages and the upgrading of WASH facilities, among others. The recovery activities also provide a unique opportunity to integrate children previously missed by the education system back into school.

8. 8. Implementation plan

Key Objective #1:	All students continue distance learning safely
Outcome Indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of students in Cambodia benefit from distance learning programmes</li> <li>• % of students are on track with grade appropriate learning as a result of distance learning programmes</li> <li>• % of vulnerable children (including children with disabilities, struggling learners, poor children, children from ethnic minorities, migrant children, children in rural hard-to-reach and poorest communities) benefit from distance learning programmes</li> <li>• % of teachers are empowered with knowledge, skills and resources to support distance learning in their schools</li> <li>• % of schools, teachers and students are knowledgeable on available health, WASH, child protection and MHPSS services</li> </ul> <p>Disaggregation: Level of education, geographical zones (provinces/ districts/rural/urban), and gender</p>
Output Indicators:	<p><i>Objective 1.1 Early childhood, primary, lower and upper secondary students have access to distance learning through print, digital technology, radio, TV and school/teacher support</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of learning assets developed and disseminated for all grade levels through TV, online, radio and paper-based materials</li> <li>– Number of schools implementing continuous learning support to students through study-groups, paper-based learning materials and monitoring visits.</li> <li>– Number of students accessing distance learning programmes and receiving regular teacher support to learn</li> </ul> <p><i>Objective 1.2 Most vulnerable children (including children with disabilities, struggling learners, poor children, children from ethnic minorities, migrant children, children in rural hard-to-reach communities) have access to distance learning opportunities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of schools have identified ‘vulnerable’ students, and students who need adjusted or additional learning support</li> <li>– Number of children with vulnerabilities, including MLE students, students with disabilities, and slow learners have received adequate learning support from their school/teacher</li> </ul> <p><i>Objective 1.3 Teachers and schools are equipped with knowledge, skills and resources to support distance learning in their communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of teachers have received information, guidance, training or resources from their school/DoE/PoE to support student learning</li> <li>– Number of schools and teachers have regularly (weekly) reached out to their students to support their learning and check on their wellbeing</li> </ul>

	<p><i>Objective 1.4 Teachers and students are aware of child protection, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), health, and WASH services in their schools and communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of students who have been reached out by their teacher or school about information on child protection and mental health/psychosocial services</li> <li>– Number of students who have been reached out by their teachers with information on health services and WASH practices</li> <li>– Number of schools and teachers who have received information about WASH, child protection and mental health and psychosocial support services</li> </ul> <p>Disaggregation: Level of education, geographical zones (provinces/ districts/rural/urban), and gender</p>			
Key Activities	Implementation Timeframe	Key Output	Responsibilities	Budget Required
<b><i>Early childhood, primary, lower and upper secondary students have access to distance learning through print, digital technology, radio, TV and school/teacher support (O 1.1)</i></b>				
1.1.1 Provide distance learning programmes for pre-school students (focus on 5-year olds), including educational videos for streaming online and for broadcast on the MoEYS TVK2 channel	July 2020 – April 2021	Children age 5 have the opportunity to continue learning in the five subject areas of sciences, Khmer, pre-math, social studies and psycho-motor  Children in pre-school are being prepared to transit to primary education	Early Childhood Education Department	\$83,000
1.1.2 Develop TV and radio programmes to support early childhood education and development of children as well as their parents	July 2020 – October 2021	Children have the opportunity to develop and continue learning through TV and radio programme  Parents improve their skills in key areas of positive parenting and early childhood development through interactive radio and TV programme	Early Childhood Education Department	\$230,000
1.1.3 Provide distance learning programmes to children in Grades 1 to 6 in core subjects of Khmer and Mathematics available online and on MoEYS TVK2 channel, with CSL integrated	July 2020 – April 2021	Primary school students access distance learning videos in Khmer and Mathematics according to school curricular, with CSL integrated	Primary Education Department	\$734,400
1.1.4 Provide distance learning programmes for Grades 7–12 in six core subjects: Khmer,	July 2020 – April 2021	Secondary school students access learning videos in six core subjects	General Secondary Education Department	\$400,000

Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, and History – available on online and MoEYS TVK2 TV channel		according to school curriculum (CSL in a separate activity for Gr 7–12)		
1.1.5 Develop paper-based learning materials (worksheets and activity/learning booklets) at the national level and distribute to schools, for all students in Grades 1 – 12	July 2020 – April 2021	Students in Gr 1–12 have received paper-based learning materials which support their continuous learning  Worksheets developed at national level and distributed to teachers	Primary Education Department, General Secondary Education Department	\$151,640
1.1.6 School block grants to school to print and utilize paper-based learning materials, (worksheets and activity/learning booklets), for all students in Grades 1 – 12	July 2020 – April 2021	Worksheets distributed to students in Gr 1-12 to support their continuous learning.	Schools	\$3,220,000
1.1.7 Conduct live ‘question and answer’ sessions for Grade 9 and 12 students in six core subjects, as preparation for the national exams	July 2020 – April 2021	Grade 9 and 12 students benefit from live QA sessions as preparation for the national exams	Department of IT, General Secondary Education Department	\$172,960
1.1.8 Monitor and evaluate continuous learning: schools at all levels submit bi-weekly e-learning reports which record continuous learning and teaching	July 2020 – April 2021	MoEYS receives bi-weekly reports from schools (reporting structure: school – DoE – PoE – MoEYS) with up to-date information on student learning and teaching, including student access to different learning modalities; teacher efforts to reach all students via learning groups, worksheets, sharing materials; and teacher-student engagement.	Primary Education Department, General Secondary Education Department	\$15,000
1.1.9 Procure necessary equipment (central level) for the production and dissemination of high-quality distance learning video programmes and e-lessons for online streaming and TV broadcasting.	July – December 2020	Equipment to support the production and dissemination of continuous learning videos procured and disseminated.	Department of IT Primary Education Department, General Secondary Education Department	\$85,000

