A National Emergency - Our Children's Learning Loss:

A Path to Post-COVID-19 School Recovery in Malaysia

Situation Report and Recommendations

A resource document for meeting the
learning needs of ALL children in Malaysia

Leave No Child Behind in Malaysia

May 2022

DEDICATION:

We would like to acknowledge the many schools, teachers and parents who have strived to support their children's education during this difficult COVID-19 pandemic. We want to specially appreciate the unrecognised and unvoiced struggle of our children – their pain and loss requires that we act now. It is only in working together as a nation and in our communities that we can offer the recovery, resources and services that our children and teachers need.

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ABOUT THE DOCUMENT:

This document is based on a policy document that was written to support consideration, at the national level, of the issues that it focuses on.

In view of the critical importance and urgency of those issues, this document was redrafted for access by all who are concerned with our children today and the nation's prospects in the near future.

This is a resource document for everyone who is in a position to contribute to meeting the learning needs of ALL children in Malaysia.

SUGGESTED CITATION:

Amar-Singh HSS, Ong Puay-Hoon, Gill Raja, Srividhya Ganapathy, Ng Lai-Thin, Yuenwah San (2022). A National Emergency - Our Children's Learning Loss: Keys to Post-COVID-19 School Recovery in Malaysia. Situation Report and Recommendations. Malaysia. 27th April 2022.

IMAGE CREDIT:

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Student Learning Lag, School Dropout and Post-COVID-19 Rehabilitation Measures

Executive Summary

Education poverty will have enormous lifetime implications, not just for children, but also for the Malaysian economy.

The World Bank estimates that Malaysia's learning poverty is already high. Unless swift and bold action is taken, it will worsen.

In addition, the concurrent mental health pandemic in children, exacerbated by prolonged school closure, is significantly impacting learning, the quality of our future workforce, and our productivity.

Key Initiatives:

- Undertake rapid assessment of all students to understand each child's situation and status.

- Identify vulnerable children and schools that require more support, including financial aid to enable those from poor families to return to school.

- Provide additional temporary teachers/teaching support, especially in Standards 1 and 2 and the transition years, to aid children who have not been prepared for school or are struggling to continue.

- Allocate significant financial support to restore the pre-school sector (kindergartens and early childhood intervention/learning disability services for children), to prevent a prolonging the crisis.

- Identify and reach out to school drop-outs to enable their return to schooling or vocational skills training and employment.

- Be aware of and address the mental health needs of students by identifying children affected and offer support using mental health professionals and associations.

**Our children's today, our nation's future ~
requires our bold, decisive action now**

Diagnosis: Situation Analysis of the Problem

Malaysia has had one of the highest learning losses
among Asian developing nations

Asian Development Bank April 2021

Malaysia's learning loss:[1]

- Exceeds losses of all ASEAN members, except Myanmar;
- On par with losses of Bangladesh and Nepal;
- Among Asian developing nations with the highest loss.
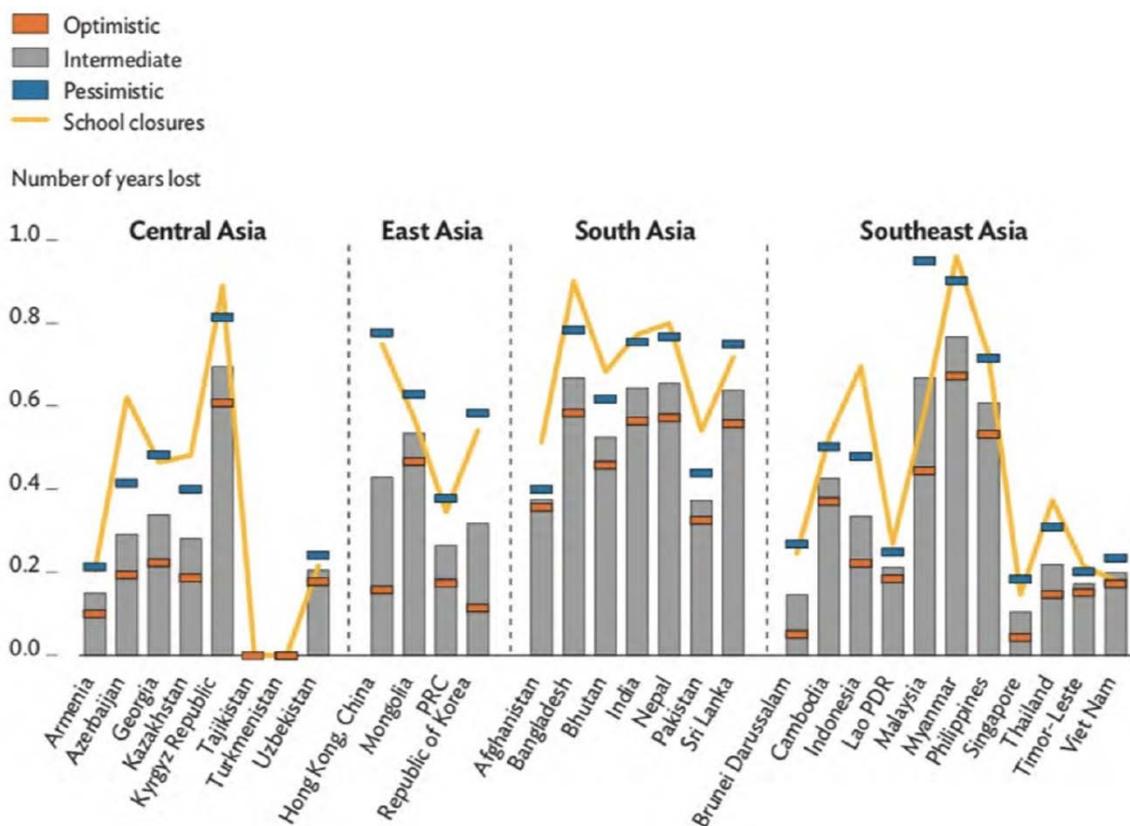
Source: Asian Development Bank

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[1] Asian Development Bank (2021). Learning and Earning Losses from Covid-19 School Closures in Developing Asia. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/692111/ado2021-special-topic.pdf>.

