



All Children Reading–Asia (ACR–Asia)

# COVID-19 EDUCATION RESPONSE MAPPING STUDY

*Building Resilience in the Kyrgyz Republic:  
Readiness, Response, and Recovery*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ADB	Asian Development Bank
CLASS	Classroom Assessment Scoring System
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DRCU	Disaster Response Coordination Unit
EDI	Early Development Instrument
EDS	Education Development Strategy
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IITT	In-Service Institute for Teacher Training
INEE	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies
IT	Information Technology
K	Kindergarten
MOES	Ministry of Education and Science
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoH	Ministry of Health
NDS	National Development Strategy
NES	National Education Strategy
NGO	NonGovernmental Organization
NSBA	National Sample-Based Assessment
NSC	National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic
NST	National Scholarship Test
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PIAAC	The Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
READ	Russian Education AID for Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

# 1 OVERVIEW

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) crisis has caused unprecedented levels of disruption to education systems worldwide. Across the Asia region, it is estimated that around 760 million children were impacted by school closures at the height of the pandemic. Government response strategies have varied across the region, with some countries imposing prolonged school lockdowns while others have had short, repeated closure periods. As countries begin to reopen schools and continue to prepare for subsequent waves of COVID-19 infection, there is a need to develop the greater capability of education systems to safeguard learning and address persistent barriers to learning equality by harnessing the opportunities for systemic change. However, school-based practices and responses that have been effective in supporting the continuity of learning during the COVID-19 pandemic have yet to be well examined, particularly in Asia. While the system and school structures are a crucial component of educational quality, understanding what happens in a school setting can offer meaningful insights into overcoming barriers to educational quality as education systems recover and rebuild from the pandemic.

This report presents the findings of research undertaken in the Kyrgyz Republic, Central Asia. It forms part of a broader study that aims to explore the system and school-level practices that have supported learning continuity in Asia during the pandemic. The study will focus on the practices of policymakers that have supported teaching and learning and consider ways in which school leaders, teachers, and parents have worked to support children during periods of disruption. Rather than comparing the responses of countries in Asia, this study will highlight innovations in the system and school policies and programs in the Kyrgyz Republic and make recommendations based on insights from the Kyrgyz Republic's education system. The study will focus on the system and school participants that support students in the Kyrgyz Republic but will not include students themselves.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

In order to understand the ways in which the education sector of the Kyrgyz Republic has responded to COVID-19, evidence has been drawn from research, policy, and current examples of practice. The scope covers policies and practices focused on supporting teaching and learning, with emphasis on the conditions that support students in the early years.

### 2.1 Research Questions

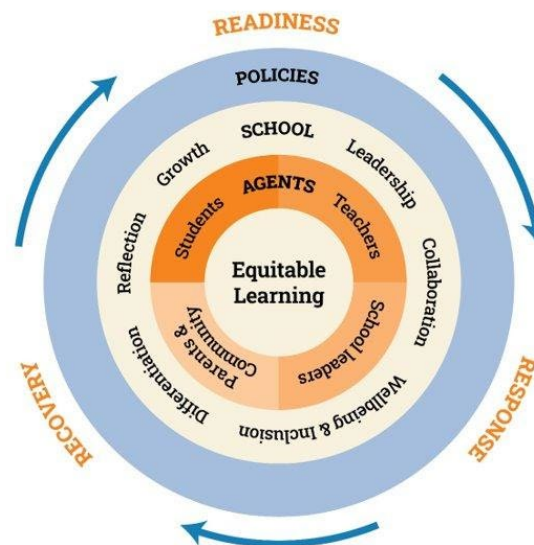
The study was guided by four sets of research questions:

1. How are countries' planned responses aligned with available evidence and frameworks on how to safeguard children's learning progress and social and emotional development, as well as address learning inequalities during the COVID-19 emergency and its aftermath? Do planned responses consider the needs of learners in the early grades?
2. What was the evolution of each country's basic education response to COVID-19, from the initial crisis response to measures they took as the situation stabilized into the "new normal, to their long-term plan for recovery and transformation following the pandemic?
  - a. To what extent was the country prepared to respond? What structures and processes were in place that promoted responsiveness and resilience to the pandemic?
  - b. What was the country's initial planned response in 2020? Was this a temporary measure or part of a plan for longer-term system strengthening moving forward?

- c. Where is the country currently in its response? Is this an extension of temporary measures or part of a plan for longer-term system strengthening moving forward?
- d. What plans are in place to strengthen the responsiveness and resilience of the system moving forward?
3. At response timepoints (b) and (c), how successful have select countries been in implementing the proposed solutions?
4. What are the gaps, challenges, and risks for reaching the most disadvantaged schools and learners through technology-based remote learning solutions in response to COVID-19? How could opportunities be leveraged to allow these interventions to be successful into the future, including policy-enabling factors and promising classroom-based practices?

An analytical framework (**Figure 1**) was developed to guide the investigation of the research questions and consider the intersections between policy, school, and stakeholder-level indicators that contribute to a resilient education system. The framework is informed by the extensive literature on effective teaching and learning and draws from the emerging evidence based on COVID-19 impacts on education systems worldwide.

**Figure 1. Analytical Framework**



In the context of COVID-19, the three phases—Readiness, Response, and Recovery—provide the operational context that influences how education systems plan for and manage their strategies for improvement and resilience.<sup>1</sup> As such, each phase is aligned with the research questions to examine: (1) the education system’s preparedness in anticipation of risks to learning, (2) the continual process of response and adaptation to mitigate those risks during the crisis, and (3) the focus on effective early recovery and long-term education transformation that protects the needs of all learners. The three phases are represented in a

<sup>1</sup> This framework draws on USAID’s Reigniting Learning: Strategies for Accelerating Learning Post-Crisis evidence review and Return to Learning during Crises toolkit and the work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on promising policy responses to support greater education system resilience and responsiveness. Each phase is underpinned by the central notion of resilience, in which change is embraced by educators during periods of disruption, and moving forward, rather than returning to what has always been done, is recognized, and rewarded. Both share similar elements in defining a path forward that prioritizes the policies and practices to promote: (1) equity and inclusion, (2) flexibility in learning interventions and assessments, and (3) building the capacity of educators. However, this framework also seeks to broaden the ways in which we recognize system readiness and quality by focusing on the interplay between policy, practice, and equitable learning.



cycle to reflect an iterative process where data-driven monitoring and improvement facilitate greater systems strengthening and resilience.

A particular focus of this study is on school-level practices that safeguard children's learning and social-emotional well-being during and after the pandemic. Based on the established body of research on the importance of school-level practices, the analytical framework identifies six quality inputs that have the potential to influence student outcomes positively and which should be considered preconditions for a resilient education system. A full description of the analytical framework can be found in **Annex A**.

### **Leadership**

Leadership focuses on improving student learning, supporting ongoing teacher professional learning and collaboration, engaging all members of the school community, and promoting the well-being and growth of the school community. Leadership can occur at various levels, including at policy, school, or classroom levels.

### **Collaboration**

Quality collaboration can occur between systems and schools, schools and families, and school staff. Collaboration supports learning and well-being, engagement, motivation, and student outcomes.

### **Well-Being and Inclusion**

Well-being is a valued outcome of school structures, processes, and programs that support the inclusion of all members of the school community (students, teachers, school leaders, and families). A sense of well-being can support staff and student engagement and participation.

### **Differentiation**

Differentiation relates to multiple pathways for learning, flexible options for engaging in learning, responsiveness to individual needs, the use of evidence to inform decision-making and planning, teacher autonomy to adjust and respond to the needs of their students, and the context for teaching and learning, and support for teachers to enable a differentiated approach (training, resources, mentoring).

### **Reflection**

A culture of reflection looks for pathways to improvement and growth, uses evidence to evaluate impact, and chances to identify areas for improvement, involving all members of the school community in the process of reflection. Feedback is also an integral part of the reflective process.

### **Growth**

Growth is an emphasis on making progress, change, and improvement, and other structures and processes that support teachers, students, and families to contribute to improvement within their school community.

## **2.2 Data Collection and Analysis**

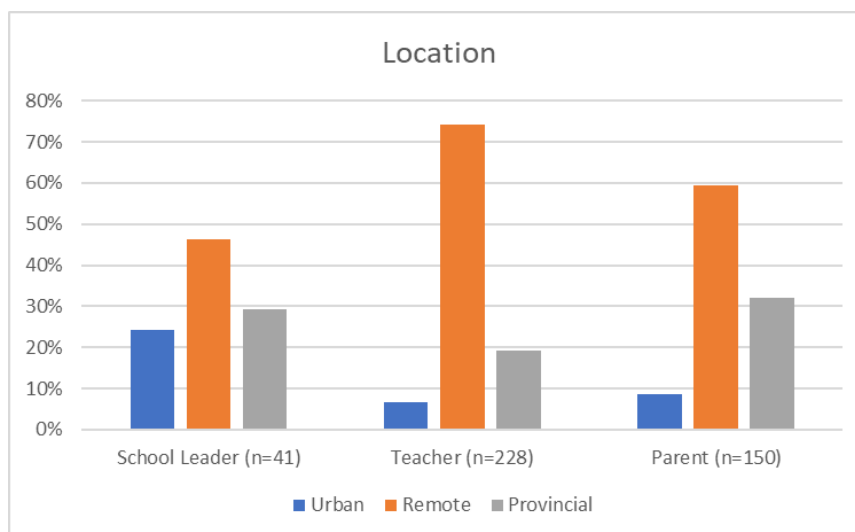
Drawing upon the above analytical framework, the study employs multiple methods to offer a descriptive account of the ways in which policymakers, teachers, school leaders, and parents have responded to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. With a focus on gathering qualitative insights that have not yet been gathered in previous research, the study featured three key data collection and analysis activities, which are explained in more detail below:

- **Desktop Reviews** of relevant documents on COVID-19 education response in the Kyrgyz Republic. This rapid review was undertaken to collate evidence from various education systems about their COVID-19 responses and re-opening strategies. See **Annex B** for the full desk review.
- **Key Informant Interviews** with Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) officials, education leaders, teachers, and principals ( $n=20$ ) to understand the decision-making process and implementation of the planned response and the strategic focus of the planned response at different points in time, as well as the focus, moving forward. Interview data were collected face-to-face by in-country researchers. Where live interviews were not possible, phone or online communication was used. See **Annex C** for the complete interview protocols and list of informants.
- **Survey:** A non-representative survey with purposefully selected school leaders ( $n=41$ ), teachers ( $n=228$ ), and parents ( $n=150$ ) examining COVID-19 specific policies and practices within school communities was conducted. Online and paper-based surveys were distributed in both Kyrgyz and Russian languages to ensure a diversity of insights. Open-ended data about challenges and opportunities were also collected as part of the survey. See **Annex C** for the full survey instruments.

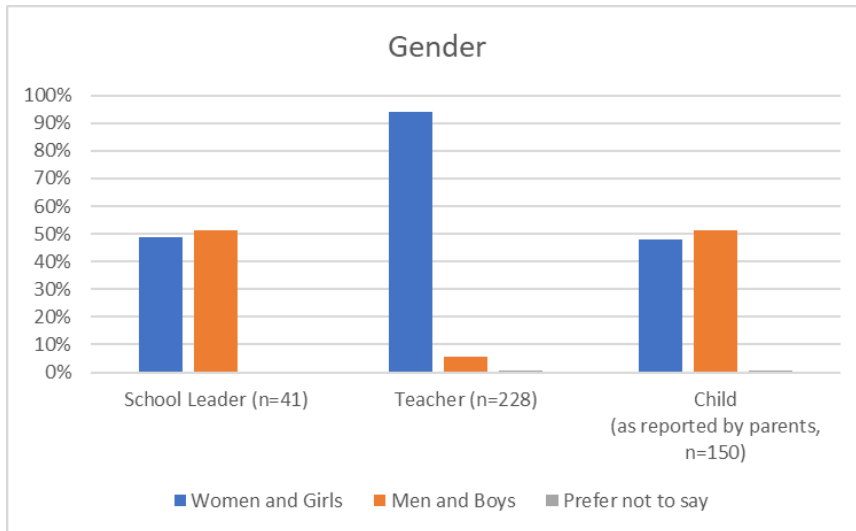
### 2.2.1 Participants' Demographics

The geographic representation in this sample is consistent with the population, with the majority of respondents located in rural areas. Given that 80 percent of schools in the Kyrgyz Republic are located in rural areas, two-thirds (66 percent) of the sample were from rural/remote areas, followed by 25 percent from regional/provincial centers and 9 percent from cities. There was equal gender representation in the sample of school leaders and children (as reported by their parents in the survey). However, there were more women teachers who responded to the survey than men teachers. Most teachers (approximately 80 percent) had more than 11 years of teaching experience. Almost 70 percent of households surveyed spoke a language other than Kyrgyz or Russian at home. Participants' demographics are illustrated in **Figures 2 to 6**.

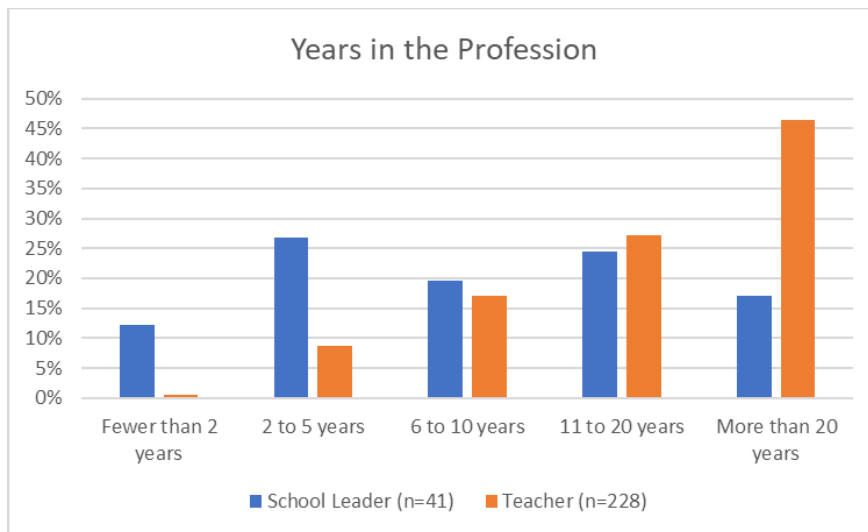
**Figure 2. Location of Participants**



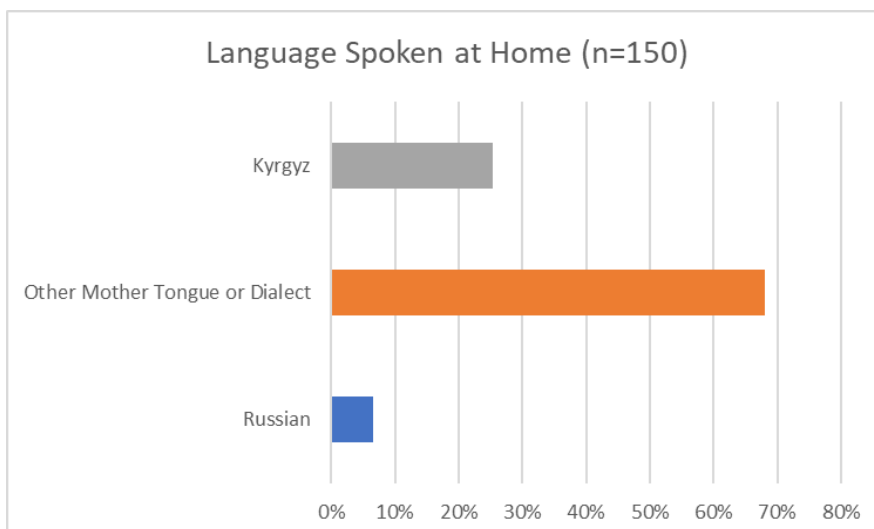
**Figure 3. Gender Breakdown of Participants**



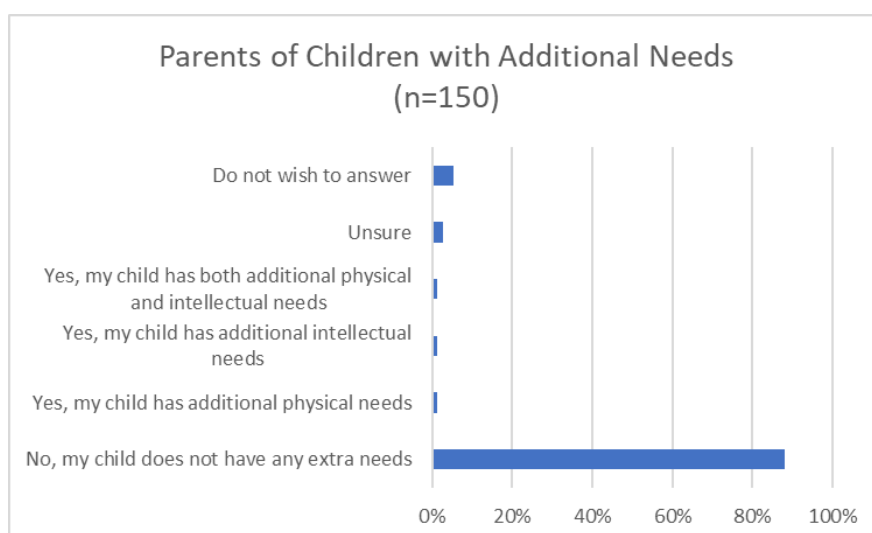
**Figure 4. Years in the Profession**



**Figure 5. Languages Spoken in the Home**



**Figure 6. Children with Additional Learning Needs**



### 2.3 Analysis

1. **Documents** collected as part of the desk review were analyzed against the analytical framework in order to understand levels of readiness to respond to COVID-19 in the Kyrgyz Republic. Documents were collected and analyzed in English, Russian, and Kyrgyz languages, with the support of in-country research teams.
2. **Interview Data** were subject to inductive thematic analysis using the Dedoose platform against the analytical framework developed for the study. Saturation in themes was reached during the process of analysis. The findings of the interviews confirmed those key challenges and opportunities facing Kyrgyz as raised in the desktop review and identified additional opportunities to those highlighted in the survey.
3. **Survey Data** were subject to descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS, with additional open-ended responses subject to thematic analysis in the survey platform Alchemer. The survey data provided insights into the experiences of school-level participants and were triangulated with the key informant interview data and document analysis to consider perceptions of given and received support in the Kyrgyz education system.

### 2.4 Limitations

This study aims to investigate the ways in which schools and education systems in the Kyrgyz Republic adapted to changes and challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of the study is on basic education and the early grades, with sampling targeted at primary school teachers, school leaders, and parents of young children. Where possible, data relating to the impact on kindergarten (K) to Grade 3 students are highlighted. However, many of the schools in the Kyrgyz Republic are K to Grade 12, and some responses can be expected to reflect the experiences of both primary and secondary school students.

In an effort to fill the current gap in school-based insights around practices, the study is largely based on qualitative data. Thus, the data included in this study are not representative. However, there are many insights raised in the data that reflect the findings of previous research (see United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), 2021a, for example). These data also highlighted gaps in evidence at the school level and provided an opportunity to identify areas for further support and improvement in the Kyrgyz education system.