1.1.10 Develop a single, regularly updated national page on MoEYS website which provides one-stop guidance and information on different learning programmes and modalities and how to access them.	July – September 2020 (afterwards maintain and update new information)	MoEYS website has a page with all TV and radio schedules by grade; general guidance and advice for parents/caregivers; training resources; links to key learning resources; platforms and apps; policies and guidance on school-reopening.	Department of IT	\$45,000
Estimated budget: Early childhood, primary, lower and upper secondary students have access to distance learning through print, digital technology, radio, TV and school/teacher support (O 1.1)				\$5,137,000
<b><i>Most vulnerable children (including children with disabilities, struggling learners, poor children, children from ethnic minorities, migrant children, children in rural hard-to-reach communities) have access to distance learning opportunities (O 1.2)</i></b>				
1.2.1 Each school identifies vulnerable children who need additional learning support including in pre, primary, lower and upper secondary education levels.	July – September 2020	Children with various vulnerabilities (incl. struggling learners, children with special needs, children with little family support, poor children) are identified from all levels of education. Information regarding children with vulnerabilities is included in the bi-weekly e-learning and teaching report.	Early Childhood Department, Primary Education Department, Secondary Education Department	\$340,800
1.2.2 Prepare worksheets for accelerated learning students in Khmer and Mathematics, make copies of student textbooks for Accelerated Learning in 7 provinces.	August - December 2020	Accelerated Learning Students in disadvantaged areas and disadvantaged students continue their usual education through adjusted student worksheets.	Primary Education Department	\$25,398
1.2.3 Build capacity for education officer and teachers on teaching accelerated learning and prepare students before new academic year: start in 7 provinces; conduct field monitoring on Accelerated Learning Programme.	August - December 2020	Education officers have knowledge and teachers have the ability to teach student in AL Programme  Students in the AL programme have access to learning	Primary Education Department	\$129,600
1.2.4 Develop and broadcast multilingual education (MLE) radio programme to support children engaged in MLE pre-school	July 2020 – April 2021	MLE students in pre-school and G1-3 have the opportunity to continue learning in their own language in core subjects with the support of a radio programme.	Special Education Department, Early Childhood Department	\$84,000

education as well as early grades of primary education (G1, 2, 3)				
1.2.5 Purchase and disseminate radios for MLE students, purchase broadcasting time / airtime from radio station.	July 2020 – April 2020	Radio distributed to 1500 MLE students in preschool in 4 provinces and in primary schools in Kratie.  MLE students have access to radio programme, supporting their continuous learning. (for 6 months)	Special Education Department	\$19,500
1.2.6 Develop and disseminate paper-based materials to MLE students, i.e. work sheets which match with the MLE radio programme.	July 2020 – April 2021	Materials to support 6,244 indigenous students for 6 months (both pre- and primary schools)	Special Education Department, Provincial Offices of Education, District Offices of Education	\$37,464
1.2.7 Purchase Flash memory cards for MLE program (64 GB)	July 2020 – April 2021	MLE students in grade 1-3 have access to radio learning in areas where there is no radio coverage to access the MLE radio programme	Special Education Department, Provincial Offices of Education, District Offices of Education, Multilingual Education schools	\$5,400
1.2.8 Integrate Cambodian sign language (CSL) in all G7–12 e-learning videos published online and broadcast on MOEYS TVK2 channel	July 2020 – June 2021	All e-learning videos online and on TVK2 channel include CSL  E-learning videos are distributed directly to students with hearing impairments through special schools or inclusive classes.	Special Education Department, National Institute for Special Education	\$88,500
1.2.9 Special schools and integrated schools develop individualized education plans with individual learning goals and adaptations for children with disabilities	July – April 2021	Children with disabilities are supported in their learning through individualized education plans with individual learning goals and suitable adaptations  Teachers are supported with supplies i.e. notebooks and learning materials	Special Education Department National Institute for Special Education	\$46,914

		Teachers follow up the implementation of individualized education plans at children's home		
1.2.10 Identify and disseminate learning materials, apps and games for students with special needs, including children with various impairments such as hearing, vision and speaking, and for children on the autism spectrum; disseminate through NGO networks, special schools and integrated schools	July 2020 – April 2021	Children with special needs and various impairments, including hearing, vision and speaking, and children on the autism spectrum are supported during school closures, through inclusive learning materials, games and apps	Special Education Department, National Institute for Special Education	\$67,020
1.2.11 Purchase Flash memory cards for students in Special Education High Schools (64 GB)	July 2020 – April 2021	700 students with visual and hearing impairments receive a flash memory card to enable access to learning	Special Education Department	\$6,300
1.2.12 Develop a video for parents and teachers how they can support children with disabilities in pre- and primary school, including setting up routines at home and small groups for learning	July 2020 – December 2021	Parents, pre- and primary school teachers are guided how to assist children with disabilities in home or in small learning groups, including how to maintain daily routines	Special Education Department	\$20,600
1.2.13 Develop or adjust and disseminate printed learning materials in braille for visually impaired children and youth in Grades 1–12	July – November 2020	Children with visual impairments receive appropriate learning material and support to continue learning through special education schools	Special Education Department	\$7,500
1.2.14 Work with Mobile Network Operators for free online access to key educational websites, platforms and applications, and/or establish free Wi-Fi hotspots in schools and other critical points where children can learn / install content servers (a digital education system) to schools to enable students access digital and educational resources extracted	July – November 2020	Students in remote and hard-to-reach areas are able to access e-learning videos and education resources through Wi-Fi hotspots or content servers established in schools	Department of IT	\$180,000