A situation analysis of the state of the education experiences of children in Malaysia, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, shows that most children in Malaysia have had a major loss in education progress.

1.1   With school closures of more than 41 weeks[2], Malaysian students have had their schooling disrupted (Malaysia is one of the countries in the world with the longest period of school closures) due to the COVID-19 pandemic ("pandemic").

1.2   Post-pandemic, we know that:
(a) Most children have had a major loss in education progress.

(b) As many as 40% have not been able to participate in online classes - the figures are worse in rural areas and in Sarawak and Sabah.

(c) Screen addiction is aggravated and children suffer from reduced attention span. Others have lost interest in schooling.

(d) Ministry of Education (MOE) statistics show that a rise in the number of children who have dropped out of school. MOE numbers are conservative. We lack concrete data on the number of pre-schoolers who did not start primary school or the number of primary sixers who did not continue with secondary education.

(e) Educational outcomes are even worse for children with disabilities, children living in poverty, children in Sabah and Sarawak, children in indigenous communities, children who are stateless, refugee children and children in detention centres.

(f) There have been limited remedial lessons for those failing to catch up. Students who move on, unprepared, to the next grade are missing key building blocks of knowledge for success (e.g., reading, writing and mathematics), with children being incorrectly categorized as having learning difficulties.

(g) While most teachers have worked hard to support their students, they have received little additional resources and training to support them.

(h) The enormous disruption in schooling (one of the longest in the world) and loss of social interaction has had a serious impact on the mental health of our children. There is real fear that our children falling behind in their studies and concerns whether, as schools reopen, they will be safe from the virus.

1.3   There is urgent need for an emergency national education recovery plan to rehabilitate students with learning loss – post-pandemic.

1.4   This post-pandemic learning loss is global – but other countries have been working on solutions to this since 2020 and early 2021. Our children are being left behind. Malaysia's economic competitiveness could suffer. Social stability could be undermined.

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[2] As of 31 March 2022.

Implications of the Education Crisis

The following are the key significant implications that we could expect, if we do not act boldly, quickly and comprehensively:

1. With more than 40% of our children significantly affected by learning loss in the past two years, we could face this scenario for many years to come:
   - (a) Higher rate of early education drop-out;
   - (b) Less skilled labour force;
   - (c) Serious impact on long-term workforce productivity;
   - (d) Economic downturn;
   - (e) Increased social problems and worsening social instability.

2. If we do not now inject lifesaving investments into the pre-school sector (including children with learning disabilities), the on-going education crisis will continue to be perpetuated for a number of years, as many children will not be prepared educationally for Primary 1. Twenty-five percent (1,210) of all kindergartens and pre-school child services have closed as of 31 March 2022).

3. The current mental health pandemic in children (as a result of school loss, home confinement and loss of peer social interaction) will have major impact on long-term health needs in the country. We can expect higher rates of suicide and mental health pathology that will strain the health services. This will result in a less than robust workforce.

"This generation of students now risks losing $17 trillion in lifetime earnings in present value, or about 14 percent of today's global GDP, as a result of Covid-19 pandemic-related school closures".

World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, Dec 2021[3]

"The cumulative effects of the pandemic could have a long-term impact on an entire generation of students. Education achievement and attainment are linked not only to higher earnings but also to better health, reduced incarceration rates, and greater political participation. We estimate that, without immediate and sustained interventions, pandemic-related unfinished learning could reduce lifetime earnings for K–12 students by an average of $49,000 to $61,000."

– McKinsey Report, 2021[4]

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[3] World Bank-UNESCO-UNICEF report (Dec 2021). Learning Losses from COVID-19 Could Cost this Generation of Students Close to $17 Trillion in Lifetime Earnings. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/12/06/learning-losses-from-covid-19-could-cost-this-generation-of-students-close-to-17-trillion-in-lifetime-earnings>.

[4] McKinsey Report (July 2021). COVID-19 and education: The lingering effects of unfinished learning. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>.

Prescription: Key Principles for Recovery

The suggestions and initiatives below are taken from the best evidence and practice currently available internationally and adapted to the Malaysian situation

- The key post-COVID-19 rehabilitation measures for education are outlined in this document. It is important to emphasize that no one-size national solution will work. We need local-level modification or adaptation of any national plan, taking into account the specific local context, cultures and issues/resources.

- Each State, district, municipality and community may identify schools requiring additional support, including those experiencing high dropout rates.

- The Ministry of Education (MOE) could enlist help from parents, civil society organizations (CSOs) and other agencies to support local initiatives.

- To ensure that no child is left behind, the focus should be broader than inclusion and academic achievement. Schooling should give each child a sense of mastery, in tandem with developing confidence, self-worth and life skills.

