

Education and COVID-19: Rebuilding education systems for recovery

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Western

Renew the Social Contract for Education

- Education as a ‘common good’: beyond utilitarian functions
 - Labour market integration and basic skills are important but insufficient to meet the growing challenges of societies undergoing wide-sweeping transformations
- **Governance perspective:** Overall responsibility of the State to guarantee education, and its role in strengthening accountability mechanisms for all actors – state, non-state, and their networks – and promoting citizen engagement to enable inclusive and resilient education systems of good quality for all
- **Philosophical perspective:** Humanistic approach – education not merely as the sum of skills acquired, but as a broader societal endeavour towards human well-being that enables people to live meaningful and dignified lives

Average Duration of Closures by Region

Globally, a total average of 10.3 months were lost to full and partial school closures from February 2020 to March 2022.

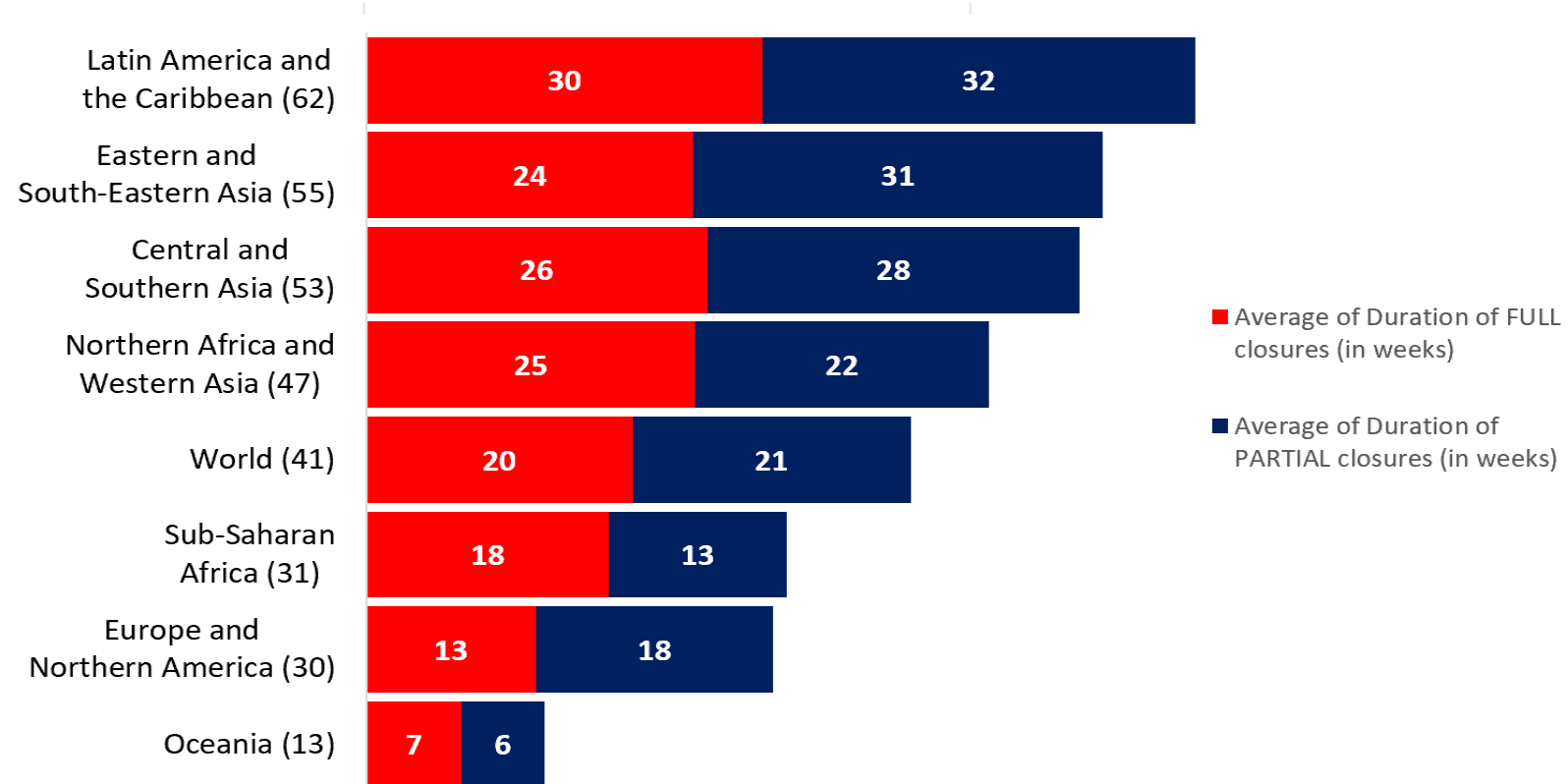


Figure 1 Average duration of full and partial school closures due to COVID-19, February 2020 to March 2022

Note: Full closures refer to instances where all schools were closed nationally due to COVID-19. Partial closures refer to school closures in some regions, or for some grades, or with reduced in-person instruction. Numbers in brackets are the total average duration of school closure per region in weeks. Totals may not add up because of rounding.

Source: Authors' calculations based on the UNESCO global dataset on duration of school closures, prepared by the Future of Learning and Innovation Team, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris. Data cover the period, 16 February 2022 to 31 March 2022. Last date accessed, 22 April 2022.

Regional Variations of Closures

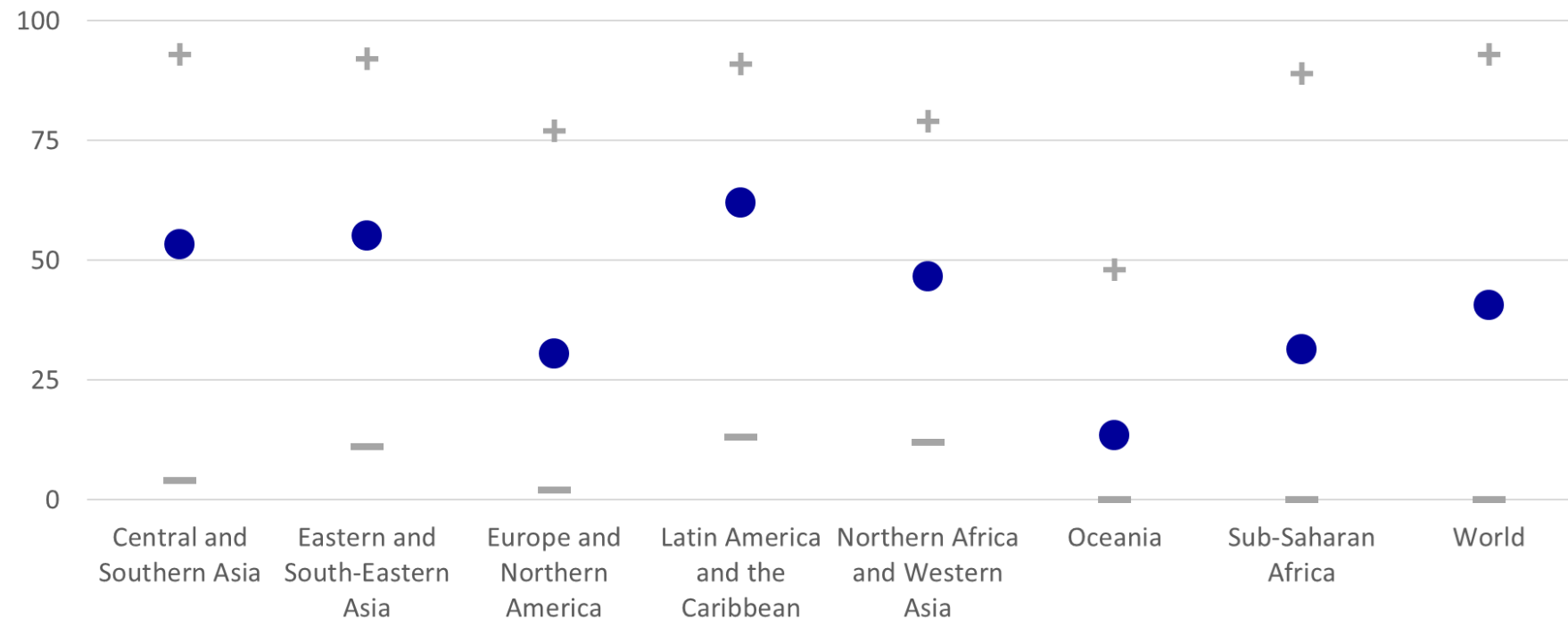


Figure 2 Regional average in weeks of all types of school closures, with maximum (+) and minimum durations (-) in the region