from websites, especially KROU Facebook page				
1.2.15 Provide TV shutter box and equipment to rural schools and a room for distance and e-learning at schools (COVID-19 recovery)	July – November 2020	Students in remote and hard-to-reach areas are able to access e-learning videos and education resources at school	Department of IT, Provincial Offices of Education, District Offices of Education,	\$180,000
Estimated budget: Most vulnerable children (including children with disabilities, struggling learners, poor children, children from ethnic minorities, migrant children, children in rural hard-to-reach communities) have access to distance learning opportunities (O 1.2)				\$ 1,238,996
<b>Teachers and schools are equipped with knowledge, skills and resources to support distance learning in their communities. (O 1.3)</b>				
1.3.1. Conduct rapid assessment of teacher skills and competencies needs in remote and blended continuous learning, formative assessment, particularly digital education	July – August 2020	Rapid assessment on teacher competency completed  Results of assessment shared	Teacher Training Department	\$40,000
1.3.2 Provide teachers with relevant and practical online training to improve their pedagogical skills in relation to continuous learning for themselves and for their students	July 2020 – April 2021	Teachers receive support and resources, including videos through social media platforms and Telegram, to strengthen their pedagogical skills which support student learning	Teacher Training Department, Early Childhood Education Department, Primary Education Department, Secondary Education Department, Department of IT	\$194,460
1.3.3. Train school directors on blended continuous learning, particularly digital education principles and methods	July 2020 – April 2021	School directors improve their leadership and teacher support in blended continuous learning through the provision of video clips and modules	Teacher Education Institutions, National Institute of Education Provincial Offices of Education, District Offices of Education	\$102,331
Estimated budget: Teachers and schools are equipped with knowledge, skills and resources to support distance learning in their communities. (O 1.3)				\$336,791
<b>Teachers and students are aware of child protection, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), health, and WASH services in their schools and communities (O 1.4)</b>				
1.4.1 Disseminate timely and relevant information on COVID-19	July 2020 – April 2021	Teachers, parents and students receive timely information on COVID-	School Health Department	\$116,776

situation, and guidance for safe health and hygiene practices to teachers, parent and students		19, and behavior focused messaging on health and hygiene		
1.4.2 Disseminate adequate information to students and teachers on available mental health and psychosocial support services	July 2020 – April 2021	Teachers and students have access to adequate mental health and psychosocial support to deal with stress and wellbeing during COVID19 crisis	School Department	Health \$30,000
1.4.3 Support teachers to reach out to their students regularly to check how they are doing, encourage and care for them, identify children at risk of or experienced violence, and to share resources and information on psychosocial and mental health, including whom to contact when things are difficult	July 2020 – April 2021	Teachers understand their role and have the information to support their students' wellbeing and protection	School Department	Health \$90,000
1.4.4 Disseminate information to schools, students and families on referral pathways, mechanisms and information on child protection and psychosocial support services, including in cases of violence against children and/or gender-based violence, including helplines	July 2020 – April 2021	Schools, children and families have information on available child protection and psychosocial support services, including helpline numbers	School Department, Primary Education Department	Health \$30,000
Budget required: Teachers and students are aware of child protection, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), health, and WASH services in their schools and communities (O 1.4)				\$266,776
<b>Total budget required for Key Objective #1: All students continue distance learning safely</b>				<b>\$ 6,979,563</b>
<b>Key Objective #2:</b>	<b>Students and staff return to education institutions safely</b>			
Outcome Indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of schools in Cambodia reopened</li> <li>• % of students who return to school within the first month of school reopening</li> <li>• % of teachers who return to school within the first month of school reopening</li> </ul>			
	Disaggregation: Level of education, geographical zones (provinces/ districts/rural/urban), and gender			
Output Indicators:	<i>Objective 2.1 Key policies, procedures and financing plans needed to resume safe school operations, developed</i>			

- Financing requirements for making WASH facilities available in all schools, and for cleaning and disinfection of all schools determined (disaggregated by level of education)
- Number of schools sensitized on back to school guidelines, child protection and safeguarding policies, along with standard operating procedures for physical distancing, WASH, cleaning and disinfection, safe food preparation and services, monitoring and supervision by education authorities developed (disaggregated by education stakeholder type, level of education covered by education institution, geographical zones, and gender)

*Objective 2.2 Back-to-school planning and campaigns are planned and implemented using participatory methods, and engaging whole school community, including children and young people*

- Number of students/caregivers surveyed feel confident to send their children back to school
- Number of education staff (school directors, teachers) surveyed feel confident to resume teaching-learning
- Number of students, caregivers, and education staff reached through the back-to-school campaigns by MOEYS and development partners

*Objective 2.3 Prior to school reopening, all school facilities are cleaned, and disinfected, safe water and hygiene facilities are adequate and accessible*

- % of schools reported having conducted environmental cleaning and disinfection
- % of schools have adequate functional handwashing facilities (water and soap available)
- % of schools have adequate water supply
- % of schools have functional sanitation facilities (Toilets) with separated toilets for boys and girls
- % of schools having clean school environment and having solid waste management system including menstrual health management (no waste on premise, have at least two bins)

*Objective 2.4 The education community returns to safe learning environments wherein the wellbeing and protection of students and education staff are ensured*

- Number of students and education staff with access to mental health and psychosocial support programmes (MHPSS)
- Number of students with access to MOEYS scholarship programme

*Objective 2.5 Essential infrastructure investments in schools prioritized to ensure access to adequate WASH facilities in ECE, primary and secondary schools.*

- Number of latrine rooms constructed/renovated in basic education schools (ECE, primary and secondary) identified using an equity-oriented criterion for prioritization in the MOEYS procurement plan
- Number of basic education schools (ECE, primary and secondary) equipped with water supply, and identified using an equity-oriented criterion for prioritization in the MOEYS procurement plan

Key Activities	Implementation Timeframe	Key Output	Responsibilities	Budget Required
<b>Key policies, procedures and financing plans needed to resume safe education institution operations developed (O 2.1)</b>				
2.1.1 Develop clear national guidance on parameters for decision making on school openings, including guidance to sub-national level on assessment and decision making and process of authorization to open schools	May 2020 – September 2020	Guidelines for Ministry of Education on when and how to reopen schools drafted, and disseminated to all sub-national authorities and schools/education institutions	Department of Policy	\$30,000
2.1.2 Prepare safety and health protocol guidance in working places, and for carrying out activities at national and sub-national levels	May 2020	Guidelines for workplace safety of MOEYS staff developed  Guidelines for conducting training and other activities at national and sub-national levels developed	School Health Department	\$15,000
2.1.3 Develop back-to-school implementation guidelines for Cambodia that includes easy-to-understand standard operating procedures on physical distancing, water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), menstrual hygiene management (MHM), hand washing, cleaning and disinfection, safe food preparation and services, monitoring and supervision by education authorities	May 2020 – September 2020	Back-to-school implementation guidelines developed and endorsed by MOEYS (already done)  Standard operating procedures for physical distancing, WASH and MHM, cleaning and disinfection, safe food preparation and services, and monitoring and supervision by education authorities developed and endorsed by MOEYS	School Health Department	\$50,000
2.1.4 Establish and strengthen child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures as well as reporting and referral mechanisms at a school level' (referral from schools to child protection services) so children who experienced violence can receive	May 2020 – September 2020	Child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures as well as reporting and referral mechanisms at a school level developed	Department of Policy, Early Childhood Education Department, Primary Education Department, General Secondary Education Department	\$140,000