## **3 READINESS: PREPAREDNESS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

### **3.1 Education Reform Policies**

Prior to the pandemic, the Kyrgyz Republic was already experiencing a learning crisis. The latest Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Monitoring report found that more than 265 million children did not go to school. Of these children, 22 percent were primary school age (National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic [NSC] & UNICEF, 2020). Of those that attended school, fewer than 60 percent of 7- to 14-year-olds were able to finish tasks on basic reading and numeracy. These poor results point to a low-quality system, typically characterized by a poor curriculum, lack of quality learning materials, low teacher quality, and ineffective teaching practice and teacher management (Hou, 2011).

The Kyrgyz government had already undertaken a series of education reform initiatives to address persistent, poor education outcomes in the country. Under the National Education Strategy (NES) 2021–2040 (NES 2040) and the Education Action Plan 2021–2023, these initiatives included a greater regulatory function of the education sector, expanding access to preschool and basic education services and ensuring relevant skills to meet the demands of the labor market. The government’s education reform agenda also saw an increase in the education budget and decentralization of education services to the provincial offices. These processes demonstrated a strong political commitment and leadership from the Kyrgyz government to improve access and quality of education for all students.

When COVID-19 reached the Kyrgyz Republic, a state of emergency was declared on March 22, 2020, and the government enacted existing emergency response policies and mechanisms to respond to the pandemic. This included coordination across government through the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the Secretariat of National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Disaster Response Coordination Unit. The Unit was established in 2008 to improve communication and cooperation between the government, United Nations agencies, international and local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the donor community to provide a humanitarian response to emergencies. This was coupled with the development of a manual for emergency situations as part of a broader initiative to support disaster risk reduction in vulnerable communities and educational settings.

In compliance with quarantine and lockdown requirements, the MOES closed schools across the country. Remote learning strategies were quickly initiated by MOES in April 2020, and schools were offered directives to support students and families. Some schools with boarding facilities, residential institutions, or schools located in select remote areas were able to remain open, but most schools experienced intermittent periods of closures during the 2020–2021 school year due to localized COVID-19 outbreaks. Given the decentralization of education services to the provincial levels, there was greater autonomy for local education authorities to respond to the needs of their communities.

### **3.2 Digitalization of Education**

MOES was also responsible for the coordination of live lessons, which were broadcast on three national television channels and two mobile network applications (UNICEF, 2020a). Universities and television companies also collaborated with the MOES to provide studio space for television lessons to be recorded (MOES, 2020). Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 1,500 video lessons were created and distributed to support students at all levels of schooling (MOES, 2020). An educational portal with teaching and learning resources and online classes using Internet-based platforms such as YouTube was also implemented (MOES, 2020).

While the shift to remote and digital learning was necessary to support the continuity of learning as part of the education system's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it also fast-tracked the government's long-term goal to establish the Kyrgyz Republic as an open digital society. Under the NES 2040, the government plans to advance the integration of information technology (IT) in the education sector by expanding Internet connections to all schools to ensure equitable access to learning. According to the recent School Connectivity Map project, 67 percent of all public schools in the Kyrgyz Republic are connected to the Internet, with plans to expand the connection to the remaining 691 schools (UNICEF, 2019). However, 35 of those are deemed too difficult to connect through the Internet fiber network due to their geographical locations and will need alternative solutions so that they are not left out of the digital transformation process.

By having a clear strategy in place for the digitalization of the education sector, the government of the Kyrgyz Republic has shown a commitment and readiness to implement remote learning for all students. However, more needs to be understood about how digital education policies are being translated into practices in the classroom to address challenges relating to equity, quality, and data management to support student learning. The next section on Response explores the efficacy of remote learning modalities used during the pandemic, including challenges and opportunities for achieving the goals set out in the NES 2040.

### **3.3 Improving Teacher Quality**

Individual schools and teachers played a central role in supporting the transition to remote learning. They were responsible for designing online learning content, assigning homework or other activities based on the MOES-issued television lessons, and supporting students to engage with learning materials (Kasymova, 2020). To support teachers, the MOES's National In-Service Teacher Training Institute and the Republican Institute of Advanced Teaching and Training prepared guidelines for the use of online learning platforms and recommendations for how to coordinate remote learning, including the use of online platforms such as Zoom, WhatsApp, Moodle, Google Classroom, Google Hangout, and Google Meet (MOES, 2020). MOES also reported that a consultation and technical support hub was established to provide IT technical support to teachers via the IT Academy (MOES, 2020).

Support for teachers during the pandemic was underpinned by the Kyrgyz government's existing teacher reform agenda under the NES 2040. Prior to the pandemic, the Kyrgyz government had introduced a series of initiatives to improve teacher quality, including the development of teaching methods and improved teacher training. Recently, there have been efforts to elaborate teacher professional standards as a basis for in-service training and revising performance incentives. This includes regulations that stipulate 72 hours of in-service training every five years for teachers at the In-service Teacher Training Institute. However, only 20 percent of eligible teachers are annually covered by the government budget due to a reluctance from local authorities to pay for training expenses. While there was evidence of support for teachers during the pandemic with additional training and resourcing provided by the government, the data from this study suggest that this was not enough, and many teachers had to rely on their own resources and peer networks to learn the skills required to deliver remote learning.

### **3.4 Mental Health and Well-Being**

The Kyrgyz Republic has a mental health policy, plan, and legislation, and, in 2008, 4 percent of the health care budget was allocated to mental health (World Health Organization [WHO] & Ministry of Health [MoH], 2008). However, mental health services in the Kyrgyz Republic lack sufficient financing, equipment, and qualified specialists, resulting in low-quality mental health care (Pinchuk et al., 2021). Before the pandemic, adolescents had been facing major stress at home due to unstable family dynamics. Students in the Kyrgyz Republic consistently reported major stress both at home and in school, associated with high levels of discrimination

and violence (UNICEF, 2021). Adolescent suicide and attempted suicide reached 1,080 cases from 2008 to 2018, which became a critical issue for youth and adolescents. Several regulations have been put in place, including Law No. 185, “On measures to prevent harm to children’s health, their physical, intellectual, mental, spiritual and moral development in the Kyrgyz Republic.”

However, the restrictions imposed during the pandemic, coupled with the transition to remote learning, have increased rates of vulnerability and placed many students at increased risk of harm and disengagement from school (Zhanybek, 2021). At the start of the pandemic, the number of reported domestic violence cases rose by 65 percent (Asian Development Bank [ADB] & United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2020). In 2021, UNICEF identified 250,000 children and caregivers requiring access to mental health and psychosocial support in the Kyrgyz Republic (UNICEF, 2021b). In response, MOES established a hotline to provide psychological support to students in each Regional Education Department. Teams of teachers and specialists were also assigned to monitor and support children and parents from vulnerable families throughout the COVID-19 pandemic (MOES, 2020). However, school-specific safety policies are not consistent across the country, and a culture of violence remains pervasive in many schools and communities.

The development of policies and programs that support students and families is encouraging and reflects a growing recognition of the role that education ministries and departments can play in supporting the health and well-being of school communities as a key part of educational practice. However, as discussed, the Kyrgyz Republic faces many challenges in supporting students; many of which existed before the pandemic. Many of these challenges are experienced by students but also by staff and system leaders. Yet there is still less information available on the practices that can support students at the school level, particularly during times of crisis. The pandemic has highlighted the increased vulnerability of children, parents, and teachers to violence during periods of a school lockdown. It is clear that legislation has yet to translate into guaranteed safety measures, and more needs to be done to understand how education policies and practices can support the mental health and well-being of children and teachers as the education system recovers.

### **3.5 Policies Supporting Inclusion and Equity**

The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic in 2010 and the Law on Education in 2003 guarantee citizens’ rights to education. In 2012, the government developed an education curriculum for children who were out of school or dropped out before secondary education and wanted to return. It was also revealed that street children and child laborers are the most vulnerable to exclusion from school, and the government of the Kyrgyz Republic is making advancements in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor (U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of International Labor Affairs, n.d.).

Children from ethnic minority groups have also been prioritized by the government, with the establishment of the Department of Ethnic, Religious Policy, and Interaction with Civil Society, responsible for implementing policies on interethnic relations. The government also supports multilingual education for children from ethnic minority groups through the introduction of the mother tongue in preschool. However, reports have shown a gradual decline in the use of Uzbek as the language of instruction since 2010, which has further put Uzbek children at a disadvantage in the classroom (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe [OSCE], 2019). With nearly 70 percent of parents surveyed reported speaking a mother tongue or dialect at home, policies on multilingual education will need to be considered to ensure equity of learning for all children.

The state has guaranteed the right to education for children with disabilities, and the supporting policies have been included in the Code of the Kyrgyz Republic “On Children” in 2012 and the NES 2040 (UNICEF, 2021). While the “Concept and Program of Inclusive Education 2019–2023” supports the right to education for children with disabilities, special

education is still considered separate from mainstream education. The current regulation does not include a definition of inclusive education and how to provide alternative modes, nor does it require the use of alternative modes by teachers.

## 4 RESPONSE: SYSTEM AND SCHOOL RESPONSES IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

This chapter presents the findings of surveys with school leaders, teachers, and parents, as well as interviews with key policymakers across the Kyrgyz Republic. The data are presented with consideration given to the six key factors outlined in the analytical framework.

### 4.1 Leadership

#### 4.1.1 Government Policies

At a policy level, participants reported that the Kyrgyz government was quick to act in implementing lockdowns and health policies (e.g., sanitizing surfaces and hand washing) to reduce the impact of COVID-19 and protect the population. These efforts were perceived as effective preventive measures to slow the spread of the virus in the community, protecting the health and well-being of those in school environments.

*“...there were many events planned at the government level. These are measures to provide all kinds of medical or other means to ensure sanitary and hygienic requirements in schools.”*

—(POLICYMAKER)

*“All measures, decrees, orders, and so on, that were from the side of the state, that is, from the side of the government of our country, we all accepted for implementation, all the measures that were required from educational institutions. Therefore, it was a very good preventive measure to create conditions so that the pandemic does not cover a large number of children and adults.”*

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

In an effort to support the continuity of learning during school lockdowns, the government introduced remote learning through online lessons and television broadcasts for those without Internet access from April 8, 2020. This involved a coordinated effort between ministry officials, teachers, and lecturers from teacher institutes to develop video lessons and digital content. Guidelines were sent from the MOES to district departments of education, which provided instruction to schools and parents. To facilitate learning in rural communities, the government provided schools with phones and TVs. This was based on an assessment of need conducted by the school and submitted for approval to the district-level Department of Education. The government also negotiated partnerships with a private telecommunication company to provide subsidized Internet access and mobile sim cards for students and teachers during remote learning.

However, interview data suggests that this was not accessible to many households across the country that did not have Internet access and largely relied on mobile or broadcast media for learning during school closures.



***“The [MOES] of the Kyrgyz Republic developed a curriculum for working in a remote format, prepared video lessons in all subjects, developed a broadcasting network, and every week they prepared a schedule of video lessons and then sent it to the Raiono (district Department of Education), from there the district sent it to schools. In addition, the lesson schedule was printed out in various publications and Internet resources and also distributed. Also posted on social networks to convey information to all parents.”***

**—(POLICYMAKER)**

Despite efforts by the government to improve education continuity for the most disadvantaged communities, there were still gaps in the provision of education services for many children. Survey data suggest that up to 10 percent of students did not access remote learning in any format during school closures. Schools also reported advocating for resources on behalf of their communities and supporting teachers to adapt government-developed teaching and learning content, such as TV broadcast lessons, to meet the individual needs of students. This was strengthened by the collaborative relationships that schools built with parents during the pandemic. Schools acted as frontline providers of assistance and resources for many communities during the pandemic, and this was particularly evident in regional, remote, or low socio-economic areas.

***“As for local authorities and self-government, we did not see any special, tangible support. Of course, they distributed humanitarian aid to children with food and the most necessary goods, but they did not solve the issue of ensuring the continuity of education for low-income families. We analyzed the needs of our families, submitted an application, and wrote many letters to help low-income families purchase or provide televisions and smartphones. But nothing was acquired; neither the district nor the local authorities solved this problem. We ourselves distributed all our school TV sets to these families, they watched, and after the pandemic, their parents returned them to school.”***

**—(SCHOOL LEADER)**

Interviews with key informants also highlighted MOES policies aimed at tackling the increasing instances of domestic and sexual violence, one of many social and health challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Initiatives such as the “Practical Guide for Juvenile Affairs Inspectors” and “Guidelines for Holding Meetings with School Children and Their Parents” were developed as part of the multisectoral *Approach to the Prevention of Sexual Violence against Women and Girls Project*. With support from development partners, the MOES developed online resources for parents and teachers and information broadcast on television on the prevention of sexual violence against minors. Recognizing the disproportionate level of violence against girls, the ministry also developed information campaigns and intervention programs targeted at women and girls.

***“It is also important to note what had to be done to combat violence against children in the fight against COVID; educational organizations should have provided assistance to persons exposed to violence as part of their plans to combat the COVID pandemic, paying special attention to children and families from risk groups, to carry out preventive work, informing children about violence, legislative guarantees, assistance services for families at risk.”***

**—(POLICYMAKER)**

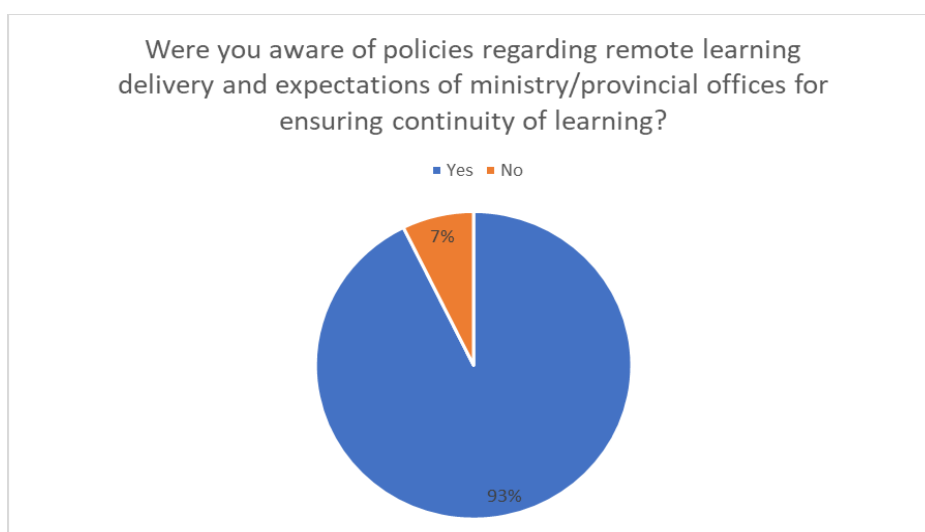
#### **4.1.2 School-Level Practices**

At the school level, leadership practices were evident across regions. School leaders overwhelmingly reported that policies and procedures were well communicated from the central MOES. Ninety-three percent indicated that they were aware of policies regarding remote learning delivery and expectations from the ministry/provincial offices for ensuring continuity of learning. Although most school leaders reported awareness of policies regarding

learning continuity (**Figure 7**), many school representatives indicated that their school largely led its own response to the challenges of the pandemic. School-based responses appeared most effective in well-resourced schools, especially private schools and those in metro areas.

While national-level guidelines relating to school closures and remote learning are important to help school leaders and teachers plan and deliver lessons during the lockdown period, schools must be able to make decisions that are reflective of the needs of their local context. This includes having the mandate to make decisions about curricula adaptation, assessment practice, school closures, data collection, teacher training, and well-being and inclusion practices that promote student engagement and support. The three most common practices implemented by school leaders on a weekly basis were: meeting with teachers to discuss support for student learning, providing additional training to teachers on remote learning, and meeting with teachers to discuss their needs. There was also evidence of teacher autonomy in the implementation of remote learning through adapting lessons and summative assessment tasks (particularly for differentiated learning) and trying new ways to monitor student engagement and growth.

**Figure 7: School Leader Awareness of Policies That Promote Continuity of Learning**



School leaders reported that they felt well supported across the various organizations highlighted in the questionnaire, particularly the Ministry of Education/Department of Education, teacher training associations, and local education authorities. Conversely, they indicated that they felt the least supported by aid organizations and private donors.

*“I want to say that our school, ours and private schools, we mastered this faster than all these seminars were organized...But nevertheless, we later participated in those seminars conducted by the city Department of Education. And at the level of the ministry, online meetings were held with teachers, with the administration....”*

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

*“Many teachers didn’t have smartphones. But I remember one of the first is the dedication of teachers. They themselves somehow saved money, bought phones for themselves.”*

—(POLICYMAKER)

School leaders also indicated that they met with teachers frequently to discuss ways to support student learning and to understand the changing needs of teachers and the challenges they

were facing. Sixty-three percent said they also provided additional weekly training on remote learning mechanisms. Overall, approximately 75 percent of teachers were satisfied with the level of support provided by their school. However, despite a desire to discuss student needs and learning more frequently, only approximately 50 percent of teachers reported meeting with their school leaders regularly.

## 4.2 Collaboration

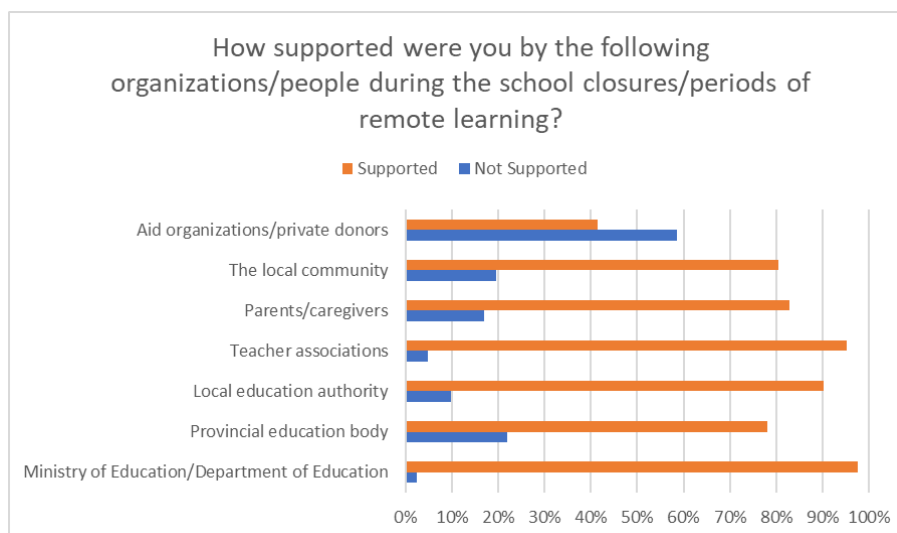
Collaboration between the central and district education authorities was found to be key to the development of policies and guidelines supporting adaptation to the provision of education services across the country at community and school levels. This included the suspension of standardized tests; extension of the duration of the school year; the provision of additional learning resources; curriculum adaptation to focus on core competencies during remote learning; guidelines for teaching practice during remote learning (e.g., working hours); and mental health and psychosocial support for teachers, parents, and students through a centralized hotline.