- Teachers and schools will require support and additional resources.

- Any recovery initiative requires good data on attendance and enrolment data that are disaggregated by student subgroups.

1	Rapid assessments Understand each child's situation/status		7	Assure parents of classroom COVID-19 safety	
2	Maintain attendance - reach out to school dropouts & those lost in transition		8	Move downstream to support pre-school services	
3	Identify & support vulnerable children		9	Continue to use some digital means of learning to reinforce education	
4	Institute staggered terms and years to catch up on lost education		10	Be aware of and address the mental health needs of students	
5	Monitor the progress of each student		11	Give teachers the support required to meet these unique challenges	
6	Pursue special initiatives to support Standard 1 entry		12	Leave no child behind: Give more individual attention to help at-risk children	

Prescription: What we Need to Do (Key areas to work on)	Execution: How to Do It and Resources Required	Index to More Details (page number)
1. Undertake rapid assessment - to understand each child's situation and status.	• Simple tool for quick assessment. Suggest MOE: • Reduce current data return burden of teachers. • Propose lead role of the Malaysian Paediatric Association, in partnership with concerned Government entities, CSOs and community groups, to facilitate rapid assessment clinics for children thought to have a disability, including devising ways to reach children in hard-to-reach locations.	21
2. Maintain attendance - reach out to school dropouts (the hardest children to identify will be those lost in transition - from pre-school to primary and from primary to secondary school).	Suggest MOE: • Use existing enrolment/registration register to check on attendance of all children and identify those who have dropped or failed to transition. • Collaborate with Jabatan Pendaftaran Negara to use the national identification register (MyKid) to identify all children who should have entered school in 2021 and 2022 and cross-check with school attendance, to identify failure to attend school. • Make home visits to children who have dropped out or failed to register --- home visits coordinated by MOE: involve MOE staff, CSOs, local authorities/agencies. • Reintroduce Program Sarapan Pagi in all government and government-aided schools and increase the income/eligibility threshold for this programme to enable more children to benefit from it.	22
3. Identify vulnerable children (e.g., those in poverty, children with disabilities, etc) who need more support.	Suggest MOE could work with the Treasury Department to: • Support all families identified as vulnerable and whose children are not able to return to school due to financial difficulties, especially those lacking food security. • Give these families assurance that they will have adequate, monthly financial support for the next 1 to 2 years that is tied to their children returning to school.	23
4. Institute staggered terms and years to catch up on lost education years via a flexible system for the next 2 years that allows students to redo an educational year to yield time for catching up.	Suggest MOE could: • Formulate a two-year staggered catch-up period (see example in table), to be reviewed with teachers after 6 and 12 months of use. • Offer local schools the flexibility to adapt it to their children's progress. • Inform parents and children that they have an option to repeat any year, if they require more educational support to catch up. This would include staying on longer in school for an extra 1 to 2 years. • Make financial assistance available to those students who would otherwise be deterred from taking this recommended path. • Encourage teachers to focus on core subjects that are non-negotiable, including Science, Mathematics, Bahasa Malaysia, English, Basic Literacy and Life Skills --- if the catch-up education volume is deemed too extensive for	24

Prescription: What we Need to Do (Key areas to work on)	Execution: How to Do It and Resources Required	Index to More Details (page number)
	some students/States, districts/municipalities, communities. • Consider the teaching of other subjects in reduced volume or offer those as optional electives. • Monitor closely the catch-up education volume: if it is observed that the catch-up education volume is too extensive, MOE may implement better long-term solutions, including mobilizing more teachers (e.g., graduates on short contracts) and strengthening existing infrastructure to ensure that especially vulnerable children (who are the most severely impacted) are assisted adequately.	
5. Monitor the progress of each student using the individual education plan.	• Suggest: MOE ensure that all children have an individual education plan (IEP) that is discussed with parents/guardians and that older children are involved in those discussions. The IEP could be periodically modified and made available online to parents via the appropriate security password.	27
6. Pursue special initiatives to support Standard 1 entry for those who did not receive pre-school education, including those with learning disabilities who did not benefit from early intervention.	Suggest MOE could: • Harness additional human resources for the next 1 to 2 years to support children who did not receive adequate pre-school education or have a learning disability. There could be 1 extra teacher in all Primary 1 and 2 classes in every school. • Obtain the additional human resources by hiring, on a contract basis, retired teachers, unemployed university graduates, upper secondary school leavers, other civil servants with low work volume. The type of human resources would depend on the State; for example, rural schools may opt to hire local school leavers, given their availability, need for employment opportunities/work experience and ability to relate to the children's culture and context.	27
7. Assure parents of classroom COVID-19 safety.	Suggest MOE, in partnership with the Ministry of Health/school authorities/corporations/donors and other entities, as appropriate, implement the following: • Ensure all children are vaccinated before attending school. • Equip all classrooms with reliable High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA)-based portable air cleaners. • Offer FFP2/KF94 quality masks to all students from especially vulnerable households/in high-risk situations and teachers of those students.	28
8. Move downstream to support pre-school services.	• Children are especially vulnerable and need Government budgetary provisions to cover half the operating costs (staff remuneration and running charges) for the early intervention programmes (EIPs) delivered by CSOs for the next two years, to keep vital services alive for children with disabilities, covering both pre-school and older children with disabilities.	29