adequate child protection services, including MHPSS				
2.1.5 All schools, Provincial and District Offices of Education sensitized on the back-to-school implementation guidelines, on supporting standard operating procedures on physical distancing, water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), menstrual hygiene management (MHM), hand washing, cleaning and disinfection, safe food preparation and services, monitoring and supervision by education authorities, and child protection and safeguarding policies	October 2020 – November 2020	Number of School directors, teacher representatives, and representatives on school management committees in all schools, as well as education institutions (tbc) oriented on how to apply back-to-school guidelines, child protection and safeguarding policies, and supporting standard operating procedures  Number of the nominated POE and DOE representatives oriented on how to apply back-to-school guidelines, child protection and safeguarding policies, and supporting standard operating procedures	Schools, School Health Department, Department of Policy, Early Childhood Education Department, Primary Education Department, General Secondary Education Department	\$30,000
Budget required: Key policies, procedures and financing plans needed to resume safe education institution operations developed (O 2.1)				\$265,000
<b><i>Back-to-school planning and campaigns are planned and implemented using participatory methods, and engaging whole school community, including children and young people before and after school reopening (O 2.2)</i></b>				
2.2.1 Conduct rapid assessment on readiness of schools to reopen, including readiness to comply with back-to-school guidelines and safety/health protocol, including readiness of students and education staff to resume teaching-learning	July 2020 – August 2020	Rapid assessment on back-to-school report shared with Joint Technical Working Group/Education Sector Working Group/education networks	Department of Policy	\$50,000

2.2.2 Develop and launch an Information, Education and Communication (IEC) 'Back to School' campaign for all grade levels to promote safe return to school, including practical ideas and steps to help children to return to school safely	August 2020 – August 2021	<p>Back to School campaigns launched by MOEYS with support from development partners and civil society partners</p> <p>Number of schools with back to school campaign</p> <p>Coordination mechanisms for education are in place and support stakeholders working to ensure successful back-to-school transition.</p>	School Health Department, Development Partners	\$250,000
2.2.3 Orientation to school support/school management committees on responsibilities for increased community engagement at school level after school reopening (this activity can be dovetailed with activity 2.1.3 - <i>All schools sensitized on the back-to-school implementation guidelines, and on supporting standard operating procedures on physical distancing, water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), menstrual hygiene</i> )	October 2020	Number and % of schools, including school directors, teacher representatives and school management committee representatives trained on responsibilities after school reopening (training can be done at the same time as activity 2.1.3)	School Health Department, Early Childhood Education Department, Primary Education Department, General Secondary Education Department	\$125,000
Budget required: Back-to-school planning and campaigns are planned and implemented using participatory methods, and engaging whole school community, including children and young people before and after school reopening (O 2.2)				\$425,000
<b><i>Prior to school reopening, all school facilities are cleaned, and disinfected, safe water and hygiene facilities are adequate and accessible (O 2.3)</i></b>				
2.3.1 Procurement of adequate WASH resources, including environmental cleaning and disinfection resources and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) resources in line with national standards for all educational institutions, as well as education offices at central,	June 2020 – October 2020	<p>Number of education offices at central, provincial and district levels that are cleaned and disinfected regularly</p> <p>Numbers of education offices at central, provincial and district levels that have mobilized adequate WASH</p>	School Health Department, Department of Finance	\$3,200,000

provincial and district levels, and schools		and MHM resources to meet minimum national standards  Number of schools that have been mobilized WASH and MHM resources (including pre-, primary and secondary schools)		
2.3.2 Cleaning and disinfection isolation/quarantine centers receive more thorough cleaning/disinfection	October 2020	Number of isolation/quarantine centers disinfected prior to reopening	School Department	Health \$10,000
2.3.3 Support in enabling access of education institutions to sufficient handwashing stations with continuous supply of water	June 2020 – October 2020	Number schools with sufficient handwashing stations with continuous supply of water	School Department, Department of Construction	Health of \$415,000
2.3.4 Procure nutrient-enhanced school feeding supplies and resume school feeding programmes in a safe and hygienic manner	October 2020 – August 2021	Number of schools in which school feeding programmes have resumed by MOEYS and/or partners  School feeding programmes comply with COVID-19 prevention protocols  School feeding programmes maintain food safety standards  Number of students benefitting from school feeding programme	School Department	Health \$200,000
2.3.5 Monitoring and supervision of cleaning and disinfection of all schools by Provincial and District Offices of Education	October 2020	Monitoring reports by Provincial and District Education Offices and schools produced and shared in a timely manner, as per the frequency determined in the standard operating procedures related to supervision and monitoring	Provincial Offices of Education, District Offices of Education, Schools, School Department	Health \$18,000
2.3.6 Prepare and disseminate age-friendly, inclusive Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) messages on handwashing, good personal	September 2020 – February 2021	RCCE messaging for various education stakeholders developed, and builds on existing evidence/rapid assessment data/KAP supporting the objectives	School Department, Department of IT	Health \$250,000

hygiene, and school safety messages for the education community in relevant languages, accessible formats, and tailoring them to populations of concern		<p>Channels or engagement strategies to share important information and guidance determined</p> <p>RCCE messaging disseminated by all education sector stakeholders</p> <p>Monitoring plan for RCCE developed and implemented</p> <p>Number of people reached through RCCE efforts disaggregated by channel (paper, radio, TV, social media, SMS etc)</p>		
Budget required: Prior to school reopening, all school facilities are cleaned, and disinfected, safe water and hygiene facilities are adequate and accessible (O 2.3)				\$4,093,000
<b><i>The education community returns to safe learning environments wherein the wellbeing and protection of students and education staff are ensured (O 2.4)</i></b>				
2.4.1 Regular, frequent monitoring by district and provincial education authorities of the education response activities and the evolving learning needs of the affected population is carried out regularly and reported in the first few weeks of school reopening	November 2020 – April 2021	<p>Reporting templates developed and disseminated by central level to sub-national level</p> <p>School reports submitted to DOEs and POEs</p> <p>Reports aggregated at central level and shared with MoEYS management</p>	Provincial Offices of Education, District Offices of Education, Schools	\$ 12,000
2.4.2 Improve governance, allocation mechanisms and monitoring of the MOEYS scholarship programme	August 2020 – August 2021	<p>Agreement on priority actions in terms of strengthening of the scholarship programme to be implemented over the next 12 months</p> <p>Data management and monitoring systems for primary and secondary scholarship programmes strengthened</p>	Primary Education Department, General Secondary Education Department, Department of Finance	\$100,000