*“In our district, in the district education department, a hotline was set up, and every school also had a hotline. The students also had a hard time. And so that they receive psychological assistance so that he does not feel somehow isolated, maybe they get into some stressful situations, even if they were at home, maybe there were some unresolved problems... The ministry told us to organize such lines.”*

—(POLICYMAKER)

Collaboration with others was important; however, there were differences observed at the school level in perceptions of support and collaboration with different organizations (Figure 8).

**Figure 8. School Leader Perceptions of Support**



### 4.2.1 Collaboration Among Teachers and School Leaders

As a result of the transition to remote learning, participants indicated that while MOES provided access to various technological platforms, there was a need to collaborate with other teachers and teacher training institutes to equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to develop and deliver learning materials using online teaching and learning platforms and methodologies. In many cases, schools developed their own training or sought assistance from external stakeholders to upskill teachers in how to teach via remote learning, including instruction in the use of various technologies. This transition was a complex and ongoing

process for teachers, and a key finding from this study highlighted that older teachers had greater difficulty transitioning to online modalities and were regularly required to support and build knowledge of their younger colleagues.

*“When we started online teaching, then it was decided to form a working group for this; they taught at our university and then began to train teachers in schools.”*

—(TEACHER EDUCATOR)

*“They learned how to teach online...we all talked to each other, with those who knew how to enter online lessons, quickly began to distribute, taught each other how to do it. And we were even surprised that the teachers were so active, but it was still difficult.”*

—(POLICYMAKER)

#### **4.2.2 Collaboration with Parents**

School leaders and teachers reported that collaboration with parents had increased as a result of remote learning, with parents becoming more engaged with their children’s learning and monitoring progress. Prior to the pandemic, one education expert estimated that only 20 to 30 percent of parents would communicate with teachers. However, during remote learning, 70 percent of teachers reported that they communicated with parents on ways to support student learning on a weekly basis.

*“Of course, we talked [to parents] almost 24 hours a day. There was constant feedback; we studied ourselves and taught our children; we had to work with parents first so that later they could help their children.”*

—(TEACHER)

*“Parents had a good opportunity to monitor the learning process directly. Everyone controlled their children to be present at lessons. I saw how parents came to the lessons together and took part.”*

—(EDUCATION EXPERT)

*“Parents began to participate more actively in the school life of the child, to communicate with them more. At this time, teachers called and asked questions about working with parents. Thanks to these teachers who were able to organize and conduct work with parents. And thanks to the parents who supported the children in a timely manner and were sympathetic to the teachers, which helped with the participation of children in online learning.”*

—(EDUCATION EXPERT)

Teachers also noted that *“children liked to work together with parents,”* suggesting an increased desire for parental interest and support from children. It was evident that parents appreciated these collaborative efforts, as survey results revealed that 84 percent of parents agreed they were satisfied with the level of support provided by their child’s school.

Parents reported that during school closures and periods of remote learning, their child continued to learn remotely through school but also noted that students were unprepared for independent learning. Parents consistently responded that they very frequently (at least 3-4 times a week) checked that their child had completed all their homework, helped with remote learning, and helped their child with learning assessments.

However, the extent to which parents could support children’s engagement in remote learning was a key concern held by policymakers, school leaders, and teachers. Most educators identified limited parental capacity to support their child with schoolwork (81 percent), limited home resources (78 percent, e.g., Internet, data, devices, quiet space, desk, books), and

limited parental engagement (77 percent) as the most significant challenges they faced in supporting students during the pandemic.

Interviews with key informants corroborated these findings and attributed parents' own work schedules, low literacy levels, limited knowledge of curriculum content areas, or difficulties ensuring students complied with learning requirements to difficulties in supporting their children in remote learning.

***“Many parents did not make their children attend classes; instead of studying, they focused on fieldwork or earning money.”***

—(TEACHER)

***“I used Zoom and classroom platforms. However, students' and parents' lack of understanding impacted student participation.”***

—(TEACHER)

***“Of course, there were difficulties in what way many parents were not ready to cooperate online with teachers; for this, they had to separately conduct some teaching moments, namely in an online format.”***

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

These challenges seemed to be magnified in the early grades, with teachers and school leaders reporting a gap in student learning outcomes when they returned to school due to a lack of parental capacity to support foundational literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers also noted that young children especially struggled with self-regulation during remote learning and required more intensive support from parents. As one school leader noted:

***“But children, especially those who were in the first grade, who completed assignments with their parents and then came to school, we saw that they never learned to read. Parents do not know this technique; teachers, of course, tried to explain to them how to work with the child, sending them instructions and tasks, someone delivered tasks, but this was not enough via WhatsApp.”***

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

## **4.3 Well-Being and Inclusion**

### **4.3.1 Student Well-Being**

The mental health and psychosocial well-being of students and young people have been a challenging area in the Kyrgyz Republic for some time. The COVID-19 pandemic contributed to the burden of mental health concerns in the Kyrgyz Republic, adding pressure to already stretched mental health services. UNICEF identified 250,000 children and caregivers requiring access to mental health and psychosocial support (2021), and the MOES targeted this issue by establishing a hotline for counseling and other psychological support for students. Teams of teachers and specialists were also assigned to counsel children and parents from vulnerable families throughout the COVID-19 pandemic (MOES, 2020).

***“Children started running away from their families and also by contacting the helpline (hotline)... For eight months of 2020, the Ministry of Labor and Social Development says that there were 96,733 phone calls or 390 calls in just one day...23.4% applied because of misunderstandings between parents and children due to online lessons, children running away from their home, aggressive behavior of the child, etc., and 10% of them applied for social assistance, and 293 people applied for psychological disorders, of which 178, this is 7.2%—there were children.”***

—(POLICYMAKER)

Some reports from participants indicated that teachers also visited the homes of disadvantaged children to ensure they had access to learning, including resources, food, and mental health support. Eighty-three percent of school leaders and 86 percent of teachers reported that they worried about the mental health and well-being of their students. Most said they tried new ways to engage all students in learning and often provided mental health resources for their students and families.

*“We had teachers going from house to house, especially in the category of those children who were inclusive, or these were children from low-income families... we have families, unfortunately, who didn’t have a TV at home, to watch the lesson...We delivered food to some families, again together with our parents. We submitted lists of such children and families who had problems in local governments, and the mayor’s office of the city, accordingly, also supported such families with food packages.”*

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

The findings of this study also suggest that the adaptation of school practices assisted in establishing safe and productive learning environments for all. For example, it was reported that some schools already conducted yearly health checks for students, which ensured they already had access to health data for many students and could identify those at an increased risk of complications related to COVID-19. These data, together with increased health and safety practices, including improved sanitization and hygiene awareness among staff and students, were said to contribute greatly to the safety of schools throughout the pandemic and beyond.

*“Every year before the start of the school year, we conduct a medical examination of all our auxiliary workers and teachers; we have certificates from children, we know which children are registered in a dispensary in one or another children’s clinic, probably, it has helped us to take specific measures to take action on such children who are more prone to infections.”*

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

There were also mental health and well-being challenges around the transition to online learning and the lack of protective factors that a school environment provides. It was found that many home environments were not physically safe for children, and increased reports of family violence, sexual abuse, and teenage pregnancies were received.

*“Because in the education system, it is the educational organization that, it turns out, is a safe environment where the child was not subjected to violence, and both parents and teachers understood this.”*

—(POLICYMAKER)

*“When we moved to an online form, we saw a lot of violence, witnessed how children were subjected to violence, especially children and women, difficulties fell on the shoulders of educational organizations.... Basically, the problem manifested itself in the fact that children were subjected to a domestic violence... violence by their own families, because many parents realized that they could not or did not know how to educate and were already in a situation in which they almost screamed.”*

—(POLICYMAKER)

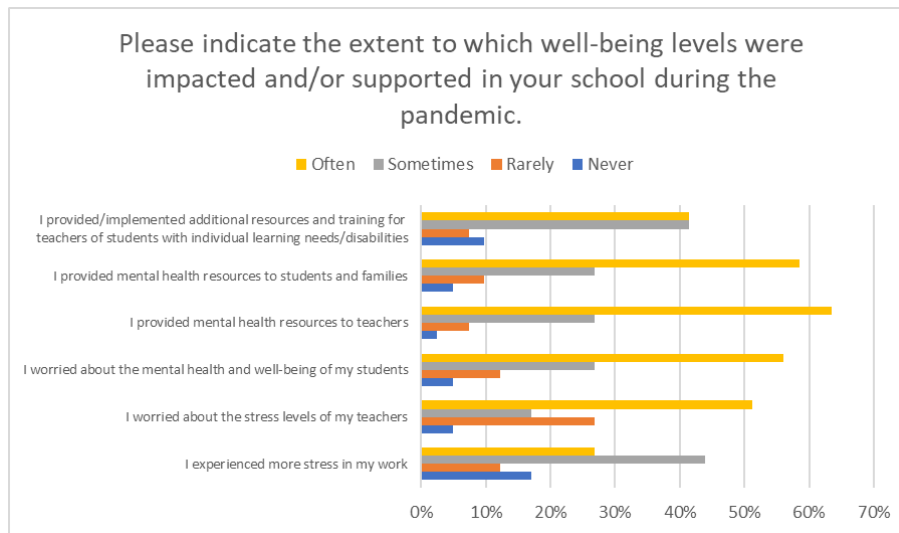
*“The number of child suicides compared to 2019 increased by 30%, of which 12 are girls, and 39 are boys. They were probably under a lot of stress, these children killed themselves, and they were school-age children. And for six months of 2020, 159 children were put on the wanted list as missing....”*

—(POLICYMAKER)

### 4.3.2 Educator Well-Being

Teachers reported increased mental health and well-being concerns, including poorer mental health due to the extra workload, managing student engagement online, and difficulties meeting the demands of parents to support their children during remote learning and to be available constantly. School leaders also reported increased levels of well-being and mental health concerns in their schools and adopted additional measures to support their staff and school community, as demonstrated in **Figure 9** below:

**Figure 9. School Well-Being Challenges**



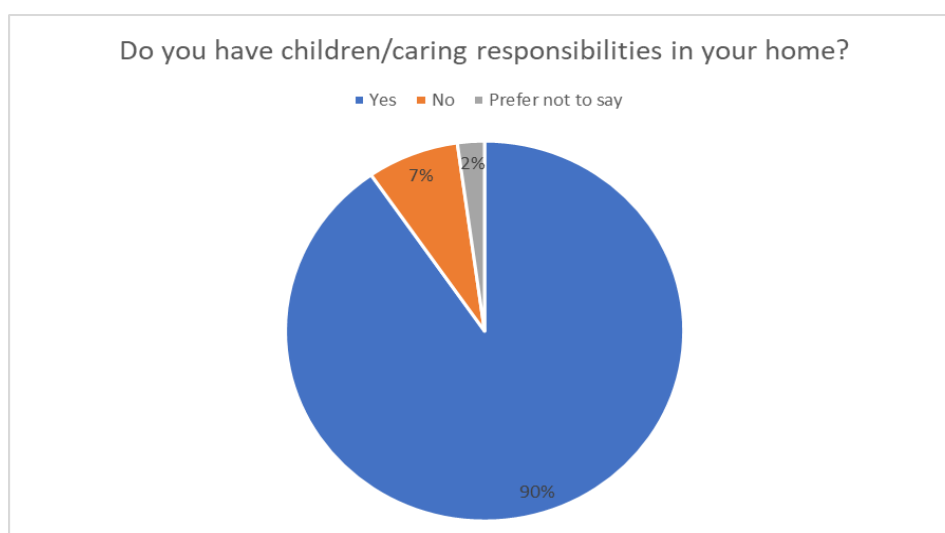
While survey data revealed that most school leaders tried to provide mental health resources ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’ to teachers and students, a lack of qualified staff to support a growing mental health crisis in the Kyrgyz Republic impacted heavily on the availability and accessibility of support.

***“Let the teacher only teach the students and not do other work. Let the parents of the students feel the responsibility. Let them conduct activities, seminars, and educational activities in this regard. It is very difficult to work as a teacher.”***

**—(TEACHER)**

A wide majority of teachers with children of their own faced the compounded challenges of being both a teacher and a parent. More than 90 percent of teachers surveyed reported having caring responsibilities (**Figure 10**).

**Figure 10. Teacher Caring Responsibility**



The dual role of teacher/caregiver presented unique difficulties and added to the burden of mental health and well-being concerns.

*“You know, the most negative moment at this time is that I stopped paying attention to my child; he lagged behind, honestly. My child was left without attention, and without help, he began to experience psychological stress. At first, I was torn between family and work, working with the class took a lot of time.”*

—(TEACHER)

#### **4.3.3 Students with Additional Learning Needs**

Remote and online learning was also seen as a strategy to cater to the needs of different students, such as those with special learning or psychosocial needs, who performed better during remote learning compared to face-to-face learning. Technology was identified as the key to supporting differing learning needs and supporting the Kyrgyz education system’s ability to transition to remote learning. However, data gathered from key informants indicated that technology also acted as a barrier in terms of resourcing, availability, and access. The integration of technology platforms to support curriculum delivery and the adoption of teaching activities to work within an online environment was an effective methodology for schools to continue to deliver learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Multiple modalities were used for distance learning, e.g., television lessons and online platforms such as Zoom, WhatsApp, Google Classroom, Google Meet, YouTube, and YaClass.

For students with physical disabilities or accessibility issues who may have previously struggled to access school learning environments, data suggest remote learning fostered equal participation. There was a concerted effort by the MOES and district education authorities to ensure that students with special needs were supported during remote learning. For example, the MOES video lessons included sign language translations.

*“...created online lessons, video lessons for children with disabilities, children with special needs...so many interesting video lessons were created, especially for elementary school, for children who were in elementary school by age, to the point that we were shown the requirements, good methodological support was provided, and very interesting lessons came out for children with certain educational needs, who took these lessons at home with the help of their parents.”*

—(POLICYMAKER)



*At the school level, there was evidence of teachers adapting lessons and using different pedagogical strategies to cater to students with special needs. “Did we work almost the same with all of them, maybe the only thing for these children was more attention in terms of the fact that they did not always succeed with everyone, and then the teachers held separate consultations for these children in extra time if they didn’t make it.”*

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

Although it is likely to have occurred, there was limited evidence of schools without access to online platforms using and distributing paper-based resources to overcome resourcing and access challenges. There are limited data on those students who were unable to access online learning and little evidence of what schools did to support students who did not have resources, except for teachers reporting the distribution of devices. Although parents and caregivers were asked to share insights into the experiences of children with additional learning needs, data retrieved were extremely limited, and analysis was not possible. This may be because physical, intellectual, and social disabilities remain stigmatized in the Kyrgyz Republic. Future research could provide more insight into the experiences of students and their families, and the ways in which inclusion can be promoted as part of remote or blended learning approaches

#### **4.4 Differentiation**

At the onset of school closures, the MOES worked with teachers, curriculum writers, and pedagogical advisors to quickly develop video content for television broadcasting and online learning. Each school was expected to use the content to support the continuity of learning in their communities. However, many teachers and school leaders interviewed reported that these resources were too generalized and had to be adapted to their school and student context. This is consistent with the experience of other countries in Asia. In an attempt to rapidly roll out the remote learning curriculum, ministries of education tended to focus on a one-size-fits-all approach with little emphasis on the individual pedagogical needs of learners.

Data from the survey and interviews indicated that educators in the Kyrgyz Republic tried to be responsive to the individual learning needs of their students. Ninety-five percent of teachers indicated that they adapted the curriculum and assessment practices for different students. This included a focus on foundational literacy and numeracy skills, reducing lesson times, incorporating psychosocial well-being and physical activities into lessons, and conducting regular phone checks to monitor student growth.

During the pandemic, teachers also received support from their school leaders and teacher trainers on how to adopt differentiated approaches during remote learning. As one teacher educator noted:

*“...the students and I have already included in our classes that if I explain some material, I will use different resources, I will use different videos, where a male voice will sound, a female voice, where different tempos will sound—faster, slower intonations, it is necessary that there is no such thing that the child understands only his teacher.”*

—(TEACHER EDUCATOR)

Some private schools are already seeing the benefit of remote learning to support different student needs, particularly for those who perform better using online or blended modalities.

*“And we are already thinking about amending the charter and, possibly, organizing online education for certain categories of children. After all, as the practice has shown, when we did the analysis, not all children were negatively affected by online learning in terms of the quality of education. As it turned out, there would be such children who, on the contrary, were more comfortable in this way.”*

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

However, there is still a lack of evidence on the extent and quality of differentiated techniques used by teachers during the pandemic. Further exploration of classroom-based practices would help identify areas for targeting teacher training and support for differentiation.

#### 4.5 Growth

A focus on student growth was reported in school-level data. Most teachers who participated in the study agreed that they were expected to assess student learning and monitor student engagement by their schools. Most teachers also reported using evidence/data to reflect on how students were performing and highlighted their collection of data to monitor student growth. However, just over half of parents agreed that their child’s school assessed their child’s learning and monitored their child’s level of engagement. This disconnect provides an opportunity for further exploration, which could encourage teachers and parents to share responsibility for student participation and achievement.

*“I think the best way is for parents, teachers, and students to work together and have feedback.”*

—(TEACHER)

While teachers reported that students had developed their learning skills through the transition to online methodologies, changes to teacher practice using remote mechanisms were also apparent. Improvements in learning activities such as creating online resources, research, independence, and time management were reported. Willingness to participate in new approaches to teaching marks an opportunity for teachers to diversify their practice and appeal to students of different interests and abilities. Personal and professional growth among educators also recognizes the opportunities provided by the pandemic.

*“When my teachers began to conduct lessons online, it was very difficult for me to teach them. I forced them to film a lesson, which was filmed and sent to the group, then the parents began to complain that there were so many mistakes in the lessons on physics, chemistry, in all subjects which were prepared, that the teachers could not speak. However, time forced my teachers and me to learn how to prepare good lessons, check each other’s mistakes, and correct and helped to each other. That time urged the teachers to show how it is possible to make a lesson properly, briefly, and clearly for their students.”*

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

*“At first, I had trouble; later, we used different methods of teaching. In the online lesson, [we used] test questions with pictures, narration, logical instructions, and problems. The students were interested.”*

—(TEACHER)

#### 4.6 Reflection

Building an education system that is resilient to future shocks and crises requires a culture of reflection that allows all members of the school community to be involved in pathways for improvement and growth. Evidence from survey and interview data provide valuable insights

from school-level actors, such as parents, teachers, and school leaders, on the challenges and promising practices for supporting student learning during the pandemic.

Parents have shown a greater understanding of the education process and become stronger advocates for their children's educational outcomes through more regular communication with teachers and monitoring of their children's learning. Eighty-six percent responded that they monitored their children's homework at least once a week, while two-thirds of parents indicated that they met with their children's teacher at least once a week to discuss their children's progress during remote learning.

Teachers and school leaders have adopted innovative practices to support student engagement and growth through the use of new assessment strategies and classroom-based data. The experiences of parents, teachers, and school leaders are critical in informing system-wide recovery and improvement from the pandemic. Similarly, successful reform efforts rely on the knowledge and involvement of parents and educators to translate policies into relevant and equitable learning experiences for children. Findings from this study provide opportunities to reflect on the challenges experienced by various groups of students and how to adapt teaching and learning practices to support student growth and well-being as systems recover and rebuild from the pandemic.