Prescription: What we Need to Do (Key areas to work on)	Execution: How to Do It and Resources Required	Index to More Details (page number)
	• Pre-school education services require incentives to rebuild, as well as maintain facilities and staffing, particularly for pre-school children in remote areas where there are only a few young children. The National Early Childhood Intervention Council (NECIC) and national associations of early childhood education stand ready to work with Government, to identify kindergartens in need of support so that those kindergartens may receive financial incentives for the next 1 to 2 years.	
9. Continue to use some digital means of learning to reinforce education.	Suggest that the Government could: • Spearhead a heightened and nation-wide initiative, working with national telecommunications companies (e.g., Celcom, Digi, Maxis) and multinational corporations to make available a digital device (Chromebook or tablet) and pre-paid internet access to every B40 school student. • Complete this initiative within 6 months of its being launched, to give a major boost to the learning capabilities of especially vulnerable students. • Empower children so that they know how to stay safe online and whom to inform, if they find themselves in uncomfortable situations.	29
10. Be aware of and address the mental health needs of students.	Suggest that MOE could: • Offer all teachers guidance on how to recognize students with potential mental health issues and avenues to refer them for help. • Consider using the 'Super Skills for Life' programme, an internationally recognized programme already introduced to Malaysia and available in BM. • Engage the Malaysian Medical Association and mental health professionals/associations in the country to offer support to students.	31
11. Give teachers the support required to meet unique challenges	Suggest that MOE: • Recruit suitable people (as outlined in recommendation 6 above) to assist in mentoring during the next 1 to 2 years --- for schools with high numbers of vulnerable students needing more individual attention. • Reduce administrative tasks and provide support, as needed, for introducing more child-centred teaching methods (e.g., Individual Education Plans). • Identify and provide assistance to teachers experiencing burn-out and mental health issues.	32
12. Leave no child behind - Give more individual attention to help at-risk children	• Suggest: To achieve this, in addition to the measures outlined above, include all children (with and without standard documentation). Suggest that MOE consider the following for action: • Communicate clearly to all head teachers and divisional educational officers the zero reject policy that is in keeping with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the	33

Prescription: What we Need to Do (Key areas to work on)	Execution: How to Do It and Resources Required	Index to More Details (page number)
	Child, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the SDGs that Malaysia has committed to implement.	
	• Provide schools that have a high number of vulnerable students the human resources to meet the need for giving individual attention to students by recruiting temporary teacher assistants and mentors drawn from local unemployed university graduates, suitable recent school leavers or retired teachers.	
	• Introduce as a KPI the design, planning and regular review of the IEP of each student with the concerned student and parents/guardians.	
	• Assess school performance/KPIs, to focus on cultivating an environment that emphasizes individualized student progress and credits efforts to address the needs of vulnerable students.	
	• Incorporate into school inspector visits the creation of a supportive, learner-centred climate and the identification of challenges and effective means of addressing them.	

To address critical **long-term measures** involving the restructuring of the education system in Malaysia, below are recommended actions.

- It is important to recognise that 15% of all students in every class have 'special learning needs,' hence the Government has to plan, organise and budget accordingly.

- It is vital to adopt and implement Universal Design for Learning so as to improve individualised learning. The education emergency requires bold investments: extensive support for teachers and increasing education human resources – quality and quantity.

Government direction, with budgetary infusion, is essential for a new lifeline woven by a coming together of education professionals, parents, communities and CSOs. This lifeline is to enable our children to survive this unprecedented period.

Let us come together to salvage the educational and social pandemic outcomes and potential income and productivity losses of our lost generation.

"an additional year of schooling can increase a person's earnings by 10% and average GDP by 0.37% annually"

Hanushek et al., 2008[5]

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[5] Grant (2017). The contribution of education to economic growth. Helpdesk Report K4D. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5b9b87f340f0b67896977bae/K4D_HDR_The_Contribution_of_Education_to_Economic_Growth_Final.pdf>.

Timelines for Urgent Action (Operationalizing Key Initiatives)

1. Age-Specific

Timeline	Preschool	Primary School	Transition from Primary to Secondary	Secondary School
0-3 months	Undertake rapid assessment of every 6-year-old pre-schooler in literacy & numeracy.	Undertake rapid assessment of every child's situation.	Identify school dropouts.	Undertake rapid assessment of every child's situation & identify pupils who have not returned.
	Identify children 4 to 6 years old who are out-of-school.	Prioritize schools according to household income status/ resources needed.	Undertake home visits to encourage a return to school.	Prioritize schools according to household income status/resources needed & distances to follow-up on school dropouts & encourage return to school or technical/vocational training.

	Identify pre-schools closed during pandemic.	● Brief teachers on how to:
		   * Conduct rapid assessment;
		   * Create & use an individual education plan (IEP) for every child.
		
		● Minimize administrative tasks of teachers.
		
		● Identify teachers experiencing burnout & provide assistance on mental health issues.
		
		● Identify human resources who could go to needy schools (teacher graduates not under MOE employment, unemployed graduates, retired teachers, able secondary school leavers/further education graduates from affected rural areas to assist in primary schools/could consider reassigning civil servants with lighter workload to serve needy schools).		

		● Create individual education plan (IEP) for every child. ● Mobilize parental & community support for staggered plan success & start school food gardens (school food security; building knowledge, social skills & emotional health).		
	● Revive & strengthen TV Pendidikan, with regular scheduling & complementary learning kits for pre-schoolers &students in rural areas with access to TVs but not digital devices.			