Source: Authors' calculations based on the UNESCO global dataset on duration of school closures, prepared by the Future of Learning and Innovation Team, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris. Data cover the period, 16 February 2022 to 31 March 2022. Last date accessed, 22 April 2022.

Compounded Effects on Outcomes

- 437 million children never reached via emergency remote instruction (UNICEF, 2020); 147 million of children missed over half of in-person instruction (United Nations, 2022)
- A study of harmonized learning outcomes across 164 countries found that while years of schooling increased on average across all regions between 2000-2017, learning outcomes were highly variable across countries and regions, HICs outpacing other country groups (Angrist et al., 2021)
- Globally: 53 out of every 100 children were either out of school, or in school but not learning – an additional 10 of every 100 children may be added to this total (Save Our Future, 2020)
- Modelling study LICs/LMICs: If learning in grade 3 is reduced by one-third, roughly the amount of time many children had already been out of school, learning levels in grade 10 will be a full year lower. And if reduced by a half, learning will be 1.5 years lower (Kaffenberger, 2021).

Education as a Key Pillar for Resilience and Preparedness

- Education disruption has institutional- and individual-level effects
 - **Institutional-level inequities:** affect education systems governance
 - **Individual-level inequities:** compound on those in existing vulnerable circumstances, emergency and conflict contexts, and facing ‘hard core’ exclusion and new pandemic-related vulnerabilities and exclusions
- Systems response: institute pro-equity measures and policies in education financing, provision, and regulation
 - Proactively protect and boost financial and human resources for education overall +
 - Target supplementary resources to the most disadvantaged (‘twin track’ approach)