## **5 CHALLENGES TO EDUCATION RESPONSES**

This study identified two significant challenges that were prevalent across reports from school and policy leaders in the Kyrgyz Republic in adapting education systems as a result of COVID-19: (1) remote learning and (2) engaging students and families.

### **5.1 Remote Learning**

Despite a clear commitment from the Kyrgyz government to support the digitalization of education in the NES 2040, key informants cited the need for more preparedness for remote learning in existing policy and practice at both school and government levels as an overarching challenge. Resourcing challenges were prevalent, and some participants reported disparities in how initiatives were implemented at the school level due to resourcing issues, limited access to government-supported teacher training, or to meet the unique needs of their communities. While the central MOES was quick to develop digital and broadcast lessons, the one-size-fits-all approach and the lack of teacher training in the use of technology and adaptation of TV lessons caused some initial delay and confusion in the delivery of remote learning. However, teachers showed resilience and confidence in teaching remotely once they mastered the technology and online pedagogy.

Lack of resourcing was also exacerbated by teachers' skill and knowledge deficits in the remote learning space, insufficient and inequitable access to materials and technology for remote learning (especially in remote areas), and the limited ability of many parents to support remote learning at home. Many school leaders reported that teachers were required to travel to family homes to check in on the well-being of children and assist in providing resources such as medical supplies, food, and mobile devices or televisions to those in need. In some regions, reports indicate that most teachers financed the provision of resources such as smartphones or other learning materials themselves. For families who could not afford the technology, school leaders have reported advocating for additional resources, such as mobile phones and televisions, from the district Department of Education and local councils. Where these were not available or where households lacked electricity, teachers have developed paper-based learning packs and visited families regularly to support and monitor learning activities.

***“The most important thing is the help of resources from the school (telephone, Internet, study materials).”***

**—(TEACHER)**

***“For those who were not covered online, they made separate tasks, printed them out, and delivered them to their homes.”***

**—(SCHOOL LEADER)**

Interview data revealed that students attending private schools or institutions in metro areas were more likely to have access to devices and secure Internet connections than students attending public schools, and particularly those in rural and remote areas. In these areas, some teachers reported that online lessons had to be delivered at variable times, as it was common that children would need to wait to use their parent’s phone to log into the session, and generally, this device would only be available to them in the evenings. Families with multiple children of different ages also faced challenges sharing a singular device while allowing each child to attend to their required learning activities.

### **5.1.1 Access to Devices and Infrastructure**

Significant issues in access to devices for both teachers and students due to a lack of funding limited the availability of online learning for many. Further issues with access to adequate Internet connections due to inadequate infrastructure contributed to the debilitating nature of this problem. For example, most households surveyed had access to a mobile phone (94 percent), television (93 percent), and an Internet connection (84 percent). However, less than half had access to a computer, laptop, tablet, or radio. About 9 percent of families did not have access to electricity. This is consistent with the responses of school leaders whom that noted limited home resources are a significant challenge.

***“The lack of Internet in the countryside does not provide parents with modern phones.”***

**—(TEACHER)**

***“But most of the schools, especially in the remote ones, in the border areas, high mountain areas, they remained without access [to Internet connections].”***

**—(POLICYMAKER)**

Discrepancies in resource and infrastructure access were also evident across the education sector. For example, in many cases, private schools, universities, and teacher education institutions appeared to have existing information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure allowing them to be more prepared to implement remote learning initiatives. This capacity will be important to leverage for the future rollout of a blended learning approach across the country.

### **5.1.2 Data Literacy**

School leaders, teachers, students, and parents were generally inexperienced in the use of technological platforms, and training was only sometimes available. The MOES’ National In-Service Teacher Training Institute provided some guidance and training to teachers. However, this research has found that this was not accessible by all, and schools routinely relied on more experienced school leaders or expert teachers to train their colleagues where possible.

***“Even though out of 7 people in the administration, only me and my deputy knew the computer. My head teacher knew how to work in Word but did not work in Excel program. The rest did not know the program at all.”***

**—(SCHOOL LEADER)**

*“...up to this point, almost 80% of teachers did not know platforms like Google Classroom, Zoom, maybe Teams and others.”*

—(POLICYMAKER)

## 5.2 Engaging Students and Families

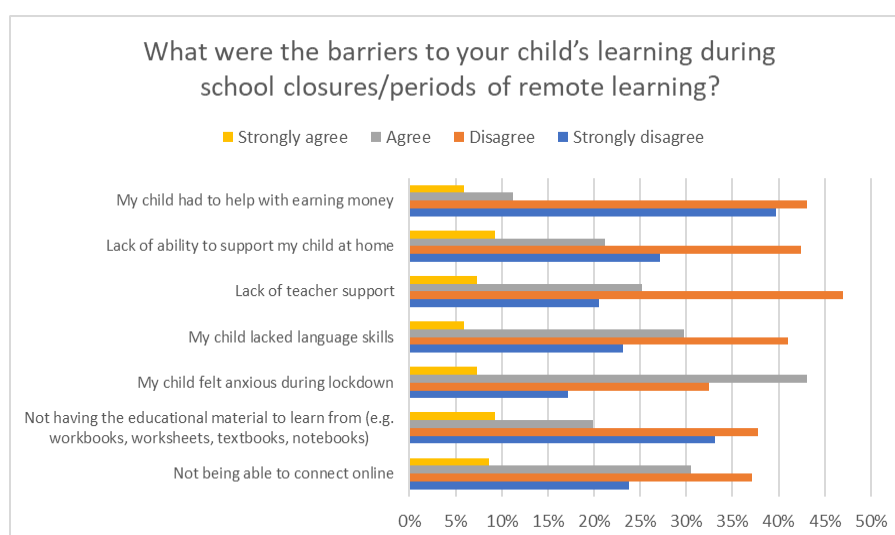
Teachers faced many challenges related to the use of technological methodologies for remote learning. In addition to challenges with the technological elements of remote learning, teachers also reported difficulties engaging students during remote learning. This was particularly due to large class sizes and additional barriers for young learners. Teachers and school leaders also expressed concerns relating to learning loss in children in the early grades.

*“But children, especially those who were in the first grade, who completed assignments with their parents and then came to school, we saw that they never learned to read. Parents do not know this technique; teachers, of course, tried to explain to them how to work with the child, sending them instructions and tasks, and someone delivered tasks, but this was not enough via WhatsApp...For elementary school, this was a big lag (they moved slowly), especially this is the second grade, they don’t know a lot in terms of mathematics, then reading, then languages, English was faced with great difficulty.”*

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

Parental interest and engagement were seen as a major challenge to the equitable participation of children in the Kyrgyz Republic, based on the perspectives of both policymakers and educators. Parental stress was also seen as a barrier to engagement and concern in relation to the provision of child safety. These findings contrast with the survey data outlined by parents, who did not report notable barriers to participation (**Figure 11**).

**Figure 11. Barriers to Children’s Remote Learning**



### 5.2.1 Mental Health and Well-Being

Although the findings presented in this report study highlight awareness of the importance of positive mental health, the well-being of students, families, and educators remains a key challenge. Previous research has highlighted the extent to which mental health services in the Kyrgyz Republic lack sufficient financing, equipment, and qualified specialists, resulting in low-quality mental health care (Pinchuk et al., 2021). Concerns around child safety during the pandemic, coupled with increased rates of child and adolescent suicide and attempted suicide,

were also reported by some policymakers who participated in this study. Concerningly, interview data suggests that parental stress, exacerbated by extended periods of remote learning, may have contributed to increased rates of violence in the home. Ensuring the health and well-being of children are supported and monitored when schools are open or closed is, therefore, a critical task for the Kyrgyz Republic.

*“A large number of parents could not manage the education of their children; many children suffered physically and mentally. There was violence against children, in the sense that the child could not master the curriculum and, therefore, the parents pressed, morally, physically....”*

—(POLICYMAKER)

## 6 RECOVERY: OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

While the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic have been extensively researched and reported, the identification of enablers that supported schools to adapt to the changes brought on by COVID-19 is equally important to note. This chapter will provide a reflection on lessons learned about what works best to support recovery and educational improvement in the Kyrgyz Republic.

### 6.1 Partnerships

This study found that many schools and education providers across the Kyrgyz Republic were well-positioned to respond to the challenges raised due to strengths in leadership, partnerships, and inclusion. Schools frequently sought out partnerships with external stakeholders, including the local government, the private sector, NGOs, and development organizations, to develop training and obtain learning resources (e.g., sim cards, tablets, computers, and televisions). Consequently, collaboration and partnerships between schools, the MOES, and the private sector appeared to be key to ensuring that adequate resources were available throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

*“Aga Khan Foundation provided teachers in the highlands with 3,000 tablets. New computers were delivered to many schools so that teachers could somehow use and conduct work. And, of course, in order for teachers and students to stay online, Megacom provided a big discount on the purchase of SIM cards. Teachers and students then moved more calmly to this platform. And thanks to their phones, and without limited Internet, they conducted classes and studied.”*

—(POLICYMAKER)

Similarly, MOES partnered with universities and other teacher training providers to support the development of upskilling programs to include remote learning teaching practices. There was also evidence that teachers formed their own peer learning networks to share teaching and learning strategies during remote learning, such as digital skills, learning materials, and content development.

The strengthened partnership between schools and parents was one of the main enablers identified in this study. While parents were resistant to remote learning at the beginning of the pandemic, this attitude shifted throughout the pandemic, where parent groups worked collaboratively with teachers and school leaders to support student learning and assist in the provision of resources to families in need. Findings also indicated that working through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic led parents to recognize the important role of teachers and the need to collaborate in their children’s learning. As parents became more invested in

their children’s learning, this facilitated a stronger link between school and home, where there was a sense of shared responsibility through building trust and mutual accountability for children’s learning and well-being. Global research indicates that many children, particularly those from poorer households, are at high risk of not returning to school after the pandemic due to their participation in economic and livelihood activities. However, strong parental engagement reflects strong values placed on education, which increases the likelihood of parents sending their children back to school and supporting them to stay in school.

***“They [teachers] were in contact with their parents all the time. Parents already knew exactly what questions, what problems to ask, you understand, such a close connection clearly makes it possible to comprehend where the child has gaps, what he needs help with; I always see this with our elementary school teachers.”***

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

***“I’d like to find ways to get along with parents and connect with them.”***

—(TEACHER)

## 6.2 Teacher Practice

The necessity to adapt to the challenges faced by education systems during the COVID-19 pandemic led to the development of strategies and practices to improve the quality and provision of education for children across the Kyrgyz Republic. Many of these adapted practices and learnings from the difficulties faced during this time have established a strong basis for a positive progression across education systems. Importantly, interview data showed that teachers were confident in adapting their practices to support student learning and well-being. It indicates a readiness of Kyrgyz teachers to adopt new practices post-pandemic. School leaders, in particular, highlighted changes to teacher practice as opportunities to leverage the learning of the pandemic.

***“...almost all of our teachers now have laptops, and they are already using these technologies in the classroom. Their lessons became interesting because, after all, students like it when the teacher not only stands and speaks with chalk on the blackboard but when shows some, well, through these platforms, they show some tasks, some slide presentations. Now, this may be a plus; teachers have mastered these technologies.”***

—(SCHOOL LEADER)

Positive examples of school autonomy are also highlighted in the study, where teachers and school leaders have demonstrated the capacity to lead and innovate the delivery of remote learning to suit the needs of their local contexts. This includes adapting pedagogical approaches, the curriculum, instructional time, and assessment of students. School autonomy is crucial to system recovery and resilience, and teachers need to be supported and have the agency to make decisions about school-level improvements, where the learning outcomes and well-being of their students are central.

While some teachers in the Kyrgyz Republic appeared ready to use blended learning approaches, others highlighted a need for additional support. Teachers expressed a desire for “*more information and methodological materials*” to participate in “*a working environment with the latest technology*” or to engage in a “*seminar on how to conduct online courses (for students, parents, teachers)*.”

Research indicates that remote modalities can enhance opportunities to learn, particularly for students with additional learning needs. However, there was still only emergent evidence of how teachers in the Kyrgyz Republic are using technology or blended approaches to support different types of students. There is, therefore, an opportunity to improve teacher training in the use of ICT and remote modalities and to ensure the new skills developed during the

pandemic continue to be used as part of ongoing teaching practice and promote educational quality for all students.

*“I want a lot of new learning techniques and digital development.”*

—(TEACHER)

*“It would be good if the necessary conditions and support were provided for the teacher.”*

—(TEACHER)

### **6.3 Flexible Learning Modalities**

The pandemic was an opportunity to speed up technological reform and improvement, including the digitization of school administrative practices and the integration of online learning resources. This, coupled with the training teachers and school staff received during the pandemic, has improved digital literacy overall and, specifically, teachers’ ability to use computer software and online platforms for administrative and learning tasks (e.g., Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, email, electronic diary, class registers). There is also an opportunity for the Kyrgyz government to draw on the experiences of higher education institutions that were the early adopters of ICT to expand teacher professional learning using online and blended approaches.

Teachers reported that gaining new digital skills and greater confidence to teach using technology allowed them to implement innovative approaches to encourage greater student engagement. As highlighted in the report, findings indicate that older teachers experienced greater difficulty utilizing devices and implementing online modalities. As such, it was frequently reported that the support of younger teachers was enlisted to improve skills in this area. This is an opportunity for improving relationships and mentoring between teachers of different skills, but also for leveraging the experiences of remote learning in order to support more equitable outcomes.

*“We are already thinking about amending the charter and, possibly, organizing online education for certain categories of children. After all, as the practice has shown...not all children were negatively affected by online learning in terms of the quality of education. As it turned out, would there be such children who, on the contrary, were more comfortable in this way.”*

—(SCHOOL LEADER)



## 7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategies for readiness, response, and recovery to support pathways to resilience are shown in **Table 1**.

**Table 1. Summary of Readiness, Response, and Recovery Strategies to Support Pathways to Resilience**

Phase	Strategies
Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education reform policies supporting education quality improvements, including teacher effectiveness</li> <li>• Cross-government coordination for disaster risk management</li> <li>• Policy supporting digitalization of the education system</li> <li>• Policies supporting marginalized populations</li> </ul>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State of emergency declared</li> <li>• School closures and implementation of remote learning</li> <li>• Development of content for online learning and broadcasting</li> <li>• Subsidized Internet and mobile access to facilitate remote learning</li> <li>• District-level resourcing to provide teachers and students with devices for learning</li> <li>• Health and well-being focus (e.g., hotlines)</li> </ul>
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapted teaching and learning strategies at the school level (e.g., adapted curriculum, instructional time, assessment)</li> <li>• Establishment of teacher peer learning networks for upskilling</li> <li>• Strengthened engagement with parents and the community</li> </ul>
Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering school-parent-community partnerships</li> <li>• Building teacher confidence in digital literacy and blended pedagogy</li> <li>• Incorporating multiple modalities into digital learning to support equity of access</li> <li>• Strengthening regulatory framework to support quality standards in education and technology (including regulating providers)</li> <li>• Leveraging the strong ICT capacity of higher education institutions to develop online and blended learning approaches</li> <li>• Prioritizing student, teacher, and parent mental health and well-being as part of the school and home environment</li> </ul>

The aim of this study is to understand the ways in which education policies and practices that support equitable learning in the Kyrgyz Republic have been implemented during the pandemic. The study found that while the Kyrgyz Republic faces numerous challenges, there are also many opportunities to consider the interpretation of policies and innovative school-level practices that have the potential to enhance the experiences of staff, families, and children in the Kyrgyz educational system.

Effective collaborations between schools and families led to improved learning opportunities for students during the pandemic. Parents developed a stronger understanding of the educational process, became further invested in their child's education outcomes, and gained

a stronger understanding of how to support their child's learning at home. Strengthened partnerships between school, home, and community build trust and shared accountability for children's learning outcomes. This also increases the perceived value of education and creates greater confidence in the education system.

International evidence suggests that parents who place a high value on education are more likely to support their children to attend school and stay in school. This is a particularly important protective factor for children from low socio-economic households, who are at greater risk of abstaining from school after the pandemic due to the pursuit of work or other economic activities. However, children in Kyrgyz families still face disparate risks in terms of psychological and physical safety. Parental investment and engagement must therefore continue to be leveraged, as cultural challenges around the value of education, especially for students who are marginalized because of language, gender, ability, and/or health, remain a barrier to participation and equitable learning in the Kyrgyz Republic. The study has highlighted positive examples of the school and home partnership, where children's learning success became a shared responsibility between the school and parents. This partnership should be reinforced and fostered post-pandemic through continued, regular communication with parents about teaching and learning strategies to support monitoring and growth. Strategies to build parental capacity to support learning at home also provide parents with an opportunity to contribute to their children's learning.

Schools reported implementing new programs and practices, particularly those that utilized remote learning mechanisms, throughout the pandemic. However, the experience of remote learning in the Kyrgyz Republic has demonstrated a gap between policy and practice. While the government negotiated with telecommunication providers for subsidized Internet connections and mobile data, this did not translate into better access for many learners due to challenges relating to the lack of devices in the home. This is consistent with findings across Asia, where the promise of technology-enabled learning seemed to exacerbate the digital divide rather than close it. To build a more resilient education system that addresses equity of access, the Kyrgyz government will need to consider a regulatory framework that ensures quality standards in delivering education technology in the future. There also needs to be a consideration for multiple modalities that cater to the needs of different learners, not a one-size-fits-all approach.

Although access to devices and data remains a challenge across schools in the Kyrgyz Republic, many teachers reported trying new modes and modalities to deliver lessons, with some teachers reporting on the ways in which these tools can foster inclusive learning. Teachers in the Kyrgyz Republic have demonstrated a resilient and adaptive approach to teaching practice during the pandemic. It is, therefore, important that support for teacher development is prioritized to take advantage of teacher confidence in digital pedagogy. Blended approaches to learning should continue to be encouraged and appropriately resourced at both school and system levels so that the digital literacy skills of educators, families, and students can continue to improve.

In terms of ongoing system improvement, data collected as part of this study indicate that high-quality practices remain inconsistent across schools in the Kyrgyz Republic. Schools with adequate resourcing were more likely to be able to support continuity of learning than schools impacted by funding challenges. Although study data emphasize that the government of the Kyrgyz Republic was responsive and made early decisions to support the continuity of learning, including the development and dissemination of learning materials in new modalities, evidence of high-quality teaching practices, particularly differentiation and reflection, was not always apparent in the majority of schools that participated in this study. However, given that most households in the Kyrgyz Republic have access to the Internet or mobile connections, there is existing potential for the expansion of the Internet and mobile technology to support differentiated learning approaches through a combination of high-tech, low-tech, and no-tech solutions.

The responsiveness and motivation of school leaders and teachers were also well-documented throughout the findings. However, there is a paucity of evidence of reflection on lessons learned during the pandemic, and any associated adjustments to programs and practices, at either the school or system level. Similarly, while educators and key informants reported the provision of differentiated learning materials for students who did or did not have access to online learning materials, evidence is still emerging on school-level practices that support differentiation in schools in the Kyrgyz Republic. Consistent processes for monitoring student growth, both formative and summative, also remain emergent. Clear leadership from researchers, pedagogical advisors, and teacher trainers is needed to better prepare educators in the Kyrgyz Republic for future disruptions. A focus on growth and improvement in online learning, assessments, and pedagogical practice is also required.