2. Implementing Policy

Timeline	Essential Tasks

0-3 months	1. Finalise staggered 2-year catch-up plan and disseminate.
	
	 2. Introduce as a KPI for schools the implementation and regular review of the IEP of each student with the concerned student and parents/guardians.
	
	 3. Adopt universal design for learning for implementation in the catch-up plan; reorient school environment to child-centred learning.
	
	 4. Adapt the protocol for school inspector visits to emphasize the creation of a supportive, inclusive, learner-centred climate & the identification of challenges & effective means of addressing them.
	
	 5. Equip all classrooms with reliable High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA)-based portable air cleaners, with FFP2/KF94 quality masks offered to all students from especially vulnerable households/in high-risk situations and teachers of those students.
	
	 6. Invest in sex-segregated, accessible toilets & water & hygiene measures that girls can safely use.
	
	 7. Issue a clear memorandum to all head-teachers to ensure that no child is denied education:
	    a. On the ground of disability;
	    b. While her/his documentary status is being reviewed.
	
	 8. Adjust technical, vocational education & training (TVET)) programmes to on-going pandemic market demand parameters, livelihood options & labour force skill requirements. Remove TVET institutional barriers to enable wide participation by students with diverse levels of ability.

3. Next Steps

TimeLine	Preschool	Primary School	Transition from Primary to Secondary	Secondary School
3-6 months	Financial & regulatory support (2 years) for early childhood intervention programmes &preschools to operate.	Send extra teachers & teacher support for all classes according to priority.	Financial support for families who cannot return due to financial reasons.	Send extra teachers & teacher support for remedial lessons or tutoring sessions.
		● Launch nation-wide initiative: give every B40 school student a digital device (Chromebook or tablet) & pre-paid internet access. ● Empower children for online safety.		
	● Financial support for families who cannot attend due to financial reasons. ● Reintroduce Program Sarapan Pagi in all government and government-aided schools.			
6th month	● Review to identify course correction.			
		● Monitor IEPs.		
6-9 months		Reassess every child's situation and learning progress.		Reassess every child's situation and learning progress.
		●Offer all teachers guidance on how to recognise students with potential mental health issues & avenues**.**		
9-12 months	● Continue to support roll out. ● Review & adjust implementation accordingly.			
12th month	● Review to identify course correction.			
		● Monitor IEPs.		

I.   Detailed Situational Analysis

Many children in Malaysia have experienced an education pause or loss due to COVID-19 in the past two years and more.

A large MOE survey conducted in March-April 2020[6] showed that 37% of children did not own any digital device and only 15% of students had personal computers, with 50% relying on smartphones. This is borne out by anecdotal reports from teachers: more than 30% to 40% of children were not able to attend online classes. Some had no internet connectivity; others had to climb a hill or tree to get a signal. This digital divide outlines the disparity in home environments for learning during school shut-down.

Even for those who had access to devices and internet connectivity, there were still hurdles in accessing, as compared to affluent peers. Many had to use phones rather than laptops; some had to share devices/broadband bandwidth and physical space with siblings and work-from-home parents.

Others, in the interiors of Sarawak, Sabah and Peninsular Malaysia, only had occasional access to information via social media (e.g., WhatsApp), but not downloadable material. Children in the interior boarding schools of Sarawak and Sabah were not able to collect work from school to do at home (a method used by some schools to offer education), given the distances involved.

Even in the case of those who managed to access online learning, teachers reported that many of them were inattentive. Some parents commented that, during their children's online classes, at times the teachers turned off their cameras (audio only) and instructed their students to also switch off their cameras. It is possible that switching off the video function was a means resorted to in locations where signals were weak. Whatever the reason might be, the absence of direct video communication between student and teacher makes it harder to focus attention on lessons during online classes.

The excessive screen time that children have experienced has worsened screen addiction and reduced attention span. Furthermore, aside from infrastructure and connectivity access and affordability issues, there are children with disabilities who have not been able to participate in any online learning. The standard operating procedures (SOPs) that determined which children could return to school when schools reopened meant many children with disabilities were excluded on health grounds (e.g., children who drooled). A prerequisite for return to school – submission of the MOE form completed by parents – omitted provisions regarding children with more extensive special needs. At the same time, there have been no remedial lessons for those failing to catch up, especially students with learning problems who are slower to grasp lesson content. Under these conditions, many children with disabilities have become even more dependent on parental help for much of their learning.

The Ministry of Education, in a written parliamentary reply, stated that 21,316 students (0.22% of all students) had dropped out from the beginning of the pandemic lockdown from March 2020 to July 2021.[7] Of more concern is the UNICEF Malaysia data from the *Families*

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[6] Ministry of Education data quoted in Khazanah Research Institute report (28 April 2020) on "Covid-19 and Unequal Learning" in
<http://www.krinstitute.org/assets/contentMS/img/template/editor/20200426_Covid_Education_v3.pdf>.

[7] Ida Lim, Malay Mail (5 December 2021). "Education Ministry: 21,316 students quit school during Covid-19 months of March 2020 to July 2021" in <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2021/12/05/education-ministry-21316-students-quit-school-during-covid-19-months-of-mar/2026057>.

on the Edge Report:[8] 1 in 5 inner-city parents reported children had lost interest in school. The UNICEF report highlighted that some children had become demotivated to continue school and that many families had difficulties paying tuition or transportation fees. In a parliamentary reply, the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) confirmed that a total of 445 Muslim school children had dropped out of school since 2020, to be married.[9] It may also be noted that, in late 2021, the Government announced that 5,173 children had been orphaned by the pandemic[10] (though these figures may be understated due to lack of testing or reporting). Little is known about the situation of these children, and whether they are still in school.