		Governance mechanisms for primary and secondary scholarship programmes strengthened		
2.4.3 Expand the number of beneficiaries of the scholarship program to supporting educational attainment at all levels over two school years (SY 2020-21 and SY 2021-22)	November 2020 – August 2022	Agreed scholarship allocations per level of education and per grade  Increased coverage of the MOEYS scholarship programme of primary scholarship programme beneficiaries by 48,151 children for a total cost of 2,889,060 USD per year for two years	Department of Finance  Primary Education Department	\$5,778,120
2.4.4 Develop and implement a school counselling and psycho-social support programme that includes training of teachers to support children as they return to formal learning, including MHPSS, positive discipline, and how to refer children with severe needs to specialized services through a partnership between MOEYS, MOH and MoSVY	August 2020 – April 2021	Number of teachers trained in MHPSS, positive discipline and referral services for students  Number of children provided with access to MHPSS  Number of children referred to using specialized services	School Health Department	\$30,000
2.4.5 Support teachers & other education personnel on own well-being & stress management through peer support groups, including referrals for specialized mental health services through a partnership between MOEYS, MoH and MoSVY	November 2020 – April 2021	Number of teachers benefitting from peer support groups  Number of teachers referred to using specialized services	School Health Department	\$10,000
2.4.6 Continue disseminating key messages from back-to-school campaign for at least one additional semester, focusing on clear and continuous information on COVID19 key health, protection and wellbeing messages,	November 2020 – August 2021	Number of education stakeholders reached with back-to-school key messages (disaggregated by stakeholder type) on health, protection and well-being topics.	School Health Department	\$10,000

including to debunk stigmatization with the school community				
2.4.7 Conduct hand hygiene education regularly and encourage all kids to practice handwashing at schools and their home	November 2020 – April 2021	Number of schools conducting hand hygiene education regularly in schools as reported in monitoring or self-assessment reports to DOEs, POEs and central level	School Health Department	\$50,000
Budget required: The education community returns to safe learning environments wherein the wellbeing and protection of students and education staff are ensured (O 2.4)				\$5,990,120
<b>Essential infrastructure investments in schools prioritized to ensure access to adequate WASH facilities in ECE, primary and secondary schools. (O 2.5)</b>				
2.5.1 WASH facilities renovation initiated in prioritized schools to address immediate needs	September 2020 – tbc	Renovation completed in target schools (ECE, primary and secondary)	Department of Construction	\$ 1,950,000
2.5.2 Upgrading and maintenance of WASH facilities at schools to increase the proportion of schools with safe water, handwashing stations, cleaning supplies	June 2020 – October 2020	Number of the schools identified as needing WASH Facilities upgraded	School Health Department, Department of Construction	\$390,494
Budget required: Essential infrastructure investments in schools prioritized to ensure access to adequate WASH facilities in ECE, primary and secondary schools. (O 2.5)				\$2,340,494
<b>Total budget required for Key Objective #2: Students and staff return to education institutions safely</b>				<b>\$ 13,113,614</b>
<b>Key Objective #3:</b>		<b>Students and teaching staff return to school and learn in an adaptable learning environment</b>		
Outcome Indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of at-risk, vulnerable children identified and enrolled in schools</li> <li>• % of schools and teachers prepared to meet the learning needs of students, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups</li> <li>• % of schools that successfully transition from distance learning to face-to-face learning</li> </ul> Disaggregation: Level of education, geographical zones (provinces/ districts/rural/urban), and gender			
Output Indicators:	<i>Objective 3.1 Identification, (re) enrollment of, and outreach to at-risk, vulnerable students</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of schools that establish and operationalize Early Warning System in schools to identify and communicate with at-risk, vulnerable students</li> </ul>			

	<p><i>Objective 3.2 Schools and teachers, are prepared to meet the learning needs of students, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Simple screening test to assess student proficiency in key subjects from primary to lower secondary designed and disseminated</li> <li>– Remedial programming for target students from primary to lower secondary established</li> </ul> <p><i>Objective 3.3 Schools are able to successfully transition from distance learning to face-to-face learning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Existing primary and lower secondary accelerated curriculum reviewed and adapted for the academic year 2020-21</li> <li>– Accelerated academic calendar and examination schedule developed</li> <li>– Number of schools that adopted accelerated curriculum, academic calendar and examination schedule</li> <li>– Number of teachers trained on accelerated curriculum, accelerated learning and digital education methods</li> </ul>			
Key Activities	Implementation Timeframe	Key Output	Responsibilities	Budget Required
<b><i>Identification, (re) enrollment of, and outreach to at-risk, vulnerable students (O 3.1)</i></b>				
3.1.1 Update existing guidelines for Early Warning System at school-level; school directors, teachers, School Management Committees and social workers work together to identify and communicate with at-risk, vulnerable students (e.g. home visit schedules, online groups) in a COVID-19 context	July - August 2020	Updated guidelines for schools on how to establish and operationalize Early Warning System, and outreach mechanisms to identify and communicate with at-risk students, including out-of-school children and youth	Primary Education Department, Department of General Secondary Education, Development Partners	\$5,000
3.1.2 Develop short online training course for school directors, teachers, School Management Committees and social workers based on guidelines on how to establish an Early Warning System and conduct successful outreach to at-risk, vulnerable students	August – September 2020	Training course for school directors and teachers on Early Warning System developed	Primary Education Department, Department of General Secondary Education, Development Partners	\$10,600