The findings of this study support several key recommendations, which are outlined in **Table 2** below for policymakers, educators, and families in the Kyrgyz Republic.

**Table 2. Recommendations for Policymakers, Educators, Parents, and Families**

Policymakers	Educators	Parents/Families
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize parental engagement</li> <li>• Enhance the digital literacy of teachers, parents, and students</li> <li>• Improve digital infrastructure to last-mile schools and regulatory standards for blended learning delivery during and post crises</li> <li>• Develop innovative and engaging learning solutions that incorporate multiple modalities rather than a one-size-fits-all approach</li> <li>• Strengthen engagement with higher education institutions with experience in education technology</li> <li>• Promote knowledge sharing among teachers through formal/informal mentoring or teacher collaboration</li> <li>• Integrate mental health and well-being as part of learning</li> <li>• Protect children from violence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to use remote modalities that support learning, incorporating a combination of high-tech, low-tech, and no-tech solutions</li> <li>• Adapt and contextualize remote learning to support different learner needs</li> <li>• Enhance capacities to deliver teaching and learning practices remotely</li> <li>• Support the implementation of policies and procedures that promote child safety</li> <li>• Participate in training on assessment and monitoring</li> <li>• Encourage parental engagement through communication and feedback loops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with your child’s teacher and ask for feedback</li> <li>• Encourage your child’s learning by showing an interest and asking questions</li> <li>• Praise your child</li> <li>• Ask questions about your children’s learning</li> <li>• Understand policies and procedures to promote child safety</li> </ul>

This study provides insights for system and school leaders to reflect on what can improve educational experiences for learners in Kyrgyz schools, thus contributing to a process of ongoing improvement and reform in the Kyrgyz Republic. If those school-level practices highlighted by this study can be embedded in purposeful policies and practices in terms of professional learning and self-reflection, there is a greater likelihood of teachers' mindsets shifting and new skills being applied and shared. Further consideration might be given to how the MOES can best position itself as a partner in reform efforts that promote family engagement, high-quality teaching, and leveraging opportunities for equitable learning.

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## ANNEX A: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

This analytical framework underpins the design and implementation of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) mapping study across six countries in the Asia region. It will be used to guide data collection, analysis, and reporting to meet the objectives of the study: (1) to fill the gap in comparative analyses on countries in developing Asia, and (2) to focus on policies and actions countries have taken to mediate and remediate learning loss and learning inequalities during COVID-19.

The framework is informed by the extensive literature on effective teaching and learning and draws from the emerging evidence base on COVID-19 impacts on education systems worldwide. The figure below depicts the different interacting levels of the education system (policy, school, agents) that impact on equitable student learning. In the context of COVID-19, the three phases—Readiness, Response, and Recovery—provide the operational context that influences how education systems plan for and manage their strategies for improvement and resilience.

This framework draws on USAID’s Reigniting Learning: Strategies for Accelerating Learning Post-Crisis<sup>2</sup> evidence review and Return to Learning during Crises<sup>3</sup> toolkit and evidence review on strategies to accelerate learning and the work of the Organisation on Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)<sup>4</sup> on promising policy responses to support greater education system resilience and responsiveness. Both share similar elements in defining a path forward that prioritizes the policies and practices to promote: (1) equity and inclusion, (2) flexibility in learning interventions and assessments, and (3) building the capacity of educators. However, this framework also seeks to broaden the ways in which we recognize system readiness and quality, by focusing on the interplay between policy, practice, and equitable learning.

By exploring possibilities and opportunities rather than deficits, this framework will guide the investigation into how the different levels of the education system operate and interact, at each phase of the COVID-19 planning and management cycle. Within each country’s context, evidence will be collected on which systematic levers and school-level practices education systems can mobilize in safeguarding equitable learning among educational agents during and after the pandemic. Examples of innovative, flexible, and responsive systems and school practices, relevant to the context will be explored and presented against the framework, creating meaningful pathways for comparative education systems to learn and adapt into the future. Lessons will be drawn from each country’s response to COVID-19 to highlight the most promising approaches to address persistent quality and equity challenges in the education system.

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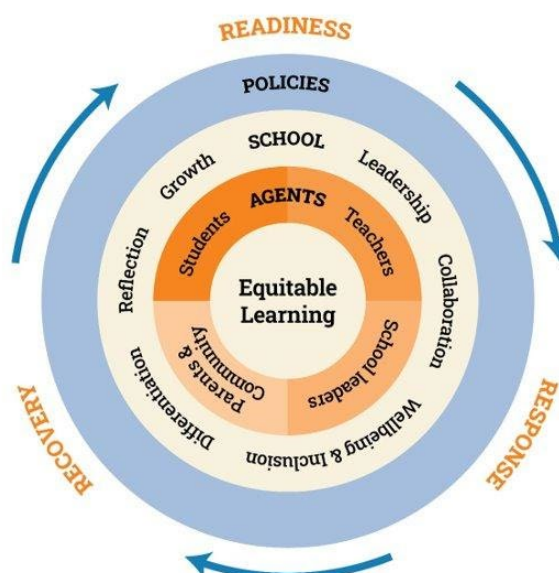
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## Analytical Framework



### Equitable Learning

Drawing upon the USAID and OECD frameworks, we place equitable learning at the center of the framework, surrounded by those practices that can improve equitable learning opportunities among students, but also parents/caregivers, teachers, and school leaders. Equity is also highlighted as an area of interest in examining indicators of readiness, response, and recovery potential in the context of the pandemic. While research into the impacts of the pandemic on student learning has not yet demonstrated broad evidence of learning loss, there is convincing evidence of learning inequity in many contexts,<sup>5</sup> including in low- to middle-income countries.<sup>6</sup>

### The COVID-19 Context

The COVID-19 crisis has caused unprecedented levels of disruption to education systems worldwide. Across the Asia region, it is estimated that around 760 million children were impacted by school closures at the height of the pandemic. Government response strategies have varied across the region, with some countries imposing prolonged school lockdowns while others have had short, repeated closure periods. As countries begin to reopen schools and continue to prepare for subsequent waves of COVID-19 infection, there is a need to develop the greater capability of education systems to (1) safeguard learning in the early response phase and (2) address persistent barriers to learning equality by harnessing the opportunities for systemic change.

The Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards for Education<sup>7</sup> provides a useful framework for understanding how systems can better respond to emergencies and how they can improve preparedness to build a more resilient education system. The Preparedness phase involves having plans and processes that document what should happen during and after an emergency, such as national disaster response plans. The

<sup>5</sup> Dorn, E., Hancock, B., Sarakatsannis, J., & Viruleg, H. (2020). *COVID-19 and Student Learning in the United States: The Hurt Could Last a Lifetime*. McKinsey and Co.

<sup>6</sup> Reimers, F.M. (Ed) (2022). *Primary and Secondary Education During COVID-19: Disruptions to Educational Opportunities During a Pandemic*. Springer. Available online <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2F978-3-030-81500-4.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). (2012). *Minimum standards for education: Preparedness, response, recovery*. Available online <https://inee.org/resources/inee-minimum-standards>

Response phase refers to policies, plans, and actions to manage priority areas, such as the closing of schools. The Recovery phase focuses on returning students to pre-emergency learning. The three phases are represented in a cycle to reflect an iterative process, where data-driven monitoring and evaluation processes facilitate systems readiness and improvement. In our framework, we have adapted the INEE standards to consider **Readiness, Response, and Recovery** not only in the context of emergencies but in relation to system resilience during and beyond the pandemic.

## Policies

This framework assumes that resilient education systems rely on the interaction between policies and institutions with classroom-level practices and the ability of agents to mobilize them. Successful policy implementation requires skilled teachers and effective school leaders to connect classroom practices with the broader education reform agenda.<sup>8</sup> Well-designed policies, supported by political commitment and strong institutional structures, including capacity and resourcing, have the best chance of success.

The OECD (2020)<sup>9</sup> proposes three key policy priorities to take education forward beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. It challenges systems to take a transformational view of education that values people and processes over classrooms and devices. This links to the second policy priority, which calls for investments in teachers through carefully designed professional development that builds resilience and responsiveness to the new learning environment and considers new learning approaches that meet the learning needs of all children. The third priority area focuses on equity and inclusion in learning that combine policies that support effective learning interventions with student engagement and well-being.

In the context of COVID-19, education systems must understand the policy levers and school-level inputs that are necessary for safeguarding learning to pre-pandemic trajectories. For example:

- Policies support schools and teachers to develop emergency distance learning materials and activities accessible to all children, particularly the most marginalized.
- Government health authorities decide when schools reopen, and all educational authorities adhere to the Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools.
- Education planners develop and adapt instructional times, curricula, and learning resources and tools, as well as modify examinations and promotion procedures to make them feasible.

## School-Level Practices

There is no doubt that quality inputs at the school level have the potential to influence student outcomes positively.<sup>10</sup> The quality of those inputs, and the potential they bring for student learning and well-being, depends on what students, teachers, school leaders, and parents do and how they interpret and enact broader policies that guide classroom practice and student learning. When we consider the school-level practices that have the potential to promote a resilient approach to change and support equitable outcomes for all, it is helpful to conceptualize the school as a community made up of four key stakeholder groups that come together to support learning and well-being. They are the students, the teachers, the school leaders, the parents, and the community. We refer to these different stakeholder groups as “Agents” in recognition of the active role they can play in identifying needs within the school community and responding to those needs, particularly during a time of change or disruption.

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<sup>8</sup> Schleicher, A. (2018). *What makes high-performing school systems different. World Class: How to Build a 21st-Century School System*. Paris: OECD Publishing.

<sup>9</sup> Organization for Economic Cooperation Development (OECD). (2020), OECD Economic Outlook, Volume 2020 Issue 2, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/39a88ab1-en>.

<sup>10</sup> Hattie, J. (2003). *Teachers Make a Difference, What is the research evidence?* University of Auckland.

School-level factors that have the potential to influence student outcomes positively include the following.

- **Leadership:** Leadership that focuses on improving student learning, supporting ongoing teacher professional learning and collaboration, engaging all members of the school community, and promoting the well-being and growth of the school community. In the context of this framework, we acknowledge that leadership can occur at various levels, including at policy, school, or classroom levels. In this current study, we are interested in how leadership at the school level contributes to resilience in the face of challenges and supports equitable outcomes. This leadership may come from school leaders themselves, but also collaborative leadership involving teachers, families, and the local community.
- **Collaboration:** Quality collaboration between school and families to support learning and well-being, the professional collaboration between teachers that is focused on improving learning and the impact on student outcomes,<sup>11</sup> and the collaboration between students and teachers (e.g., formative assessment<sup>12</sup>) to improve student engagement, motivation, and learning.<sup>13</sup>
- **Reflection:** A culture of reflection that looks for pathways to improvement and growth, uses evidence to evaluate impact, and identifies areas for improvement, involves all members of the school community in the process of reflection. Feedback is also an integral part of the reflective process<sup>14</sup> allowing agents across various levels of the school to develop a sense of agency.
- **Differentiation:** Multiple pathways for learning, flexible options for engaging in learning, responsiveness to individual needs, using evidence to inform decision-making and planning, teacher autonomy to adjust and respond to the needs of their students and the context for teaching and learning, support for teachers to enable a differentiated approach (training, resources, mentoring).<sup>15</sup>
- **Well-Being and Inclusion:** An emphasis on promoting well-being as a valued outcome of school, structures, processes, and programs that support the well-being of all members of the school community (students, teachers, school leaders, and families) can support student engagement and learning.<sup>16</sup> Inclusion should also be considered a key condition for well-being<sup>17</sup>
- **Growth:** An emphasis on making progress, change and improvement, and other structures and processes that support teachers, students, and families to contribute to improvement within their school community.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Donohoo, J. (2018). Collective teacher efficacy research: Productive patterns of behaviour and other positive consequences. *Journal of Educational Change*, 19(3), 323-345.

<sup>12</sup> William\*, D., Lee, C., Harrison, C., & Black, P. (2004). Teachers developing assessment for learning: Impact on student achievement. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 11(1), 49-65.

<sup>13</sup> Timperley, H., Ell, F., & Le Fevre, D. (2017). Developing adaptive expertise through professional learning communities. In *Teachers Leading Educational Reform* (pp. 175-189). Routledge.

<sup>14</sup> Hattie, J., & Clarke, S. (2019). *Visible learning: Feedback*. Routledge.

<sup>15</sup> Tomlinson, C. A., Murphy, M. (2016). *Leading for differentiation: Growing teachers who grow kids*. Hawker Brownlow Education.

<sup>16</sup> Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68.

<sup>17</sup> Goldan, J., Hoffmann, L., Schwab, S. (2021). A matter of resources? – students' academic self-concept, social inclusion and school well-being in inclusive education. *Resourcing Inclusive Education*, 89–100. <https://doi.org/10.1108/s1479-363620210000015008>.

<sup>18</sup> Griffin, P. E. (2017). *Assessment for teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

While the system and school structures are crucial components of educational quality, understanding what happens in a school setting can offer meaningful insights into overcoming barriers to educational quality. Exploring which school-based practices and responses have been effective in supporting the continuity of learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has yet to be well examined, particularly in Asia.

In the context of this framework, the above school-level practices are intentionally broad and reflect the established body of research on the importance of in-school practices on student learning. This is a point of difference to many existing frameworks that assess school improvement or education quality, which often base quality on access to resources, infrastructure, school management systems, standards-based curricula, and summative assessment.

# ANNEX B: FULL DESK REVIEW

## Introduction

The Kyrgyz Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) swiftly responded to the Kyrgyz Republic's national quarantine and lockdown measures by closing all schools in the country on March 16, 2020.<sup>19</sup> The schools stopped operating before instructions transitioned into distance learning on April 8, 2020. The entire last quarter of the 2019–2020 academic year (April–May 2020) was completed through remote learning platforms for all grades, aside from in boarding schools and other residential institutions, as well as remote schools in areas where the state of emergency was not declared (MOES, 2020).

A Disaster Response Coordination Unit (DRCU) for the Kyrgyz Republic was activated on March 16, 2020, upon the government's request for assistance in emergency preparedness and response to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and in preparation for early recovery. The unit focuses on six priority sectors, including education, and comprises representatives of the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the Secretariat of National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations agencies, international and local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the donor community.

The pandemic has also led to renewed efforts to increase access to education, particularly in times of crisis and disruption. This review examines the Kyrgyz Republic's education policies and practices before and after COVID-19 to understand the readiness of the system to respond to the crisis. It relies on documents available in English and acknowledges that there may be more information available in other languages. Understanding where the education system was at the onset of the pandemic provides essential context for understanding the country's readiness to respond to the needs of students, parents and communities, teachers, and schools, because of COVID-19. It also allows reflection on the policies and practices that can support the readiness, response, and recovery of the education system in the Kyrgyz Republic.

## Readiness

### *The Education System of the Kyrgyz Republic*

Politically, the Kyrgyz Republic is a relatively young country. After the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1991, the Kyrgyz Republic became independent. Triggered by poverty and corruption, revolutions removed the first two post-Soviet presidents from power in 2005 and 2010. Since the 2010 revolution, the country decided to establish a new Constitution that assumed a parliamentary form of government. In that same year, an ethnic conflict occurred in the southern part of the country (UNICEF, 2011). Within this situation, the country has been making efforts to improve its education system and achieve global development goals.

Current education policies in the Kyrgyz Republic are mainly based on the Education Development Strategy 2012–2020 (EDS 2020) and the National Development Strategy 2018–2040 (NDS 2040). The NDS 2040 came into development after the Kyrgyz Republic adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and assessed its Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators in 2018. The NDS 2040 outlines the action plan to achieve the SDGs, including the education goals. The state coverage ensuring access to pre-primary education and the provision of relevant curricula and skills started in EDS 2020, and the plan was laid further in the NDS 2040. The approach centers on human development, including improving education as a mechanism to fulfill each citizen's true potential. The strategy in the education

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<sup>19</sup> [https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/ENG\\_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact\\_June%202020\\_final.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/ENG_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact_June%202020_final.pdf)

sector includes taking more regulating functions, expanding support to preschool services, and ensuring education is more relevant to the labor market. This strategy is complemented by other initiatives, such as providing more opportunities to rural and remote students in higher education through the National Scholarship Test (NST).

The NDS 2040 promises an education system that will equip people with relevant skills in the labor market, encourage lifelong learning, and ensure equal education opportunities (UNICEF, 2020a; European Training Foundation [ETF], 2021). The NDS 2040 also introduced the shift of the state's role in the education sector; from the dominant service provider to a more regulating role that produces policies and standards. Access to and full coverage of preschool and school education will be guaranteed by the state (UNICEF, 2020a). To improve graduates' employability, the Kyrgyz Republic would improve vocational training quality in line with market demands, including with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). In September 2020, the country adopted a nine-level national qualifications framework (NQF) and is now developing the national qualification system (NQS). Some qualifications can be awarded through the validation of non-formal and informal learning, in line with the NDS 2040 (ETF, 2021).

The education system is considered a priority in state funding, while the NDS 2040 emphasizes the efficient use of allocated funds. In 2018, the share of all public spending on basic services, such as education, increased from 48 percent in 2014 to 49 percent in 2018, with the education sector as the largest share allocated (21.2 percent of total state budgetary expenditure) (UNICEF, 2020a, p. 26). Efficiency in the education sector is assessed based on regular assessments of student educational achievements carried out by independent national and international entities. Previously managed by the Ministry of Finance, the education budget is now managed by MOES, and the budgetary responsibilities have been decentralized.

### ***Initiatives for Improving Education***

The right to education is guaranteed in the Constitution of Kyrgyzstan, and aside from establishing that basic general education is mandatory, it also guarantees free primary and secondary general education in public educational institutions. Compulsory education only consists of primary (Grades 1 to 4) and lower secondary education (Grades 5 to 9) (Chlkova & Usenova, 2008, as cited in UNICEF, 2012). Recent educational reforms are documented in the EDS 2020 and the NDS 2040, with the expansion of service coverage to pre-primary education and emphasizing merit-based education that provides relevant skills in the labor market. However, the monitoring of the SDGs in the Kyrgyz Republic (2020) found that more than 265 million children did not go to school, including 22 percent of children of primary school age. Of those who attend school, less than 60 percent of children of 7 to 14 years of age were able to finish tasks on basic reading skills and basic numeracy skills. The 2020 Human Capital Index also calculated a learning gap of 4.2 years; meaning that when children finish their education of 12.6 years, they would have only achieved 8.4 years of education after accounting for education quality (World Bank, 2021).

A national project called "Schools of the Future" was designed to establish model experimental schools in each region. The project aims to formulate standards of new generation schools with new innovative approaches to child development (NDS, 2018). The Mid-term Strategy in 2018–2040 NDS also states that the state will encourage the revision of higher education content to be more relevant to the current market needs and in line with the national development goals. As part of improving higher education quality, the government planned the program "3-200-2040," meaning that by 2040, three leading national universities will be among 200 leading universities in the world, according to global rankings such as the Times Higher Education.