The patchy education that many children of all ages have experienced due to school closure has resulted in some children losing basic skills, regressing in learning abilities and having to relearn how to make friendships. This is borne out by data from other countries that have studied this issue.[11,12,13,14] Some studies show that, despite favourable conditions, students made little or no progress while learning from home. In addition, learning loss was most pronounced among students from disadvantaged homes. In addition to poorer academic performances, online students felt less connected to their instructors and peers.[15]

Certain groups of children in the community have had worse educational outcomes due to COVID-19. At present, we do not have sufficient Malaysian data on the communities whose children are most impacted by the pandemic. Internationally available data suggest that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have suffered the biggest gaps in learning.[16] Anecdotal evidence from civil society organisations (CSOs) that are providing support on the ground in Malaysia indicate that these include:[17]

- Children with disabilities;
- Children in poverty;
- Children in rural schools (especially those in Sabah and Sarawak);
- Children in indigenous communities (especially the Orang Asli and Penan);

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[8] UNICEF (2020-2021). *Families on the Edge Report* (*Parts 1,2,3,4*) in <https://www.unicef.org/malaysia/families-edge>.

[9] Aslinda Nasir, Utusan Malaysia (2 December 2021). "445 pelajar berhenti sekolah kerana ingin kahwin" in <https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/12/parlimen-445-pelajar-berhenti-sekolah-kerana-ingin-kahwin/>.

[10] Prime Minister's speech (23 October 2021) in <https://www.pmo.gov.my/2021/10/teks-ucapan-sempena-pelancaran-keluarga-malaysia/>.

[11] Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) (10 November 2020) Press statement: "Children hardest hit by COVID-19 pandemic are regressing in basic skills and learning" in <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsted-children-hardest-hit-by-covid-19-pandemic-are-regressing-in-basic-skills-and-learning>.

[12] Per Engzell, Frey, A., and D. Verhagen, M. D. (27 April 2021). "Learning loss due to school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic" in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America (PNAS) April 27, 2021 118 (17) e2022376118 in <https://www.pnas.org/content/118/17/e2022376118>.

[13] UNICEF data hub. "COVID-19 and children" in <https://data.unicef.org/covid-19-and-children/>.

[14] Human Rights Watch (May 17, 2021). "Pandemic's Dire Global Impact on Education" in <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/05/17/pandemics-dire-global-impact-education>.

[15] Michael S. Kofoed, Gebhart, L., Gilmore, D., and Moschitto, R. (May 2021). "Zooming to Class?: Experimental Evidence on College Students' Online Learning during COVID-19," IZA DP No. 14356 in <https://www.iza.org/en/publications/dp/14356/zooming-to-class-experimental-evidence-on-college-students-online-learning-during-covid-19>.

[16] Emma Dorn, Hancock, B., Sarakatsannis, J., and Viruleg, E. (July 27, 2021). "COVID-19 and education: The lingering effects of unfinished learning," McKinsey & Company in <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>.

[17] Srividhya Ganapathy (2021). "Education: The Lost Generation - Moving Forward." (PowerPoint slides).

- Children who are stateless, refugees and those in detention centres.

There are 600,000 school children who rely on the Rancangan Makanan Tambahan (RMT), or Supplementary Food Programme, which aims to meet 1/3 to 1/4 of the daily meal requirements of these primary school children. Hence, these children have been significantly affected and the COVID-19 pandemic has worsened childhood malnutrition.

Children with disabilities have been the hardest hit by the loss of education services.[18] Children who were newly-identified as having disabilities now have a later diagnosis, later therapy and hence poorer outcomes. Due to the limited access to education and health facilities, many children with less obvious disabilities (dyslexia and other learning disabilities) will likely not be identified and given timely support. Many children with disabilities who are in special education classes (PPKI classes) were not able to get back to school for much of 2020-2021 and were also not able to access remote learning.

All community-based rehabilitation centres (PDKs) under the Department of Social Welfare and CSO-run early intervention centres, that conduct early intervention programmes (EIPs), have remained closed, as have kindergartens. Hence, many children have missed out on pre-school preparation and will have significant learning issues when they enter Standard 1. Some CSOs offered online support for EIPs and classes, but many children and parents were not able to participate due to lack of devices, as well as connectivity and parental supervision issues. Even with a 1:1 (one teacher to one student) online support, children with learning difficulties struggled to remain on-task.

While most teachers have worked hard to support their students, they have received little of what they needed --- additional resources and training --- to support them. Anecdotal evidence indicates that some teachers have resorted to leaving their online platform on but do not say anything or teach online, as they are simply unable to cope. The syllabus has also not been adequately modified to enable online learning or deal with the limited attention span of children sitting on their own in front of their devices, unsupervised. Teachers are required to institute a '1-week-on and 1-week-off' schedule for students whereby, at any one time, half are in class and the other half receive online training. However, there is no way teachers can manage such a schedule, as the same teacher is required to teach both the in-person class and online class. Some teachers were teaching one or more subjects in other classes of the same year and/or different years, further compounding the difficulty.