3.1.3 Disseminate and operationalize guidelines for Early Warning System to schools	September – October 2020	Updated Early Warning System guidelines and training course disseminated to # schools	Provincial Offices of Education, District Offices of Education, school directors, School Management Committees	\$20,000
3.1.4 Monitor the use of the Early Warning System to track, enroll and retain at-risk students, to assess level of success, and discuss ways to adapt and improve process at school and district level	November 2020 – April 2021	Bi-annual report on school enrollment of at-risk, vulnerable students  Monthly report on student attendance  Monthly meetings to discuss student enrollment and retention	District Offices of Education, school directors, head teachers, School Management Committee, social workers, Primary Education Department	\$15,000
Budget required: Identification, (re) enrollment of, and outreach to at-risk, vulnerable students (O 3.1)				\$50,600
<b>Schools and teachers are prepared to meet the learning needs of the most vulnerable learners (O 3.2)</b>				
3.2.1 Adapt/design remedial program (curriculum, teaching and learning materials) for key subjects from primary to lower secondary education for the academic year 2020-2021 with teachers and parents' input	July – November 2020	Curriculum and teaching and learning materials for remedial programming for key subjects designed and validated	Department for Curriculum Development, Primary Education Department, Department of General Secondary Education, Development Partners	\$80,000
3.2.2 Design screening test to assess student learning levels in key subjects upon re-entry to school from primary to lower secondary education	July – August 2020	Screening test to assess student learning level by grade from primary to lower secondary education designed and validated	Department of Curriculum Development, Primary Education Department, Department of General Secondary Education, Development Partners	\$30,000
3.2.3 School block grants to support remedial and accelerated learning for disadvantaged students	October 2020 – October 2021	Schools and teachers are able to meet the learning needs of all students, including the most vulnerable	Department of Finance Primary and Secondary schools	\$9,500,000
Budget required: Schools and teachers are prepared to meet the learning needs of the most vulnerable learners (O 3.2)				\$9,610,000
<b>Schools and teachers are able to successfully transition from distance learning to face-to-face learning, including marginalized and vulnerable groups (O 3.3)</b>				

3.3.1 Review and adapt existing primary and secondary (formal and non-formal) accelerated curriculum for accelerated programme for school year 2020/2021	July – August 2020	Accelerated curriculum for formal primary and lower secondary education for the academic year 2020-2021 developed	Department of Non-Formal Education, Department of Curriculum Development, Primary Education Department, Department of General Secondary Education, Development Partners	\$46,800
3.3.2 Adaptation and development of teaching and learning materials for accelerated curriculum	July – September 2020	Accelerated teaching and learning materials for academic year 2020-21 developed	Department of Non-Formal Education, Department of Curriculum Development, Primary Education Department, Department of General Secondary Education, Development Partners, Teacher Training Department	\$12,800
3.3.3 Training of teachers on accelerated curriculum, and accelerated learning and digital education methods	September – November 2020	# of teachers trained on accelerated curriculum, accelerated learning and digital education methods	Teacher Training Department, Teacher Education Institutions, and Development Partners	\$173,447
3.3.4 Printing and distribution of new teaching and learning materials	September – November 2020	Accelerated teaching and learning materials distributed to # schools	Department of Curriculum Development, Provincial Offices of Education, District Offices of Education	\$240,000
3.3.5 Development of accelerated academic calendar and examination schedule	July – August 2020	Accelerated academic calendar and examination schedule for academic year 2020-2021 developed	Department of Curriculum Development, Primary Education Department, Department of General Secondary Education	\$500,000

Budget required: Schools and teachers are able to successfully transition from distance learning to face-to-face learning, including marginalized and vulnerable groups (O 3.3)		\$973,047		
<b>Total budget required for Key Objective #3 - Students and teaching staff return to school and learn in an adaptable learning environment</b>		<b>\$10,633,647</b>		
<b>Key Objective #4:</b>	<b>Resilience building: MoEYS systems at national and subnational levels have increased resilience</b>			
Outcome Indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of education stakeholders at central, provincial, district and school level with response plans</li> <li>• % of schools with Early Warning Systems</li> <li>• % of schools reporting teacher and student attendance and performance through school-level data management systems</li> <li>• % of teachers receiving relevant continuous professional development (CPD)</li> </ul> <p>Disaggregation: Level of education, geographical zones (provinces/ districts/rural/urban), and gender</p>			
Output Indicators:	<p><i>Objective 4.1 Capacity of the MoEYS and education stakeholders, at the central and sub-national level, on pandemic preparedness, response and recovery strengthened</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– MoEYS and education stakeholders, at the central, sub-national, district and school level, have response plans in place</li> </ul> <p><i>Objective 4.2 Planning, monitoring and accountability systems to ensure quality, inclusive continuous learning, improved</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Capacity of MoEYS EMIS to capture student face-to-face and remote attendance and performance improved</li> <li>– School-level data management systems that report teacher and student attendance and performance established</li> </ul> <p><i>Objective 4.3 MoEYS distance learning programme for teachers and students to ensure continuous learning, strengthened</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Students, including at-risk, marginalized groups, are able to access high-quality continuous learning programming</li> <li>– Teachers, including those from rural, marginalized areas, receive high-quality relevant CPD, through both distant and face-to-face mechanisms at school district and TTC level</li> </ul>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>Implementation Timeframe</b>	<b>Key Output</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Budget Required</b>
<b><i>Capacity of the MoEYS and education stakeholders, at the central and sub-national level, on pandemic preparedness, response and recovery strengthened (O 4.1)</i></b>				
4.1.1 Develop and deliver training on risk mitigation and continuity	August – October 2020	Number of education stakeholders at provincial, district and school	Department of Planning	\$30,000