One of the long-term goals of the NDS 2040 is to form an open digital society in the Kyrgyz Republic. It hopes to see digital services incorporated into the social sector, such as education, and as part of promoting inclusiveness for people with disabilities. In order to foster the

inclusion and advancement of information technology (IT) in the education sector, the Kyrgyz government plans to offer free basic IT education for everyone by adding Internet connections for 140 secondary schools annually, estimating that more than 500,000 school children would have Internet access by 2023. This is an important activity, as access to devices and data remains disparate in the Kyrgyz Republic, despite investment from donors during the pandemic. A partnership with the private sector is envisaged to procure the necessary infrastructure. On top of the infrastructure development, the government also planned to include standards on educational technology in the national learning standards.

### ***Assessment Programs and Practices***

The NDS 2040 states that independent and international entities' regular assessments of student educational achievements will be used to assess the education sector's efficiency. Assessments are also used to certify students for a state-accredited school diploma by examining students in writing, mathematics, history, and a foreign language. After completing the nine-year compulsory education, students can either continue to upper secondary education or attain a certificate of completion, which does not ensure admission to higher education. On the other hand, the NST is a national test conducted in Kyrgyz and Russian that measures numeracy, reading comprehension, analogies, sentence completion, and practical grammar (Center for Educational Assessment and Teaching Materials, 2017, as cited in Shamatov & Barhy, 2020). The assessment, which was introduced in 2004, aimed to provide more access to higher education for secondary education students in rural and remote areas (Egéa, 2020).

The Kyrgyz Republic participates in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (2006 and 2009), Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA), Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), in piloting the Early Development Instrument (EDI), and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), as well as regular the National Sample-Based Assessment (NSBA) (World Bank, 2019). However, compared to students from other countries participating in international assessments such as PISA, Kyrgyz students scored relatively low. The NSBA 2014 showed that 60 percent of Grade 4 students had difficulty comprehending age-appropriate text. The country ranked last on the 2009 PISA and showed that 82 percent of 15-year-old students were functionally illiterate (World Bank, 2021). It also showed a performance gap—approximately by at least two years of schooling—between the urban and rural students (Shamatov & Barhy, 2020). These results may have been caused by a poor curriculum, lack of quality learning materials, low teacher quality, or ineffective teaching practice and teacher management (Hou, 2011). Another source (Kasymova, 2016) supported the findings by stating that the poor results were due to insufficient teachers, school facilities, and textbooks.

The PISA results drove the need to monitor and support classroom practice actively. Supported by the Russian Education Aid for Development (READ) Trust Fund, the Kyrgyz Government established a new national assessment strategy in which formative, summative, and system-level assessments work together to improve the quality of education. It includes strengthening institutional capacity to measure and analyze learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning and reform high-stake examinations.

### ***Improving Teaching Quality***

The NDS 2040 notes the importance of forming social partnerships at all levels of education, including practical training for teachers and academic teaching staff. It also recognizes the importance of creating an enabling environment to support the development of teaching methods, teacher training, and development of educational materials. To date, government efforts include revising performance incentives for teachers and stipulating in-service training. Recently, the government also attempted to elaborate on teacher professional standards to be used as the base of evaluation for performance incentives. The regulations stipulate a 72-hour of in-service training every five years for teachers, although only about up to 20 percent

of eligible teachers are annually covered by the government budget. There was a considerable lack of capacity to train many teachers, and there was some reluctance from local authorities to pay teachers' travel expenses and per diems (World Bank, 2021). The in-service training is usually delivered over a number of days at the In-Service Institute for Teacher Training (IITT) at the national or local level.

The national IITT has begun exploring the design and delivery of blended learning courses (World Bank, 2019). The Okuu Keremet! The initiative, funded by USAID, aims to enhance reading and arithmetic instruction for young elementary school students. Over 17,500 primary-grade teachers and librarians received training over the course of a year. The instruction was built on unique training modules created for the project; 14,742 instructors who successfully finished all five courses in January 2022 were eligible for government certification. The training materials are built using the online and offline usable Moodle learning management system. To enhance the quality of reading instructions, USAID financed the creation of two user-friendly apps.

The new direction of the national assessment system (2009–2019) clarified the mandates of the IITT and teacher training institutions in the learning assessment system. The Kyrgyz Academy of Education developed and conducted training on classroom assessment, and the training materials have now been incorporated into pre-service and in-service teacher training. The new guidelines for teachers are also provided to support teachers to provide monitoring classroom learning (World Bank, n.d.).

### ***Policies for Inclusion and Equity***

The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic in 2010 and the Law on Education in 2003 guarantee citizens' rights to education. The country also subscribes to the Call for Action (2013) to end the exclusion of children from education (UNICEF, 2015). In 2012, the government developed an education curriculum for children who were out of school or dropped out before secondary education and wanted to return. It was also revealed that street children and child laborers are the most vulnerable to exclusion from school; therefore, the government is making advancements in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor (U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs, n.d.).

Aside from out-of-school children, children living in areas with experiences or risks of conflict and/or disasters are also considered vulnerable groups. Because of the ethnic conflict in the southern part of the country, the Ministry of Health had identified post-traumatic stress disorder in children and that mental health and psychosocial support was required (UNICEF, 2011), and in 2011, the country established the Department of Ethnic, Religious Policy and Interaction with Civil Society, which develops the policy on interethnic relations. However, ethnic minorities were still marginalized, as an Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE's) report in 2019 showed.<sup>20</sup> It was reported that the school's instruction in the Uzbek language has declined since 2010 as it transitioned into instruction in the Kyrgyz language. Authorities explained that this transition was necessary to ensure the Uzbek community's integration into the country's general life.

The NDS 2040 states that "full and equal participation of women in management at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life is guaranteed" and that programs promoting gender equality will be strengthened. The NDS also declared that the state would end the practices of forced and early marriage and family violence and create fair opportunities to work for women and men. However, there was still a gender gap in employment rates. The employment rate for women was less than 50 percent (41.8 percent), whereas the overall employment rate was 55.9 percent (NTF, 2021). Moreover, girls and women with children at

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<sup>20</sup> OSCE Commitment Review Meeting on Human Dimension: Session 12 "Tolerance and non-discrimination" – Rights of ethnic minorities in Kyrgyzstan



an early age did not have many opportunities in the socioeconomic sector, especially as young mothers may be less likely to continue their education or stay at school (UNICEF, 2020a).

The state has guaranteed the rights to education for children with disabilities, and the supporting policies have been included in the Code of the Kyrgyz Republic “On Children” in 2012, EDS 2012–2020, and the NDS 2018–2040 (UNICEF, 2021; GEM, 2021). In cooperation with USAID and UNICEF, Kyrgyzstan developed the “Concept for Introduction of Inclusive Education” in 2018,<sup>21</sup> which later became the “Concept and Program of Inclusive Education 2019–2023” in 2019 (GEM Report, 2021). The current early childhood educational standards on preschool education and child care in 2020 are an example of the extension of government support to the preschool level.

However, in practice, special education is still considered separate from mainstream education (UNICEF, 2021b). The creation of special groups, classes, or rehabilitation centers was stipulated in the country's 2012 Code "On Children" as a guarantee of the right to education of a child with disabilities who is unable to receive education in educational establishments under general conditions, and students with disabilities were subject to quotas in higher education. Until the time of the United Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF's) report, education for children with disabilities was still considered separate.

A disability registration form determines access to education for children with disabilities. Children wanting to access special education according to their disability type must have a disability registration card, although having one does not guarantee enrollment. Children without the card would have to enroll in mainstream education, which does not guarantee the provision of inclusive education. Despite having the “2019 Concept and Program of Inclusive Education,” the current regulation and policy have not included a definition of inclusive education and how to provide alternative communication modes. They also do not require the promotion of these alternative modes by teachers. Moreover, the recent law has not considered employability, vocational rehabilitation, and active job placements for young persons with disabilities (UNICEF, 2021b).

The NDS 2040 also mentioned the development of multilingual learning and educational environment at all levels, with Kyrgyz, Russian, and English as the main languages. Currently, multilingual education programs are implemented in most areas of the Kyrgyz Republic. The program aims to improve proficiency in a second language through content and language-integrated learning and improve mother tongue-based education at schools using minority languages. Textbooks have been published in Kyrgyz and Russian and translated into Uzbek and Tajik. Schools using Uzbek and Tajik as languages of instruction also use textbooks from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, adapted to the Kyrgyz Republic standards and school programs (GEM Report, 2021).

### ***Students' and Teachers' Mental Health***

The country has a mental health policy, plan, and legislation, and, in 2008, it allocated 4 percent of the health care budget to mental health (WHO & MoH, 2008). Citizens with mental health disorders can receive free treatment and care in psychiatric hospitals, as well as access to medicines. Although there were no staff units of psychiatrists in the Ministry of Health (MoH), there were specialists (i.e., psychiatrists, child-psychiatrist, and speech and language therapists) appointed who worked part-time, with coordinators being responsible for each region. Out of 74 outpatient departments in psychiatric aid, only 18 percent were exclusively for children and adolescents (WHO & MoH, 2008).

Mental health services in the Kyrgyz Republic lack sufficient financing, equipment, and qualified specialists, resulting in low-quality mental health care (Pinchuk et al., 2021). Adolescent suicide and attempted suicide reached 1,080 cases from 2008 to 2018, which became a critical issue for youth and adolescents' mental health. Several regulations have

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<sup>21</sup> Improving education opportunities to children with disabilities in the Kyrgyz Republic

been put in place, including Law No. 185, “On measures to prevent harm to children’s health, their physical, intellectual, mental, spiritual and moral development in the Kyrgyz Republic.” The law includes measures to prevent child suicide. In 2018, the country also adopted the Program for the Protection of the Population’s Mental Health for 2018–2030. The program focuses on access to psychosocial services at the local level (UNICEF, 2020d).

### ***Emergency and Crisis Management***

Kyrgyzstan is considered vulnerable to climate change, extreme precipitation, landslides, and mudslides across the country (World Bank, 2021). Aside from education quality improvement and expansion of school enrollment, the 2018–2040 NDS also aimed to produce citizens who strive for a healthy lifestyle, which includes environmental education being promoted in the curriculum beginning in pre-primary education. Working with UNESCO, MOES has been trying to mainstream the concept of education for sustainable development into the school curriculum. The topics covered in education for sustainable development include health and well-being, environmental awareness, gender equality, and ICT literacy (UNESCO, 2019). The climate change content will also be included in environmental education in secondary schools, both in student curriculum and teacher training (World Bank, 2019).

A DRCU Team was set up in 2008 to improve communication and cooperation between the government of the Kyrgyz Republic, the United Nations country team, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and other important parties in order to provide an adequate and successful humanitarian response to emergencies. The environment, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction (DRR) components are mentioned in the NDS 2040, in which the government promises to enable a safe environment. Specific activities that are mentioned include reducing risks of radioactive contamination and land degradation in adjacent areas, rehabilitating tailings sites of the former uranium production facilities, and carrying out active work on attracting international assistance.

In 2011, a manual for emergency situations was developed for teachers and personnel in pre-primary education to teach pre-primary children about safe behavior. The guidebook was developed as part of the “Support to Disaster Risk Reduction Activities in Vulnerable Communities and Educational Institutions in Central Asia,” with the financial support of the European Commission and technical support from UNICEF.<sup>22</sup> In 2017, the UNICEF DRR Program also developed a manual in DRR for public school management. The guide is prepared for the school principals and teachers, as well as relevant staff in the MOES, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, and DRR specialists and experts.<sup>23</sup> Both guidebooks and manuals are available in Russian and Kyrgyz.

However, a UNICEF report (2013), funded by USAID, found that many of the Kyrgyz Republic’s preschools (89 percent) and schools (81 percent) were structurally unsafe due to aging buildings and structures and lack of financial support, exacerbated by natural disasters. The Kyrgyz Republic is a country of high seismic activity, and within the span between June 2009 to September 2010 alone, there were 2,398 earthquakes with a magnitude of 6 or more. Aside from the structural measures, other measures were needed to ensure the safety of schools and preschools. The government then drafted the “Repair and Reconstruction of School and Preschool Education Organizations 2014–2020,” which laid out a plan to provide funding for structural improvements. However, in 2022, the state budget was not able to fund even the minimum needs. Out of 2,296 schools, 245 public schools were in major disrepair (i.e., requiring demolition and new constructions), and 457 public schools required a major overhaul of the roof, foundation, walls, water supply, and sewage.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Manual for Teachers: Safety of pre-schoolchildren under the emergency situations

<sup>23</sup> Manual: Disaster Risk Reduction for Public Schools

<sup>24</sup> School education in Kyrgyzstan: main problems and solutions (in Russian)

## Response

According to a report by UNICEF in 2021, the number of households affected by COVID-19 was approximately 75.6 percent of the total households, and among those households, 28.6 percent had at least one person in the household who contracted COVID-19 or died. There were 21.2 percent of households in which at least one person needed health care and was affected by COVID-19 but did not receive it. Migration also ceased. The flow of remittance from migrants to their families, one of the main contributors to the gross national income, was negatively impacted. Among the households impacted by COVID-19, 50.7 percent experienced a decline in income, and this downturn in the economy also constrained the government budget and tax revenue (World Bank, 2021). Inflation rates increased in relation to the prices of basic consumer goods, especially food (which were almost 9 percent and 16 percent per annum in April 2020), according to the 2021 DRCU annual report. The number of households where children aged 5 to 17 did not attend school due to an outbreak was more than 95 percent (UNICEF, 2021). However, there were high attendance rates in primary and lower secondary schools, as well as one-year pre-primary education during the pandemic (UNICEF, 2021a; World Bank, 2021).

## Teaching and Learning During a Pandemic

Within a relatively short period of time, the Kyrgyz Republic managed to ensure access to remote learning for all levels. In March 2020, MOES approved the Anti-Crisis Plan for the Education Sector as the last quarter of the academic year of 2019–2020 went on. From the beginning of the pandemic and the school lockdown in mid-March 2020, the MOES and its agencies carried out preparatory work for the transition of schools to distance learning during the spring break, and remote learning tools were launched on April 8, 2020. Distance education started afterward, and children could freely access remote learning through online platforms, three national TV channels, and two mobile network applications (UNICEF, 2020c).<sup>25</sup> Students did not only watch a TV lesson but also received homework on the TV lesson assigned by teachers and were given further explanations from teachers. The lesson lasted 20 minutes, and the content was limited to broadcasting a snippet of the main materials on each topic. Due to time constraints, the pace of explaining a new topic was so rapid that the students on the other side of the screen did not have time to take notes (Kasymova, 2020). Monitoring student engagement in distance learning was still difficult, especially when lectures were broadcast on television. Teachers needed extensive support in the early months of remote learning because they were not entirely prepared to switch from in-class to online instruction (DRCU, 2021).

During the pandemic, more than 82 percent of children were enrolled in distance learning, mainly by using a mobile phone or tablet (98.9 percent) and watching video lessons on national TVs (51.5 percent) (UNICEF, 2021a). However, a significant portion of parents (78 percent) were surveyed and discontented with the online learning process, stating, as the main reason, that their children did not understand the lesson well (95.7 percent of dissatisfied parents). Parents also claimed other reasons, including poor Internet quality (48.5 percent), missing TV lessons (47.3 percent), insufficient equipment (36.8 percent), payment difficulties for mobiles (27.3 percent), and the quality of lessons (25.6 percent). These findings from the 2021 UNICEF survey were supported by the study conducted by Imanbekova (2020), in which 338 teachers and 1324 students reported that the main difficulties that students and teachers faced were no Internet or weak Internet connection, no appropriate devices, and teacher difficulties in getting responses from students (Imanbekova, 2020).

Teachers send feedback to students using the Internet and mobile applications that are free of charge. WhatsApp and Zoom were the most popular applications for learning (Imanbekova, 2020). UNICEF supported the development of remote learning methodology and video lessons for preschool and school-age children. The videos, which are broadcasted on national

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<sup>25</sup> Unequal access to remote schooling amid COVID-19 threatens to deepen global learning crisis

TV channels and stored on the Ministry's online portal, are in Russian and Kyrgyz languages, supplemented by Uzbek and Tajik subtitles as well as sign language translation (UNICEF, 2020a). In higher education, universities employed their own online learning management system, Moodle platforms, and corporate education portals (e.g., AVN, Google Classroom, Google Meet), while vocational education institutions used the integrated portal (MOES, 2020).

Teachers were supported with guidelines on how to use tools such as Zoom, Google Classroom, Google Drive, WhatsApp, and Telegram. Recommendations were given on how to arrange remote learning, and teachers were given the opportunity to attend webinars on the use of remote learning resources and how to address learning issues (MOES, 2020).

### **Resource Sharing**

Aside from video lessons, the MOES online portal "Educational Resources of Kyrgyzstan" ([oku.edu.gov.kg](http://oku.edu.gov.kg)) also stores other educational materials such as electronic textbooks, additional literature, tasks, video lessons, and educational games (UNICEF, 2020c). The government also provided access to open foreign educational resources, including Khan Academy. There are free online tests to help students prepare for the national test, as well as to assess Grade 4–11 students' performance with additional diagnostic tests in 13 subjects (MOES, 2020). Currently, almost all teachers would claim that they know and use the materials of digital resources, including [oku.edu.gov.kg](http://oku.edu.gov.kg). However, there are no systemic quantitative data or statistics on how it happens in reality.

### **Mental Health Support**

Before the pandemic, adolescents had been facing major stress at home due to unstable family dynamics. Restrictions imposed during the pandemic and the transition into remote learning exacerbated existing conflicts within households (Zhanybek, 2021). During the pandemic, UNICEF (2020b) recorded that more than 60 percent of adolescents reported having high levels of anxiety. Therefore, UNICEF targeted 250,000 children and caregivers in the Kyrgyz Republic to access mental health and psychosocial support by 2021. The government tried to address the issue during the pandemic. The MOES opened a hotline for counseling and other psychological support for students and assigned teams of teachers and specialists to counsel children and parents from vulnerable families. These teams stayed in contact with the families by phone to provide support. An ICT support hub for teachers was also established (MOES, 2020). The most frequent emotions of students that teachers observed were feelings of anxiety, sadness, indifference, and anger (Imanbekova, 2020).

### **Recovery**

The academic year of 2020–2021 began on September 15, 2020, 2 weeks after the normal calendar year, to ensure teachers and school personnel had received vaccinations before starting the academic year (World Bank, 2021). The first quarter of the academic year was mostly conducted in a remote learning format, except in regions where it was possible to organize offline classes without risks to students and teachers, based on the recommendations from District Sanitarian Epidemiological Surveillance, which is under the MoH. By mid-December 2020, 89 percent of schools had re-opened for students (UNICEF, 2021).

There was usually no mandatory assessment at the beginning of a new academic year. However, teachers started the academic year by conducting a formative assessment of students' knowledge, taking into account the methodological recommendations of the MOES. Many school leaders and teachers talked about the need to adjust the curriculum and teaching and learning methods after the pandemic. However, at the time of writing, there was no evidence found on how adjustments to the curriculum and remediations for students had been made. In 2021, the MOES and the MoH, supported by UNICEF, conducted rapid assessments

of water, sanitation, hygiene and infection, prevention, and control in schools and healthcare facilities. The assessments conducted in 1,862 out of 2,283 schools and preschools found that most schools had at least access to water and handwashing equipment, but 40.8 percent of surveyed schools had no sanitizers (UNICEF, 2021).