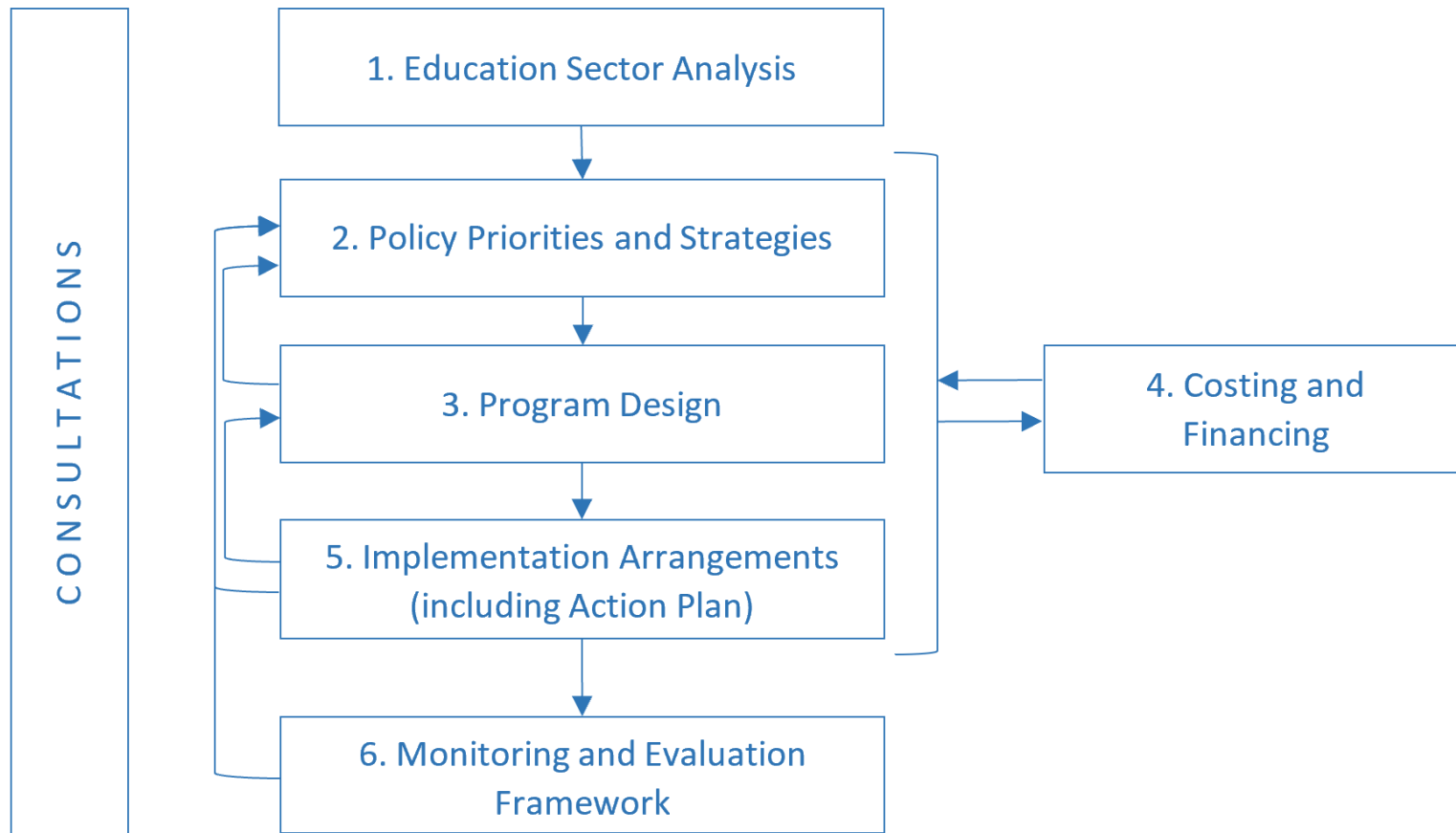
Guiding Principles

Imperative for all countries domestically, OECD DAC donors, and international organisations and actors in regional and international cooperation to:

- Extend system capacities to focus on equity concerns
- Be attuned to bidirectional and multi-dimensional relationships of education with other outcomes
- Engage through cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder, and multilateral coordination and collaboration

Strategies should focus on and involve vulnerable groups and extend avenues for broad-based citizen engagement

Main components of educational planning – a framework



Data to support planning:

Existing education data should be disaggregated by vulnerable groups and mapped to each school community

1. rapid data collection formats focusing on key indicators and sampling schools and students;
2. monitoring equity by over-representing vulnerable students (e.g., girls, students in poverty, students with special needs, minority or linguistic groups);
3. frequent low-stakes learning measurement (UIS, 2020).

Note: Adapted from IIEP-UNESCO and Global Partnership for Education

Source: Reproduced from Srivastava et al., 2020

Underlying dataset:

- official data on all public school cases with school demographic and geo-location data – previously disparate but publicly available datasets

Unique school-level dataset on COVID-19 infections and equity variables:

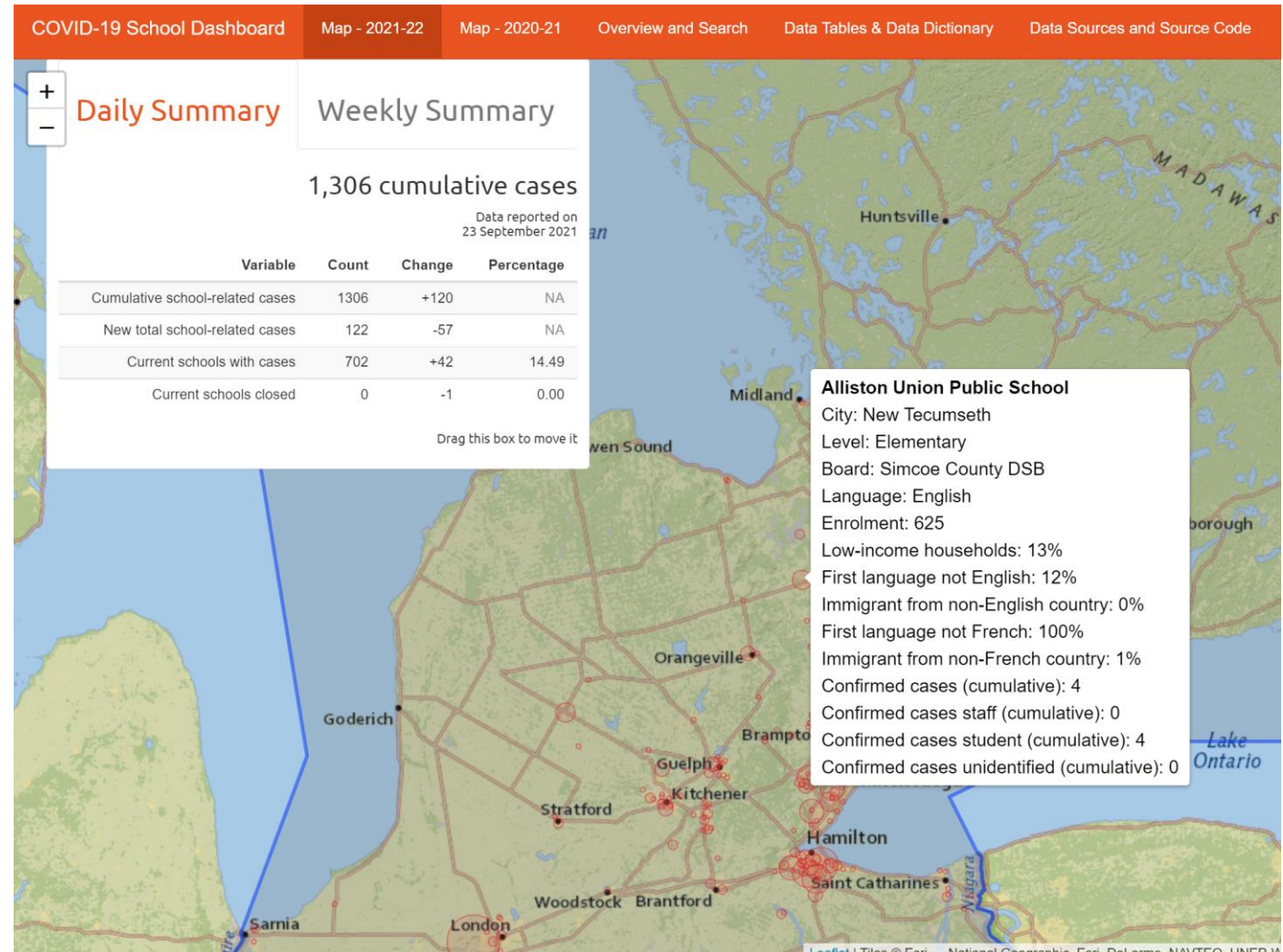
- household income, immigrant status, language, parental education
- school administrative data

Implications on school infections closures and disruptions:

- School characteristics:** Weak but significant effect of low household income on elementary school student infections.
- Area marginalization characteristics :** Very strong significant effect of marginalization on elementary school student infections (Srivastava et al., 2022)
- 3 Levels of disruption: individual, class, school

COVID-19 School Dashboard (Ontario)

<http://covid19schooldashboard.com/>



[Srivastava & Taylor \(2021\) \(v. 1.1\)](#)

<https://github.com/connor-cozens/covid19-school-dashboard>

Envision Education as a Societal Endeavour for Recovery – Recommendations

- **Recommendation 1: Institute a long-term crisis-sensitive approach with collaborative cross-sectoral participation and citizen engagement**
- **Recommendation 2: Prepare resilient systems for the future by reinforcing risk-informed educational planning and integrating equity-oriented analysis**
- **Recommendation 3: Actively implement targeted open and public initiatives for citizen engagement to enable accountability and transparency in education and ensure participation from marginalized groups**
- **Recommendation 4: Reassess partnerships between state and non-state actors to ensure they meet collective goals**
- **Recommendation 5: Institute collective action across the humanitarian-development spectrum and enrich international cooperation beyond North-South engagement**

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