

# A Disability Inclusive Education Response to Covid-19

18 August 2020 at 1:00PM (Bangkok time) via Zoom



## Questions and responses from the webinar

Questions to Panelists	Responses
<b>TEACHERS AND TEACHING MODALITIES</b>	
<p>There is no mention in the <a href="#">guidelines</a> about helping teachers identify, per learner, the increased disparities and vulnerabilities children with disabilities face when they return to school.</p> <p>What is the impact of COVID-19 to our students with disabilities? How can they cope up with the lesson if they choose the blended learning approach of teaching?</p> <p>And In the absence of ancillary services because of the lock down, please give us some advice on what program/ intervention are we going to do to address the needs of these type of learners.</p> <p>What safety measures are done to ensure that the teacher visiting the homes of the learners with disabilities do not risk transmitting any virus to the learners they visit and that the teachers themselves do not contract any virus in the course of their visit to the learners with disabilities?</p>	<p><b>Ms. Erin Tanner, Education Specialist, UNICEF EAPRO, Thailand</b></p> <p>The assessment tools and measurements used to assess children with disabilities in their initial placement at school could be used to measure against previous results. It is understood that students with disabilities may have regressed in their learning or skills development, however, there are no COVID-19 specific tools at this point to measure for this.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic is having a disproportionate impact on the learners who were already experiencing social and educational disadvantage. Many low- and lower-middle-income countries have not taken any measures to support learners at risk of exclusion, such as the poor, linguistic minorities and learners with disabilities. Even prior to the crisis, people with disabilities were far less likely to go to school, complete primary or secondary education and possess basic literacy skills. The risk is that educational gaps have widened considerably due to COVID-19.</p> <p>The onus of ensuring that children with disabilities can cope and learn on return to school is not only the teachers but families who've had to take on home schooling responsibilities as well and can contribute to supporting return to school. Ensure that families understand the return to school processes and can also have access to resources and support from schools to support their child's learning during this period. Ensure that time spent with the teachers in the blended learning approach is spent on specific lessons which will address gaps in learning due to COVID-19 related challenges with accessing learning. For instance, in-classroom learning with teachers could focus on literacy and maths, while learning at home could focus on art, physical exercise and music. Ensure the core lesson is happening with teachers.</p> <p>A situational analysis can be conducted including consulting with people with disabilities in your area to understand what is being offered, and to whom. Understand the eligibility requirements, and advocate for accessibility and inclusion if necessary. In terms of teaching programs, consider starting your plans again – all children with and without disabilities are likely to be starting from square one again in some way. Be compassionate and patient with the children and yourself.</p> <p><b>Mr. M. Abdus Salam, Founder and Chief Executive of Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK), Bangladesh</b></p> <p>In terms of safety measures, when teachers make home visits, always use facemasks and sanitizer. All our offices conduct temperature checks upon entering and staff are strictly encouraged not to come to office or visit households of the children with disabilities if they feel unwell and have flu-like symptoms. When visiting households, they are requested to maintain social distance of at least 2 meters. COVID-19 safety materials like masks and sanitizers are provided to children with disabilities and their families. The team tries to ensure their safety through positive communications. The latest protocols and best practices</p>

<p>What financial aid can you provide teachers who are infected with COVID-19 when doing house-to- house visits for their students with disabilities?</p> <p>Can you give us an idea on how to teach our deaf pupils during this pandemic since no face-to-face teaching and the approach that can be used is modular distance learning? Do you have any sample on how to do that?</p> <p>Because learning can't wait, is there any alternate learning channel for students, with and without disabilities?</p> <p>Adaptive learning devices are among the challenges for learners with disabilities, and they are usually in schools, if available. How do we help those who wish to study from home (online) when these devices are not available?</p>	<p>are followed for real time improvement of interventions to support children with disabilities and their families</p> <p><b>Ms. Nantanoot Suwannawut, Academic Officer, Ministry of Education, Thailand</b> The government of Thailand has prepared a certain budget specifically for this group of children (so-called learner development categories). During the pandemic, the expenditure has officially been transformed to help with these add-hoc activities.</p> <p><b>Mr. Tolhas Damanik, Executive Director, Wahana Inklusif Indonesia Foundation, Indonesia</b> For students with disabilities including the deaf, who cannot attend online classes, the role of parents and family members are critical to ensure that they can still learn. Usually, teachers are encouraged to do home-visits at least once a week and to collaborate with parents to develop learning plans for their children. Teachers can provide guidance for parents on how to set up the learning goals and use any kind of resources and materials available in their houses to support the learning process. Parents and other family members are also taught to understand the learning needs of children with disabilities and to provide accommodations so that the learning process itself can still be accessible for their children.</p> <p><b>Ms. Sunanda Mavillapalli, Leonard Cheshire</b> Leonard Cheshire is currently piloting distance-learning models for teachers on Inclusive Education by adapting existing training materials to be delivered in self-administered modules via mobile phone. For example, our Kenya team has trained 150 teachers remotely through Google Classrooms backed up with WhatsApp communities of practice since the crisis. The programme responded to the needs identified through a telephone survey conducted with parents and teachers. In South Sudan, LC has trained education officers and community mobilization volunteers through mobile phones and pre-recorded webinars backed up with WhatsApp Q&amp;A sessions. These officers and volunteers will now train and sensitize teachers and school level staff.</p> <p>Parents can be encouraged to take advantage of community resources. Compilation of a list of internet providers that provide free Wi-Fi and computer access to children with disabilities in the community are made available to parents. Leonard Cheshire works closely with the Ministry of Health in the countries we work in and other NGO's that provide rehabilitation and assistive devices to children with disabilities. All beneficiaries are assessed for their support needs and referred for further rehabilitation and assistive devices, when required. Monitoring is done throughout the project should there be a need for further adjustments / fixing the assistive devices.</p> <p>All project staff and community volunteers were mobilized to stay in contact with beneficiaries through regular cellphone and ensured they had information and support to stay safe and healthy during the pandemic. Radio programmes were produced, a Guideline for parents on how to support their children with disabilities to learn from home was developed, dignity kits were distributed and bulk SMS health messaging on COVID-19 was sent to beneficiaries. Teacher training continued through virtual platforms on inclusive education and the use of assistive technology. In Kenya, LC continued a programme of rolling out low cost refreshable braille readers to learners with visual impairment and making textbooks and reading materials available in accessible format.</p>
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Amid the challenges that hinder the teaching- learning process for the Learners with Disabilities, can you please share to us some coping techniques to increase their attention span?

Please find the resources [here](#).

Guides for families and professionals supporting autistic adults and adults with learning disabilities during COVID-19 crisis are available for [Social Workers & Occupational Therapist](#) and [Carers and Family](#).