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

As the pandemic hit two years after the recent educational reforms (NDS 2040) were established, the Kyrgyz Republic is not only faced with the challenge of carrying out reforms but also carrying them out during difficult times. There were a few achievements that the government has managed to attain. The government has managed to keep enrollment in pre-primary and basic compulsory education high. The review has also shown that the government's swift response may contribute to the continuation of learning during the pandemic by mobilizing teachers to provide learning materials through video lessons.

However, according to the World Bank's 2020 Human Capital Index, children in the Kyrgyz Republic were estimated only to reach 60 percent of their full potential as an adult even before the pandemic. Children in the Kyrgyz Republic will have even more obstacles to surmount due to the learning gaps over the last year. As examples in other countries, the learning gaps will be challenging to overcome as another estimate from the World Bank indicated that learning would drop by as much as 10 PISA points in schools closed for six months. The share of students performing below functional literacy was estimated to increase up to 97 percent in schools closed for an entire year.

There are also opportunities to explore how the education system in the Kyrgyz Republic can be further strengthened. Vocational education requiring practical training had difficulties conducting this kind of training in business as strict lockdowns were in place, while remote learning materials were more available and perhaps relevant to general education students (ETF, 2021). Assessment results, such as the NST and PISA, have shown performance gaps between the urban and rural areas, location of schools, and medium of instruction. Investment may be needed in improving the skills of teachers, building modern educational institutions, and improving the water supply and electrification of schools in these schools (UNICEF, 2020c). The provision of inclusive education for children with disabilities was already a challenge even before the pandemic (UNICEF, 2021), and there is little evidence found on remote learning practices in existing education institutions for children with disabilities.

Considering that the pandemic is already in its second year, there had been little evidence of practices at the household or school level that support students' learning remotely, particularly those in remote areas and children with disabilities. It might be because offline learning started again in September 2020, only around six months after the mass school closures. Moreover, even if schools were closed on April 2021 until January 2022 due to the pandemic, there were no mass school closures, and offline learning had presumably continued, although with disruptions. It was also unclear if and how teachers were trained to support children with disabilities during the pandemic. Moreover, although there was evidence of mental health support for students and their families in place, the review has not found evidence of the impact of such support and no evidence that there is any mental health support for teachers. Aside from in-service teacher training, there was no literature, at least in English, describing how pre-service teacher education has been carried out after the NDS was established and if there is a policy to support teachers in adapting to crises. Moreover, as the enrollment rate for upper secondary education decreases, the review has not found any information on what caused it and how to retain the current students or reach out to dropouts and help them finish their education.

# ANNEX C: INSTRUMENTS

## C.1 Survey Protocols

### *School Leader (Russian Language)*

Вопросник для руководителя школы

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Реагирование образовательных систем стран Азии на пандемию COVID-19  
ОБЩАЯ ИНФОРМАЦИЯ

Вы отобраны для участия в данном исследовании о воздействии COVID-19 на обучение под названием “Реагирование образовательных систем стран Азии на пандемию COVID-19”, которое проводится в различных странах Азии. Исследование проводится Министерством образования и науки Кыргызской Республик в рамках проекта “Чтение для всех детей – Азия (ACR-Asia)”, финансируемого агентством ЮСАИД.

В данном вопроснике запрашивается информация о:

- Вас и Вашей школе
- полученной и необходимой Вам поддержке
- методах преподавания и обучения

Пожалуйста, внимательно прочтите каждый вопрос и ответьте как можно подробнее. Некоторые вопросы потребуют от Вас краткого текстового ответа в отведенном для этого месте.

Не существует «правильных» или «неправильных» ответов.

Все ваши ответы останутся конфиденциальными. Они будут объединены с ответами других руководителей школ для подсчета итоговых и средних показателей, в которых нельзя будет идентифицировать ни одну школу или школьного руководителя.

1) Для продолжения, пожалуйста, подтвердите, что Вы руководитель школы\*

- Да  
 Нет

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РАЗДЕЛ А: О ВАС

2) Название школы\*

3) Где расположена Ваша школа? \*

- В селе  
 В районном центре  
 В городе

4) Ваш пол? \*

- Женский  
 Мужской  
 Предпочитаю не отвечать

5) Сколько лет Вы работаете руководителем школы?

(Пожалуйста, не учитывайте какой-либо период продолжительного отпуска, такой как отпуск по беременности и родам/отцовству/ долгосрочный отпуск)\*

- Менее 2 лет  
 От 2 до 5 лет  
 От 6 до 10 лет  
 От 11 до 20 лет

Более 20 лет

6) Есть ли у Вас дети/обязанности по уходу за детьми дома? \*

Да

Нет

Предпочитаю не отвечать

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#### РАЗДЕЛ В: ПРОБЛЕМЫ

7) С какими проблемами столкнулась Ваша школа, чтобы оказать поддержку учащимся во время пандемии?

(Отметьте все подходящие варианты) \*

Пожалуйста,

отметьте

Недостаточная оснащенность школьной инфраструктуры (н-р, ксеро-копировальные устройства для распечатки раздаточных материалов, отсутствие/ограниченность доступа к Интернету)

Несоответствие ресурсов для дистанционного обучения (т. е. отсутствие доступа к Интернету, печатных материалов для учителей)

Несоответствие ресурсов для учащихся с особыми потребностями (например, с физическими недостатками, умственными или эмоциональными/психологическими нарушениями)

Низкий уровень вовлеченности учителей в работу

Низкий уровень самочувствия и/или благосостояния учителей

Уход учителей по собственному желанию

Увольнение учителей

Недостаточность навыков учителей для проведения дистанционного обучения

Низкий уровень доверия учителей к дистанционному обучению

Низкий уровень вовлеченности учащихся в учебу

Плохое самочувствие и/или низкий уровень благосостояния учащихся

Низкий уровень вовлеченности родителей в учебный процесс

Ограниченная возможность родителей поддерживать своего ребенка в учебе (н-р, неграмотность, занятость работой)

Ограниченность домашних ресурсов (н-р, доступа к Интернету, информации, гаджетам, отсутствие спокойного места для занятий, письменного стола, книг)

Ограниченный доступ к общественным ресурсам (библиотеке, Интернету, электричеству в общественных местах и т.д.)

Недостаточность поддержки школы местным сообществом (недостаточное вовлечение родителей, недостаточность общественных ресурсов)

Политическая нестабильность или конфликт в районе, в котором расположена школа

Проблем нет

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#### РАЗДЕЛ С: ВОСПРИЯТИЕ ПОДДЕРЖКИ

8) В какой степени Вы согласны со следующими утверждениями?

В период пандемии ожидалось, что моя школа...\*

Полностью не согласен      Не согласен      Согласен      Полностью согласен

Введет дистанционное обучение на время закрытия школы/периодов удаленного обучения                       

Предоставит учителям ресурсы (Интернет-связь, цифровое оборудование, учебные материалы) для продолжения преподавания

- Предоставит учащимся соответствующие ресурсы (Интернет-связь, цифровое оборудование, учебные материалы) для продолжения обучения ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
- Обсудит с родителями и семьями методы преподавания и обучения ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
- Проведет мониторинг психического здоровья и самочувствия учителей ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
- Проведет мониторинг психического здоровья и самочувствия учащихся ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
- Изменит требования к обучению учащихся (т.е. корректировка оценивания, сосредоточение внимания только на грамотности и т.д.) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
- Апробирует другие, инновационные пути вовлечения учащихся в процесс обучения ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
- Проведет мониторинг вовлеченности учащихся в обучение ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
- Проведет оценивание учащихся во время обучения ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
- Предоставит дополнительную поддержку уязвимым группам учащихся (девочкам, учащимся из семей с низкими доходами и т.д.) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
- Предоставит дополнительную поддержку учащимся с различными способностями (высокими или низкими) к обучению или потребностями в обучении ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

9) Оказывали ли Вам поддержку следующие организации/лица в период закрытия школ?  
\*

- Не поддерживали      Поддерживали
- Министерство образования и науки/Управление образованием ( ) ( )
- Областные институты образования, областные учебно-методические центры образования ( ) ( )
- Районные/городские отделы образования ( ) ( )
- Методическое объединение учителей ( ) ( )
- Родители/опекуны ( ) ( )
- Местное сообщество ( ) ( )
- Благотворительные организации/ частные доноры ( ) ( )

10) Были ли Вы информированы о политике министерства/региональных органов управления образованием относительно ожидаемого дистанционного обучения для обеспечения непрерывности обучения? \*

- ( ) Да  
( ) Нет

11) Какие еще виды поддержки Вы требовали/запрашивали от вышеперечисленных организаций/лиц в связи с пандемией? Пожалуйста, поясните свой ответ \*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12) Какая еще поддержка Вам потребуется от вышеперечисленных организаций/людей в будущем? Пожалуйста, поясните свой ответ

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### РАЗДЕЛ D: ЛИДЕРСТВО И СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВО

13) Пожалуйста, укажите, как часто Вы участвовали в следующих мероприятиях, которые проводились в школе в период пандемии\*



	Никогда	Один/ два раза в год	Раз в четверть	Каждую неделю
Я участвовал (а) в мероприятиях по профессиональному развитию в дистанционном формате	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я поддерживал (а) связь с лицами, принимающими решения, или организациями вне школы, обсуждая, как поддержать учащихся во время пандемии.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я проводил (а) обучение для учителей по дистанционному преподаванию с применением дополнительных материалов (ТВ, радио, материалы на бумажных носителях)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я проводил (а) дополнительное обучение для учителей по дистанционному преподаванию с применением информационных технологий (ИТ)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я обсуждал(а) на встречах с учителями их потребности и проблемы	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я обсуждал(а) на встречах с учителями пути поддержки обучения учащихся	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я обсуждал(а) с родителями способы поддержки учащихся в обучении	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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#### РАЗДЕЛ Е: РАЗВИТИЕ И ДИФФЕРЕНЦИАЦИЯ

14) Пожалуйста, укажите, как часто Вы проводили следующие мероприятия в школе в период пандемии\*

	Никогда	Один/ два раза в год	Раз в четверть	Каждую неделю
Я оказывал (а) поддержку учителям по адаптации их преподавания во время закрытия школы/ дистанционного обучения	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я помогал (а) учителям адаптировать методы оценивания учащихся во время закрытия школы/ дистанционного обучения	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я использовал(а) данные моей школы при анализе успеваемости учащихся	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я обсуждал (а) с учителями применение фактических данных для мониторинга развития учащихся	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я планировал (а), как улучшать результаты своей школы и учащихся (долгосрочные цели, стратегическое планирование и т. д.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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#### РАЗДЕЛ F: БЛАГОСОСТОЯНИЕ И ИНКЛЮЗИЯ

15) Пожалуйста, укажите, в какой степени уровень благосостояния участников образовательного процесса обсуждался и/или поддерживался Вами во время пандемии\*

	Никогда	Редко	Иногда	Часто
Я испытал (а) больше стресса в своей работе	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Меня беспокоил уровень стресса у моих учителей	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Меня беспокоили психическое здоровье и благополучие моих учащихся	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я предоставлял (а) учителям информацию по сохранению психического здоровья	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я предоставлял (а) учащимся и их семьям информацию по сохранению психического здоровья	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Я предоставлял (а) дополнительные материалы и обучение учителям, имеющим учащихся с особыми познавательными потребностями/инвалидностью	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## РАЗДЕЛ G: РЕФЛЕКСИЯ

16) Что из нижеследующего Вы планируете сделать для поддержки Ваших сотрудников и учащихся после пандемии? \*

Да Нет

- Сотрудничество с учителями по улучшению обучения учащихся
- Сотрудничество с родителями/семьями по улучшению обучения учащихся
- Посещение семей для мониторинга участия учащихся
- Телефонные звонки семьям для мониторинга участия учащихся
- Адаптация уроков к различным группам учащихся
- Адаптация итогового оценивания к различным группам учащихся
- Применение гибридного/дистанционного обучения (меньше часов лицом к лицу, больше учебной деятельности онлайн)
- Внимание к психическому здоровью и благополучию учителей
- Внимание к психическому здоровью и благополучию учащихся
- Мониторинг развития учащихся с применением данных по школе и классам

17) Что больше всего помогало поддерживать учащихся Вашей школы во время пандемии? Пожалуйста, поясните свой ответ \*

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## РАЗДЕЛ H: ОТСЛЕЖИВАНИЕ

18) Какие стратегии и/или меры, использованные во время пандемии, могут помочь улучшить качество образования в Вашей школе в будущем? \*

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19) Готовы ли Вы участвовать в последующем индивидуальном интервью в рамках данного исследования?\*

- Да, я готов (а) принять участие в последующем интервью
- Нет, пожалуйста, не контактируйте со мной больше

20) Если Вы отметили выше “ДА”, пожалуйста, предоставьте Ваши контактные данные (номер телефона и электронный адрес) \*

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Если вы ответили «Нет», завершите заполнение вопросника и обратитесь к своему администратору, чтобы получить ссылку на вопросник, который имеет отношение к Вам (например, «Учитель» или «Родитель»).

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Спасибо за заполнение данного вопросника!

## **Teacher (Russian Language)**

### ВОПРОСНИК ДЛЯ УЧИТЕЛЯ

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Реагирование образовательных систем стран Азии на пандемию COVID-19

#### ОБЩАЯ ИНФОРМАЦИЯ

Вы отобраны для участия в данном исследовании о воздействии COVID-19 на обучение под названием “Реагирование образовательных систем стран Азии на пандемию COVID-19”, которое проводится в различных странах Азии. Исследование проводится Министерством образования и науки Кыргызской Республики в рамках проекта “Чтение для всех детей – Азия (ACR-Asia)”, финансируемого агентством ЮСАИД.

В данном вопроснике запрашивается информация о:

- Вас и Вашей школе
- полученной и необходимой Вам поддержке
- методах преподавания и обучения

Пожалуйста, внимательно прочтите каждый вопрос и ответьте как можно подробнее. Некоторые вопросы потребуют от вас краткого текстового ответа в отведенном для этого месте.

Не существует «правильных» или «неправильных» ответов.

Все ваши ответы останутся конфиденциальными. Они будут объединены с ответами других учителей школ для подсчета итоговых и средних показателей, в которых нельзя будет идентифицировать ни одну школу или школьного учителя.

1) Для продолжения, пожалуйста, подтвердите, что Вы учитель в школе\*

- Да  
 Нет
- 

#### РАЗДЕЛ А: О ВАС

2) Название школы\*

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3) Где расположена Ваша школа? \*

- В селе  
 В районном центре  
 В городе

4) Ваш пол? \*

- Женский  
 Мужской  
 Предпочитаю не отвечать

5) Сколько лет Вы работаете учителем?

((Пожалуйста, не учитывайте какой-либо период продолжительного отпуска, такой как отпуск по беременности и родам/отцовству/ долгосрочный отпуск) \*

- Менее 2 лет  
 От 2 до 5 лет  
 От 6 до 10 лет  
 От 11 до 20 лет  
 Более 20 лет

6) Есть ли у Вас дети/обязанности по уходу за детьми дома? \*

Да

Нет

Предпочитаю не отвечать

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#### РАЗДЕЛ В: ПРОБЛЕМЫ

7) С какими проблемами Вы столкнулись, чтобы оказать поддержку учащимся во время пандемии? (Отметьте все подходящие варианты) \*

Пожалуйста, отметьте

Недостаточная оснащенность школьной инфраструктуры (н-р, ксеро-копировальные устройства для распечатки раздаточных материалов, отсутствие/ограниченность доступа к Интернету).

Несоответствие ресурсов для дистанционного обучения (т. е. отсутствие доступа к Интернету, печатных материалов для учителей)

Несоответствие ресурсов для учащихся с особыми потребностями (например, с физическими недостатками, умственными или эмоциональными/психологическими нарушениями)

Низкий уровень профессионального роста

Низкий уровень личного самочувствия и/или благосостояния

Загруженность и переутомление других учителей

Увольнение других учителей

Недостаточные навыки преподавания в дистанционном формате

Низкий уровень доверия к преподаванию в дистанционном формате

Ограниченная степень вовлеченности учащихся

Низкий уровень самочувствия и/или благосостояния учащихся

Ограниченная степень вовлеченности родителей

Ограниченная способность родителей помогать своему ребенку в учебе

Ограниченный доступ к общественным ресурсам (библиотеке, Интернету, электричеству в общественных местах и т.д.)

Недостаточность поддержки школы местным сообществом

Политическая нестабильность или конфликт в районе, в котором расположена школа

Проблем нет

8) Есть ли другие проблемы, с которыми Вы столкнулись как учитель? Пожалуйста, перечислите их ниже \*

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#### РАЗДЕЛ С: ВОСПРИЯТИЕ ПОДДЕРЖКИ

9) В какой степени Вы согласны со следующими утверждениями?