planning at the sub-national, district and school levels		levels trained on risk mitigation and continuity planning		
4.1.2 Develop and update the COVID-19 Response Plan after results from joint rapid needs assessment are available	August 2020 – September 2020	Revised response plan for COVID19 at central level available	Department of Planning, Department of Policy	\$ 5,000
4.1.3 Develop guidelines on COVID-19 response plan for education stakeholders at the sub-national, district and school levels	September 2020	Guidelines on COVID-19 response plan developed and orientation conducted for PoEs, DoEs and Schools	Department of Planning	\$10,000
4.1.4 Develop COVID-19 response plans at the sub-national, district and school levels through mentoring and coaching	September - November 2020	Number of education stakeholders at provincial and district level with COVID-19 response plans  Number of provincial offices of education that have provincial COVID19 response plans that are aligned with national level response plan  Number of schools with COVID-19 response plans	Department of Planning, Provincial Offices of Education, District Offices of Education, Schools	\$250,000
4.1.5 Develop strategies for disaster resilience in education sector; and embed into the ESP that will be revised after the Mid-Term Review	January 2021 – March 2021	Strategies for disaster resilience in education are developed  Strategy for disaster resilience embedded into the MTR-ESP	Department of Policy, Department of Planning	\$60,000
Budget required: Capacity of the MoEYS and education stakeholders, at the central and sub-national level, on pandemic preparedness, response and recovery strengthened (O 4.1)				\$355,000
<b><i>Planning, monitoring and accountability systems to ensure quality, inclusive continuous learning, improved (O 4.2)</i></b>				
4.2.1 Provide technical assistance to improve EMIS capability to track student face-to-face and remote attendance and performance	June – August 2020	Technical assistance on EMIS enhancement received	Department of EMIS	\$60,000

4.2.2 Train MoEYS officials at sub-national, district and school level to collect data on new indicators	August – October 2020	Number MoEYS officials at sub-national, district and school levels trained on new indicators	Department of EMIS	\$40,000
4.2.3 Train MoEYS officials at central and provincial level on EMIS data analysis to inform evidence-based decision-making	November – December 2020	Number of MoEYS officials at sub-national, district and school levels trained on data-analysis and evidence-based decision making (EMIS)	Department of EMIS	\$14,000
4.2.4 Conduct Quality Assurance of data entry	November – April 2020	Monthly assessment on school-level data quality	Department of EMIS	\$8,000
4.2.5 Establish/improve school-level data management systems that complement EMIS in collecting data on teacher attendance, and teacher and student performance	June – September 2020	School-level data management systems established in # districts	Department of EMIS	\$12,000
4.2.6 Train school directors on data collection, data management and evidence-based decision-making	October – November 2020	Number of school directors trained on data collection, management and evidence-based decision-making	Department of EMIS Provincial Offices of Education, District Offices of Education	\$50,000
Budget required: Planning, monitoring and accountability systems to ensure quality, inclusive continuous learning, improved (O 4.2)				\$184,000
<b>MoEYS distance learning programme for teachers and students to ensure continuous learning strengthened (O 4.3)</b>				
4.3.1 Conduct gap analysis of MoEYS and DP ongoing continuous learning programme	August – October 2020	Gap analysis of existing teaching and learning videos, especially to assess level of access and learning among marginalized groups and rural areas, completed	Department of Policy	\$50,000
4.3.2 Conduct workshop to share results of gap analysis and prepare workplan for (a) production of new continuous learning assets for teachers and students, (b) improve asset distribution strategy keeping marginalized groups and areas in mind, (C) integrate and improve	August – October 2020	Workshop findings report completed and shared	Department of Policy	\$50,000



the weaknesses identified in the existing item bank				
4.3.3 Complete production and validation of new learning assets (for students, teachers and lecturers at TECs/TTCs) including new MoEYS student e-learning app for use in schools as well as TECs/TTCs	October – December 2020	Number of learning assets produced	Teacher Training Department Department of IT	\$40,000
4.3.4 Disseminate new learning assets through an improved advertising and distribution strategy based on the results of the gap analysis	January – March 2021	Videos and app accessed by # students	Teacher Training Department Department of IT	\$10,000
4.3.5 Integrate learning assets for teachers into the national CPD system to be delivered by TEIs, TTIs	August – September 2021	Distance learning modules integrated into the national CPD system/framework	Teacher Training Department	\$20,000
4.3.6 Monitor access and response to learning assets at central, PoE, DoE and school level	November 2020 – April 2021	Monthly reports on # views of each learning asset  Monthly reports on learner performance (teachers and students)	Primary education Department, General Secondary Education Department, Department of M&E, Provincial Offices of Education, District Offices of Education	\$50,000
Budget required: MoEYS distance learning programme for teachers and students to ensure continuous learning strengthened (O 4.3)				\$220,000
<b>Total budget required for Key Objective #4 - Resilience building: MoEYS systems at national and subnational levels have increased resilience</b>				<b>\$759,000</b>
<b>Total budget for MOEYS Response Plan for time period June 2020 – December 2021</b>				<b>\$31,485,824</b>

## 9. 9. Management of Implementation and Monitoring & Evaluation

Following the finalization of the national response plan, a detailed costed Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan will be developed. The plan will include information on the final list of outcome and output indicators for the response plan, along with data sources, baselines, targets, measurement frequency and who is responsible for measuring progress against key results indicators. Gender-specific indicators will be adapted and included in the results framework and gender disaggregated reporting will be utilized.

### 9.1 Assessments

In the early stages of COVID19 response efforts, there has been emphasis on assessment, including determining the population in need (PIN) for sector-wide interventions (in this situation all school-aged children in Cambodia). Several small-scale assessments have been undertaken so far by education sector partners, including by different technical departments, to inform immediate response activities.

In July and August 2020, MoEYS and partners will undertake a comprehensive, coordinated assessment of the sector to determine the best approach to implement future response and recovery strategies in Cambodia. The national response plan will be updated to reflect any additional information arising from the assessment. The rapid assessment will be carried out with the overall leadership and strategic guidance of the Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG)/Local Education Group (LEG). A technical assessment working group comprising of MoEYS and Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) representatives (UNICEF and Save the Children) will be responsible for the overall coordination and knowledge exchange on the assessment. MoEYS' Teacher Training Department will lead a survey on **capacity assessment** of teacher trainers and teacher trainees to adopt high-technology and low-technology solutions in teacher training institutions. Prior to school re-opening, **a back-to-school assessment** will also be conducted to: (i) gather a general understanding about how children, teachers and parents feel about returning to school, and (ii) promote a return to school while continuing to protect the community from transmission of COVID-19.

### 9.2 Monitoring

MoEYS will monitor response plan activities using methods consistent with its M&E model and guided by the GPE COVID-19 M&E guidelines. MoEYS and education sector partners will learn and share the implementation experience as the basis of continuous improvement to enhance the relevance and context of the response plan. The three areas in which evidence will be collected, reviewed and fed into future activities are: (i) relevance, (ii) effectiveness and (iii) efficiency.