It is acknowledged that students who move on to the next grade unprepared are missing key building blocks of knowledge that are necessary for success, while students who repeat a year are much less likely to complete high school and move on to college. And, it is not just academic knowledge that these students may miss out on. They are at risk of finishing school without the skills, behaviours and mindsets to succeed in college, technical and vocational training institutions or in the workforce.[19]

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic is a childhood mental health pandemic that is only just being recognised and addressed, with long-term implications.[20] The enormous disruption in

[18] Amar-Singh HSS and Ng, L.T. (2021). "Future of Early Intervention Services in Malaysia," National Early Childhood Intervention Council, Malaysia.

[19] Emma Dorn, Hancock, B., Sarakatsannis, J., and Viruleg, E. (July 27, 2021). "COVID-19 and education: The lingering effects of unfinished learning," McKinsey & Company in <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>.

[20] Amar-Singh HSS (November 2020; updated August 2021). "COVID-19 and its Impact on Future Generations. Speaking for the Unspoken 2020: The Vulnerable Population and COVID-19."

schooling (whose duration is one of the longest in the world) and loss of social interaction has had a serious toll on our children. Some children are now more fearful, suffer 'post-traumatic stress disorder' and have trust and relationship issues. Although there is insufficient data, anecdotal evidence shows that most children are now scared of how far they have fallen behind. Children in secondary school education are especially affected. This is a deep source of stress and mental anguish. Some have trouble with sleep and loneliness. Suicide among teenagers in Malaysia has doubled in the first few months of 2021.[21]

Some children have experienced the loss of a loved one; others were relocated (due to the loss of parents) and experienced the loss of a familiar home, school and friends. In October 2021, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and the Children's Hospital Association jointly declared that the pandemic-related decline in child and adolescent mental health had become a national emergency in the U.S. that would have a lasting impact on young people, their families and communities, with soaring rates of depression, anxiety, trauma, loneliness and suicide.

The same situation (as highlighted in the AAP-AACAP-CHA Declaration) likely exists in Malaysia and needs to be urgently addressed.[22] Any measures to address the gaps in education must also deal with the mental health of our children. Getting our children safely back to school is a start to dealing with some of these concerns. This needs to be done with schools offering children viable means of building an increased sense of mastery and self-esteem and does not leave students struggling and feeling a failure.

It is important to note that the Covid-19 crisis has exacerbated existing inequalities in education.

Any recovery plan must focus on equity and building back better as children return to school.

The joint UNESCO, UNICEF and World Bank report[23] on 'The state of the global education crisis: A path to recovery' is a valuable resource on how to 'build back better.' The document outlines the 'nearly insurmountable' scale of lost schooling due to COVID-19 (up to 70% of 10-year-olds in low-and middle-income countries lack basic reading skills) and suggests key 'levers' to accelerate learning recovery. Although this report was prepared independently of that document, it is interesting to note the striking similarities in thinking and ideas for moving forward.

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[21] Haslin Hasan, The Straits Times (August 9, 2021). "Covid-19 lockdown sees rising mental health concerns among teens in Malaysia." in <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/covid-19-lockdown-sees-rising-mental-health-concerns-among-teens-in-malaysia>.

[22] American Academy of Pediatrics (Last updated 19 October 2021). "AAP-AACAP-CHA Declaration of a National Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health" from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) and Children's Hospital Association (CHA) in <https://www.aap.org/en/advocacy/child-and-adolescent-healthy-mental-development/aap-aacap-cha-declaration-of-a-national-emergency-in-child-and-adolescent-mental-health/>.

[23] The joint UNESCO, UNICEF and World Bank report (2021). 'The state of the global education crisis: A path to recovery' in <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/publication/the-state-of-the-global-education-crisis-a-path-to-recovery>.

II. Post-COVID-19 Rehabilitation Measures for Education: Quick Win Solutions

The focus of this paper is on short-term actionable measures to offer 'quick-wins' to remedy the issues. Thus, this document does not address the critical long-term measures involving the restructuring of the education system in Malaysia that is urgently needed. It does, however, highlight some issues for further consideration.

A. General Suggestions and Approach

1. It is important to emphasise that no one-size national solution will work. The situation requires a framework and ideas/suggestions, with scope for local initiatives, aimed at supporting the education of our children. At the local level, the context, cultures and issues will vary and cannot be addressed by a blanket national approach.

    It is important to offer **adequate resources** to those on the ground and trust that the teachers and parents who know their children best will try their hardest to tackle the problems. The role of the central-level stakeholders is to have a minimally burdensome and user-friendly monitoring system to track children's education progress by State/District/Municipality/Division (PPD – Pejabat Pendidikan Daerah). Each State/District/Municipality/Division should be encouraged to identify schools requiring additional support, including those experiencing high dropout rates.

2. The problems cannot be solved by MOE acting on its own. The solutions call for a multi-pronged, multi-agency approach, with the active participation of CSOs and Local Government and State/District/Municipality/Division authorities in supporting local initiatives. It is vital that parents are involved in the local-level education re-building initiatives and their opinions are heeded. It is also recommended that a Corporate Mentorship Programme, in conjunction with MOE, be launched: corporations partner with government schools as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility initiative (with tax benefits for the Corporation), to financially support some of the measures proposed here. It is noted that caution must be exercised and that the safety of the students and their best interest are always the paramount consideration. Thus, all mentoring exercises must be in the presence of the school authorities.

3. Teachers will require support. To free teachers to fully immerse in teaching and supporting/nurturing the children in their care, it will be important to remove or minimize some of the burdensome duties of teachers (e.g., paperwork, data collection and other lower priority responsibilities).