В период пандемии ожидалось, что моя школа...\*

Полностью не согласен      Не согласен      Согласен      Полностью согласен

Введет дистанционное обучение на время закрытия школы/периодов удаленного обучения

Предоставит учителям ресурсы (Интернет-связь, цифровое оборудование, учебные материалы) для продолжения преподавания

Предоставит учащимся соответствующие ресурсы (Интернет-связь, цифровое оборудование, учебные материалы) для продолжения обучения

- Обсудит с родителями и семьями методы преподавания и обучения ( ) ( ) ( )  
 ( )  
 Проведет мониторинг психического здоровья и самочувствия учителей ( ) ( )  
 ( ) ( )  
 Проведет мониторинг психического здоровья и самочувствия учащихся ( ) ( )  
 ( ) ( )  
 Изменит требования к обучению учащихся (т.е. проведет корректировку оценивания, сосредоточит внимание только на грамотности и т.д.) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
 Апробирует другие, инновационные пути вовлечения учащихся в процесс обучения ( )  
 ( ) ( ) ( )  
 Проведет мониторинг вовлеченности учащихся в обучение ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
 Проведет оценивание учащихся во время дистанционного обучения ( ) ( ) ( )  
 ( )  
 Предоставит дополнительную поддержку уязвимым группам учащихся (девочкам, учащимся из семей с низкими доходами и т.д.) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
 Предоставит дополнительную поддержку учащимся с различными способностями (высокими или низкими) к обучению или потребностями в обучении ( ) ( ) ( )  
 ( )

10) В целом я удовлетворен (а) уровнем поддержки, оказанной моей школой \*

- ( ) Совсем не согласен  
 ( ) Не согласен  
 ( ) Согласен  
 ( ) Полностью согласен

11) Опробовали ли Вы во время пандемии какие-либо новые методы преподавания? Какие именно? Как вы применяли их в рамках Вашего преподавания? \*

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

12) Использовали ли Вы какие-либо новые средства обучения во время пандемии (телевидение, приложения, радио и т. д.) в рамках своего обучения? Какие именно? Содействовали ли они обучению учащихся? \*

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#### РАЗДЕЛ D: ЛИДЕРСТВО И СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВО

13) Пожалуйста, укажите, как часто Вы участвовали в следующих мероприятиях, которые проводились в Вашей школе в период пандемии \*

- |   | Никогда | Один/ два раза в год | Раз в четверть | Каждую неделю |
|---|---------|----------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Я участвовал (а) в мероприятиях по профессиональному развитию в дистанционном формате   | ( )     | ( )                  | ( )            | ( )           |
| Я поддерживал (а) связь с организациями вне школы, обсуждая, как поддержать учащихся во время пандемии.   | ( )     | ( )                  | ( )            | ( )           |
| Я участвовал (а) в обучении по дистанционному преподаванию с применением дополнительных материалов (ТВ, радио, материалы на бумажных носителях) | ( )     | ( )                  | ( )            | ( )           |

Я участвовал (а) в дополнительном обучении по использованию информационных технологий (ИТ) в дистанционном преподавании ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
 Я обсуждал(а) с директором школы при встрече мои потребности и проблемы ( ) ( )  
 ( ) ( )  
 Я обсуждал(а) возможности поддержки учащихся на встречах с директором школы ( )  
 ( ) ( ) ( )  
 Я обсуждал(а) с родителями способы поддержки учащихся в обучении ( ) ( ) ( )  
 ( )

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#### РАЗДЕЛ Е: РАЗВИТИЕ И ДИФФЕРЕНЦИАЦИЯ

14) Пожалуйста, укажите, как часто следующие мероприятия происходили в Вашей школе в период пандемии \*

	Никогда	Один/ два раза в год	Раз в четверть	Каждую неделю
Я адаптировал (а) методы преподавания во время закрытия школ/дистанционного обучения	( )	( )	( )	( )
Я адаптировал (а) методы оценивания учащихся во время закрытия школ/дистанционного обучения	( )	( )	( )	( )
Я использовал(а) данные моего класса при анализе успеваемости учащихся	( )	( )	( )	( )
Я собирал (а) фактические данные для мониторинга развития учащихся	( )	( )	( )	( )

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#### РАЗДЕЛ Ф: БЛАГОСОСТОЯНИЕ И ИНКЛЮЗИЯ

15) Пожалуйста, укажите, в какой степени уровень благосостояния участников образовательного процесса обсуждался и/или поддерживался в Вашей школе во время пандемии \*

	Никогда	Редко	Иногда	Часто
Я испытывал (а) больше стресса в своей работе	( )	( )	( )	( )
Меня беспокоил уровень стресса у моих коллег	( )	( )	( )	( )
Меня беспокоили психическое здоровье и благополучие моих учащихся	( )	( )	( )	( )
Я получал (а) информацию о сохранении психического здоровья от своего руководителя школы	( )	( )	( )	( )
Я предоставлял (а) информацию о сохранении психического здоровья учащимся и их семьям	( )	( )	( )	( )
Я включал (а) мероприятия по укреплению психического здоровья и благополучия в свою преподавательскую практику	( )	( )	( )	( )
Я апробировал (а) новые методы вовлечения всех учащихся в обучение	( )	( )	( )	( )
Я получал (а) дополнительную информацию и обучение для поддержки учащихся с индивидуальными потребностями /инвалидностью	( )	( )	( )	( )

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#### РАЗДЕЛ G: РЕФЛЕКСИЯ

16) Что лучше всего помогло поддержать учащихся Вашей школы во время пандемии? Пожалуйста, поясните свой ответ \*

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17) Что из следующего Вы планируете сделать после пандемии, чтобы поддержать своих коллег и учащихся? \*

Да Нет

- Сотрудничество с учителями по улучшению обучения учащихся
- Сотрудничество с родителями/семьями по улучшению обучения учащихся
- Посещение семей для мониторинга участия учащихся
- Телефонные звонки семьям для мониторинга участия учащихся
- Адаптация уроков к различным группам учащихся
- Адаптация итогового оценивания к различным группам учащихся
- Применение гибридного/дистанционного обучения (меньше часов лицом к лицу, больше учебной деятельности онлайн)
- Внимание к личному психическому здоровью и благополучию
- Внимание к психическому здоровью и благополучию учащихся
- Мониторинг развития учащихся с применением данных по школе и классам

18) Что бы Вы еще хотели в будущем, чтобы Ваша школа делала для поддержки Вас и Ваших учеников? \* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### РАЗДЕЛ Н: ОТСЛЕЖИВАНИЕ

19) Готовы ли Вы участвовать в последующем индивидуальном интервью в рамках данного исследования? \*

Да, я готов (а) принять участие в последующем интервью

Нет, пожалуйста, не контактируйте со мной больше

20) Если Вы отметили выше “ДА”, пожалуйста, предоставьте Ваши контактные данные (номер телефона и электронный адрес) \*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Если вы ответили «Нет», завершите заполнение вопросника и обратитесь к своему администратору, чтобы получить ссылку на вопросник, который имеет отношение к Вам (например, «Учитель» или «Родитель»).

\_\_\_\_\_

Спасибо за заполнение данного вопросника!

#### **Parent (Russian Language)**

#### ВОПРОСНИК ДЛЯ РОДИТЕЛЕЙ

#### Реагирование образовательных систем стран Азии на пандемию COVID-19 ОБЩАЯ ИНФОРМАЦИЯ

Вы отобраны для участия в данном исследовании о воздействии COVID-19 на обучение под названием “Реагирование образовательных систем стран Азии на пандемию COVID-19”, которое проводится в различных странах Азии. Исследование проводится Министерством образования и науки Кыргызской Республик в рамках проекта “Чтение для всех детей – Азия (ACR-Asia)”, финансируемого агентством ЮСАИД.

В данном вопроснике запрашивается информация о:

- Вашей семье
- Вашем доме
- Вашем ребенке

Если у Вас несколько детей, посещающих школу, пожалуйста, заполните анкету для каждого ребенка.

Вопросы будут о Вашем ребенке. Внимательно прочтите каждый вопрос и ответьте правдиво. Не существует «правильных» или «неправильных» ответов.

Все Ваши ответы останутся конфиденциальными. Они будут объединены с ответами других родителей для подсчета итоговых и средних показателей, в которых нельзя будет идентифицировать ни одну школу, учителя или родителя.

1) Для продолжения, пожалуйста, подтвердите, что Вы родитель. \*

- Да
- Нет

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#### РАЗДЕЛ А: О ВАС И ВАШЕЙ СЕМЬЕ

2) Название школы, которую посещает Ваш ребенок

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3) Где находится школа, которую посещает Ваш ребенок? \*

- В селе
- В районном центре
- В городе

4) Данный вопросник заполнен: \*

- Матерью/женщиной-опекуном
- Отцом/мужчиной-опекуном
- Бабушкой/дедушкой
- Другое, пожалуйста, уточните (н-р, сестра/брат, родственник, опекун):

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5) Укажите самый высокий уровень формального образования, которое Вы получили? \*

- Докторская степень
- Магистерская степень или 5-летний курс в вузе
- Бакалавриат
- Профессиональное и /или техническое образование
- Выпускник средней школы, имеется аттестат о среднем образовании
- Незаконченное среднее образование

6) В период пандемии Вы работали полный рабочий день? \*

- Да
- Нет

7) Сколько детей, не достигших 18 лет в Вашей семье? \*

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 или более

8) Укажите возраст ребенка, о котором идет речь в данном вопроснике? \*



- 3 года
- 4 года
- 5 лет
- 6 лет
- 7 лет
- 8 лет
- 9 лет
- 10 лет или более

9) Укажите пол ребенка, о котором идет речь в данном вопроснике? \*

- женский
- мужской
- предпочитаю не отвечать

10) Укажите основной язык, на котором вы разговариваете дома? \*

- русский
- кыргызский
- другой родной язык или диалект (Кыргызстан)
- филиппинский
- другой родной язык или диалект (Филиппины)

11) Есть ли у Вашего ребенка какие-либо особые потребности? \*

- Нет, мой ребенок не имеет каких-либо особых потребностей
- Да, мой ребенок имеет особые физические потребности (нарушения)
- Да, мой ребенок имеет особые интеллектуальные/ментальные потребности (нарушения)
- Да, мой ребенок имеет особые и физические и интеллектуальные/ментальные потребности (нарушения)
- Не уверен (а)
- Предпочитаю не отвечать

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#### РАЗДЕЛ В: О ВАШЕМ ДОМЕ

12) Какие из следующих предметов есть в Вашем доме?

(Если оборудование сломано сейчас, но может быть отремонтировано в течение 30 последующих дней, отметьте «Да») \*

- | Да  | Нет                      |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Компьютер /ноутбук/планшет                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Интернет-связь  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Телевизор   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Радио   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Мобильный телефон                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Стационарный телефон                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Холодильник   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Плита (электроплита и духовка, газовая плита)         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Стиральная машина-автомат                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Туалет внутри дома                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Водопровод (вода в доме)                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Электричество (сеть, генератор или солнечные батареи) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Автомобиль, мотоцикл или мопед                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Велосипед   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

13) Укажите основной источник освещения в Вашем доме? \*

- Освещения после наступления темноты нет  
 Свечи  
 Керосиновая или масляная лампа  
 Газовая лампа  
 Электрическое освещение  
 Лампа на солнечной энергии

14) Какие из следующих учебных материалов Ваш ребенок имеет дома?

(Если предмет сломан сейчас, но может быть отремонтирован в течение 30 последующих дней, отметьте «Да»)\*

Да Нет

- Ручка или карандаш    
Линейка    
Калькулятор    
Школьные учебники    
Тетради для учебы в школе    
Отдельный стол для занятий    
Школьная сумка (рюкзак, портфель, ранец)    
Цветные карандаши/ручки    
Компьютер /ноутбук/планшет

15) Примерно сколько книг любого содержания имеется в Вашем доме?

(Пожалуйста, НЕ считайте школьные учебники, электронные книги, газеты или журналы)\*

- Нет или очень мало (0 – 10)  
 Достаточно, чтобы заполнить одну полку (11 – 25)  
 Достаточно, чтобы заполнить один книжный шкаф (26 – 100)  
 Достаточно, чтобы заполнить два книжных шкафа (101 – 200)  
 Достаточно, чтобы заполнить три или более книжных шкафа (более 200)

#### РАЗДЕЛ С: ОБ ОБУЧЕНИИ ВАШЕГО РЕБЕНКА В ПЕРИОД, КОГДА БЫЛИ ЗАКРЫТЫ /ПЕРИОДЫ ДИСТАНЦИОННОГО ОБУЧЕНИЯ

16) В период, когда были закрыты школы, как часто Вы делали следующее, чтобы поддержать обучение своего ребенка? \*

Никогда Редко (раз в месяц) Часто (раз в неделю) Очень часто (не менее 3-4 раз в неделю)

Просил (а) кого-то помочь моему ребенку с занятиями (наставник, братья, сестры, др.)

Помогал(а) своему ребенку выполнять задания

Читал(а) книги ребенку

Помогал(а) ребенку с онлайн занятиями

Проверял (а), все ли домашние задания выполнил мой ребенок

17) В период, когда была закрыта школа, продолжал ли ваш ребенок обучаться в школе дистанционно? \*

- Да  
 Нет

18) В период, когда была закрыта школа, как часто Ваш ребенок участвовал в следующих действиях? \*

Никогда Редко (раз в месяц) Часто (раз в неделю) Очень часто (не менее 3-4 раз в неделю)

Встречался с учителями-предметниками (лицом к лицу, онлайн, по телефону и т.д.) ( )  
( ) ( ) ( )

Встречался с учителями-предметниками вместе с группой/классом (онлайн, по телефону и т.д.) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Слушал образовательные программы по радио ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Смотрел образовательные программы по телевизору ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Читал образовательный материал онлайн ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Использовал цифровые приложения ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Выполнял заданные учителем домашние задания ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Выполнял задания на оценку, заданные учителями ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Читал развлекательные книги ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Читал школьные учебники ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Читал другие учебные материалы (включая газеты) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

19) В какой степени следующие утверждения описывают поведение Вашего ребенка во время закрытия школы? \*

Нисколько В малой степени В умеренной степени В большой степени  
Мой ребенок был мотивирован заниматься с учебными материалами ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
( )

Моему ребенку нравилось домашнее обучение (зайти в онлайн-класс/настроиться на уроки по радио или телевидению, выполнять задания в тетрадях) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
( )

Моему ребенку нравилось учебные материалы, которые можно было взять домой. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Мой ребенок грустил, когда школу закрыли ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Мой ребенок был мотивирован выполнять повседневные задания ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
( )

Мой ребенок общался с членами семьи в своей обычной манере ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Мой ребенок беспокоился больше, чем до пандемии ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

20) Что мешало обучению Вашего ребенка во время закрытия школы/дистанционного обучения? \*

Полностью не согласен Не согласен Согласен Полностью согласен  
Не получалось подключаться онлайн ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Отсутствие учебных материалов для обучения (например, рабочих тетрадей, рабочих листов, учебников, тетрадей) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Мой ребенок чувствовал беспокойство во время самоизоляции ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Обучению моего ребенка мешали его недостаточные языковые навыки ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
( ) ( )

Отсутствие поддержки учителя ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Отсутствие возможности содержать ребенка дома ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

Моему ребенку приходилось зарабатывать деньги/ помогать по дому ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
( )

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## РАЗДЕЛ D: ВОСПРИЯТИЕ ПОДДЕРЖКИ

21) В какой степени Вы согласны со следующими утверждениями?

Во время пандемии школа моего ребенка...\*

- |  | Полностью не согласен    | Не согласен              | Согласен                 | Полностью согласен       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Предоставила мне/моему ребенку необходимые ресурсы (например, учебные материалы) для поддержки моего ребенка | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Предоставила моему ребенку необходимые ресурсы (н-р, учебные материалы), чтобы заниматься самостоятельно     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Обсуждала стратегии/методы преподавания и обучения со мной, как с родителем/опекуном                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Сообщала мне о том, как мой ребенок учится   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Поддерживала мое психическое здоровье и благополучие как родителя  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Наблюдала за психическим здоровьем и благополучием моего ребенка   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Изменила свои ожидания в отношении обучения моего ребенка  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Пробовала другие, инновационные способы вовлечения моего ребенка в обучение                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Контролировала участие моего ребенка в обучении  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Оценивала обучение моего ребенка   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

22) Я удовлетворен уровнем поддержки, предоставляемой моей школой \*

Полностью не согласен

Не согласен

Согласен

Полностью согласен

23) Готовы ли Вы участвовать в последующем индивидуальном интервью в рамках данного исследования? \*

Да, я готов (а) принять участие в последующем интервью

Нет, пожалуйста, не контактируйте со мной больше

24) Если Вы отметили выше "ДА", пожалуйста, предоставьте Ваши контактные данные (номер телефона и электронный адрес) \*

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Если вы ответили «Нет», завершите заполнение вопросника и обратитесь к своему администратору, чтобы получить ссылку на вопросник, который имеет отношение к Вам (например, «Учитель» или «Родитель»).

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Спасибо за заполнение данного вопросника!

## **C.2 Key Informant Interview Protocol**

### ***Format***

The interview with key informants will last approximately 30 minutes. The interview will be conducted using videoconferencing software (where possible). If a live interview is not possible due to disruption, the interview questions will be administered over the phone or sent by email if phone interviews are not possible. Where there is a lack of internet connectivity or due to remoteness, interviews may be conducted face-to-face. The interviews will follow a semi-structured protocol, with key questions asked of all informants and scope to explore ideas/examples in more detail as they emerge in individual interviews.

### ***Purpose of Interview***

This interview seeks to explore the support provided to educational settings during the pandemic, the barriers and enablers to responding to needs during and beyond the pandemic, and the system-level strategies for improving educational quality and equitable outcomes at different points in time. These interviews aim to capture the perspective of stakeholders at the system level (e.g., policymakers, supervisors, teacher educators), providing a point of comparison for the school-level interviews in the case studies. Asking informants about the key policies that are in place to support responsiveness and improvement provides an opportunity to connect with and compare the results of the desk review. The Key Informant Interview will consist of the following key questions:

1. What policies were designed to support educational settings during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. Can you describe examples of the support that was given to educational settings during the pandemic?
3. What do you see as the main needs that schools were attempting to respond to during the pandemic? Student needs? Needs of families? Needs within the community?
4. What do you see as the barriers or challenges that schools face when responding to these needs within their school community? (student needs, needs of families, needs across the community)
5. What were some of the enablers or things that helped schools to respond to needs during the pandemic?
6. What strategies and/or policies are designed to improve educational quality within schools during the pandemic and move beyond the pandemic in the future?

## ANNEX D: KEY INFORMANTS

We would like to thank the following informants for their insights and expertise.

**Table 3. List of Key Informants**

Name	Role
Abdyldaeva Gulshan Kushbekovna	Chief Specialist of the Department of School, Out Of School, and Additional Education, Ministry of Education and Science KR
Umralieva Samarkul Kydyrmaevna	Head, Department of School, Out Of School, and Additional Education, Ministry of Education and Science KR
Dyusheeva Nazira Kubanychbekovna	President of Kyrgyz Academy of Education
Asakeeva Raina Akmataliyevna	Vice-President of International Education Organization, Sapat
Kaldybaev Salidin Kadyrkulovich	Vice-Rector for Research, Ala-Too International University
Olga Vladimirovna Soloshenko	Director, Ecological and Economic Lyceum no.65, Bishkek city
Victoria Aleksandrovna Bulatova	Associate Professor for the International University in Central Asia, Department of General Education, Chief Specialist of the Department of Multilingual Education of the Kyrgyz Academy of Education, and Senior Lecturer at the Republican Institute for Teacher Training and Professional Development
Kenesh Mukhtarovich Tilekeev	Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences (Ph.D.), Professor of the Department of Special Pedagogy and Psych Correction
Elena Aleksandrovna Roslyakova	Vice-President for Educational Issues, Yraiym Charity Foundation, Director of Ak-Bata School
Inna Alexandrovna Nasybulina	Principal, School-Gymnasium #1, named after Leo Tolstoy, Balykchy city, Issyk-Kul region
Venera Nazarbekovna Ibraeva	Leading Specialist, District Education Department of Kochkor district of the Naryn region
Elmira Kambarbekovna Minbaeva	Methodologist in Russian Language and Literature, Issyk-Kul Regional Institute of Education
Beishembieva Elmira Aidarkanovna	Principal, Secondary School No. 3, Tokmok city, Chui region
Dinara Kurbanalieva Erkesarieva	Principal, Secondary School No. 12, Tokmok city, Chui region
Yrysbubu Ibraimovna Nasipbayeva	Specialist, Republican Institute for In-Service Teacher Training and Retraining
Janyl Busurmankulova	Head, Center for Advanced Teacher Training and Retraining
Nurisa Mairambekovna Maraimova	Principal, Secondary School No. 2, Jalal-Abad city

Name	Role
Damira Tokonovna Kasymbekova	Principal, School-Gymnasium No. 1 named after Mikhail Babkin, Jalal-Abad city
Zhazgul Altynbaevna Tashieva	Primary School Teacher, School No. 9, named after Ratbek Sanatbaev, Jalal-Abad city
Irina Sergeevna Goncharova	Principal of the Kaindy School-Gymnasium No. 2, named after Kulsara Sulaimanova, Chui region