Interventions in the response plan that will be prioritized for regular monitoring for reporting during the response and recovery period include:

- **Tracking the status of schools** (closures/ re-openings, declared as safe schools, or assigned as treatment centres) on a weekly basis at target locations to inform the design of interventions.
- **Assessment, monitoring and addressing the gaps of the resources and capabilities** at POE, DOE and school levels to ensure the implementation of the Safe School Protocols for COVID-19 Prevention and Control and other guidelines to ensure children's safe return to school.
- **Monitoring, tracking and analysis of continuous learning initiatives:** MoEYS and partners will closely monitor all teaching and learning opportunities provided to enable students to

continue learning during school closures and following re-opening of schools. Where possible, feedback loops will be integrated so response efforts can be re-defined or re-focused to include continuous education interventions. These interventions may be based on other channels such as teacher-student networks, visiting/ rotating teachers, TV broadcasting, radio spots and other innovative approaches. Approaches will be sought that are effective for children from different vulnerable backgrounds, such as children with disabilities, migrant households, ethnic minorities, urban slums and remote communities.

- **Monitoring of risk communication and community engagement:** MoEYS and partners will monitor the number of children reached with targeted messages and information on COVID-19 regarding personal hygiene and improved sanitary practices (specific to schools and ECD centres).

For outcome indicators, data will be collected through the existing information management systems (EMIS, HRMIS, EFMS), as well as through the reports being delivered from school-district-provincial-central level, as mandated by MoEYS Directive No. 23. Dynamic data collection tools need to be developed and utilized to accurately capture the coverage and any gaps in the proposed response plan activities.

Reporting at school-level will follow established MoEYS procedures as far as circumstances allow, to minimise further burdens on school leadership. This is expected to include the use of the Quality-EMIS office<sup>45</sup>, which collates learning outcomes for all schools nationally. Where appropriate, evidence will be gathered remotely: for example, by the use of videos/photographs to show evidence of activities and effectiveness.

Current school level school monitoring systems consist of internal inspection (school self-assessment and DTMT monitoring) and external inspection (regular inspection from POE Inspection Offices). This national response plan will operate under the assumption that both forms of monitoring and inspection will be operational during the response and recovery phases. Thematic inspections, also involving school-level visits, will continue under the leadership of EQAD. Increasing use will be made of distance-monitoring procedures. for example: the use of the CFS dashboard to allow schools and DTMTs to input data remotely.

MoEYS will create additional DTMT monitoring guidelines to allow internal inspection to focus on COVID-19 specific indicators and with a greater emphasis on WASH provision. POE Regular Inspection will be given a similar and aligned checklist for their inspections. Further monitoring will take place using school samples for verification. As the monitoring needs to be adaptive and responses rapid, sampling of representative schools groups - using online materials such as google forms, distributed on Telegram - will deliver field-level information that can be quickly collated to deliver effective responses.

Financial monitoring for the response plan will comply with the MoEYS financial manual for COVID-19 programming. This financial manual was jointly developed by MoEYS and development partners to establish accountability and transparency mechanisms in implementing the programme for technical departments and the Department of Finance (DoF).

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<sup>45</sup> Quality-EMIS (QEMIS): Technical office within EMIS department.

Funding to schools will be coordinated by MoEYS, specifically DoF. MoEYS will develop and sign an MoU with the relevant development partner/donor. The MoU will elaborate the financial flow, fund disbursement and reporting requirements. Development partners will explore the possibility of using existing procedures, specifically the existing School Operating Fund (SOF) mechanism to transfer funds. DoF will be responsible for disbursing funds to schools, monitoring fund utilization and collating financial reporting from schools.

### 9.3 Management of Implementation and Reporting

Reporting requirements will be responsive to both internal reporting needs (within MoEYS), and to external reporting needs (other line ministries, and funding partners).

Considering the fluid and unpredictable nature of the pandemic, monitoring reports will be compiled and reviewed monthly from all 25 POEs and sent to central level (DGPP/M&E Department). At the same time, implementing partners responsible for response and recovery plan activities will provide regular programmatic reports to all parties concerned, under the leadership of the Directorate General of Policy and Planning (DGPP). MoEYS will provide quarterly financial and programmatic reports to funding institutions, partners, and the Ministry of Economic and Finance. MoEYS (DGPP, and other technical departments) will monitor service delivery at school and community levels.

The ESWG will continue to provide regular updates at monthly meetings, as well as to the MoEYS JTWG Secretariat to track ongoing programmatic and financial interventions to the COVID-19 response. The ESWG will continue to provide regular updates at its monthly meetings, as well as to MoEYS. A user-friendly platform for monitoring and reporting of the COVID-19 education response will be developed by the JTWG Secretariat to track ongoing programmatic and financial contributions to the COVID-19 response. The current tracking system will also be refined to replicate reporting processes used by other emergency clusters around the world, such as using the 3W or 4W<sup>46</sup> template. Under the overall coordination of UNICEF, as the ESWG chair, development partners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can report on services delivered and coverage. Regular updates on progress and developing needs will be shared with all relevant stakeholders.

### 9.4 Evaluation

The JTWG/LEG will discuss the commissioning of a COVID-19 Post Response Evaluation of Education Sector Support to assess the overall relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness, longer-term impacts and sustainability of all interventions of the response. This will include: the estimated percentage of actual access, coverage, usage, level of information dissemination, knowledge increase, lessons learned, best approaches, gaps, and unintended consequences. The findings will be used to compare the impact on educational outcomes between accessible and vulnerable population groups. Where possible, the evaluation will also draw on, and contribute to, other social sector impact assessments that will be undertaken by other sectors/partners.

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<sup>46</sup> The Who's doing what, where (3W) tool is a valuable information management tool for coordination and activity gap analysis in emergency situations. While this is usually used in humanitarian situations where the cluster system is activated, it is still a tool that can be adapted to the Cambodian context. Creating, maintaining and sharing the 3W with external partners throughout an emergency promotes the JTWG's coordination and communication role in information management. Raw data from 3W can support emergency programme monitoring and contribute to overall gap analysis by representing capacity that can be compared to needs. Additional information can be accessed from here: <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/42801/who-does-what-where-3w#:~:text=Responsibility%20and%20reporting,information%20internally%20and%20to%20partners.>