4. No child in Malaysia should be denied access to the public education system, regardless of the child's or family's status (e.g., associated with factors such as nationality, identification documentation availability, disability, statelessness).

5. To ensure that no child is left behind, the focus should be broader than inclusion and academic achievement. Schooling should give each child a sense of mastery, in tandem with developing confidence, self-worth and life skills.

6. Efforts o provide solutions/recommendations are hampered by the lack of evidence and data. It is imperative that this situation be rectified urgently, and data from schools throughout Malaysia be collated and coordinated, to enable the full understanding of the magnitude of the problem, and the numbers involved. To this end, as a priority, it is necessary to collect attendance and enrolment data and disaggregate the data for student subgroups, including the following:

6.1 How many children have dropped out of the following:

    (a) Government or Government-assisted schools?

    (b) Special education schools?

    (c) State-registered religious institutions?

    (d) Other schools/learning institutions[24]?

6.2 How many children were registered in kindergartens in the years 2020, 2021 and 2022?

6.3 How many children were enrolled in Primary 1 in 2020, 2021 and 2022?

6.4 How many children were enrolled in Primary 6 in 2020, 2021 and 2022?

6.5 How many children were enrolled in Form 1 in 2021 and 2022?

6.6 How many children were registered for the SPM exams in 2020 and in 2021, and how many of these children actually sat for the exams?

6.7 What were the absenteeism rates in 2020/2021/2022 for all States and Districts?

6.8 What are the results of the survey/assessment undertaken by MOE on the mental health of children?

6.9 What are the data (2020 and 2021) on attempted suicides and suicides involving children in the records of the police/accident and emergency/trauma departments of general hospitals?

B. Undertake Rapid Assessment – To Understand Each Child's Situation and Status

1. The Government may require a simple, rapid assessment tool that assesses each child's education status (in each of the core subjects – not just in each grade/schooling year), mental health and social/family circumstances, so as to prioritise support (see below, Section D. Identify Vulnerable Children Who Need More Support). Minimising any paperwork required for this and focusing only on essential areas would be a recognition of teacher workload. The desirable aim is for teachers to tailor their teaching to each child and to identify schools that are facing more challenges and require more support.

2. The Government could obtain support from paediatricians and clinical/educational psychologists from all over the country (without fees charged) to offer rapid assessment clinics for children suspected of having a disability – the rapid assessment for each child must be conducted in the presence of the respective teacher and parent(s). For parts of the country where this is harder to reach/access, online paediatric support via nearby clinics could be organised for remote assessment.

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[24] Where it is possible to get such data.

3.   **Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required**

Identify a simple tool that can be used for a quick assessment and will not burden teachers. Ideally, the tool can also allow for a reassessment of progress after a 6-month interval. Two samples of subject-based quick assessment for Primary 3 Science are annexed.

3.1   MOE could review current data entry and submissions required by teachers and work to reduce the volume.

3.2   The Malaysian Paediatric Association, in partnership with concerned CSOs, could engage with paediatricians working in the Ministry of Health, Universities and in private practice, to offer their services, all over the country, for rapid assessment clinics for children who may have a disability. Some funding would be required to enable online access to/by students/parents/guardians/schools (online assessments) in remote areas and to cover travel costs.

C.   Maintain Attendance – Reach Out to School Dropouts

1.   The Government would require an outreach programme to re-engage, support and re-enroll students who have opted not to return to school. Teachers, supported by social workers and CSOs, would need to do home visits to understand the students' home environment, circumstances and reasons for dropping out. This would require a travel budget and time, especially to reach remote communities far from the nearest school. Those who dropped out due to family financial reasons would require meaningful support from the Government. Others would require a rebuilding of their self-confidence and motivation to re-enter school. Some older students could be transitioned to vocational training programmes.

2.   The hardest children to identify would be those lost in transition – those who did not make the transition from pre-school to primary and from primary to secondary school. Many children with disabilities may never have entered into the school system and need to be identified.

3.   **Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required**

It is suggested that MOE could consider the following:

3.1   Use existing enrolment/registration register to check on the attendance of all children and identify those who have dropped out or failed to transition between Standard 6 and Form 1.

3.2   Use the national identification register (MyKid) to identify all children who should have entered school in 2021 and 2022, based on age, and cross-check those with school attendance to identify failure to attend school. This task could be jointly conducted by Jabatan Pendaftaran Negara and MOE.

3.3   Implement parallel mechanisms for children in international, private, home school and religious schools.

3.4   Coordinate home visits, involving MOE staff, CSOs, and local authorities/agencies, to encourage a return to school, as soon as a child who has dropped out or failed to register is identified. Some funding would be required for covering travel expenses.

3.5   Reintroduce Program Sarapan Pagi in all Government and Government-aided schools and increase the income/eligibility threshold for this Programme to enable more children to benefit from it. Wherever feasible, encourage schools to start food gardening.[25]

D.   Identify Vulnerable Children Who Need More Support

1.   The Government could enlist and fund CSOs with proven track records, to offer targeted support to especially vulnerable children and their families. For this, the Government would need to set aside funds to aid these families. Financial support and food security for children with and without disabilities are required for the families of children in poverty. Many drop out of school because families can no longer afford the time and money to support their children's learning. Affordable or free after-school and out-of-school care services (trained to support children with disabilities) may be necessary for these families.

2.   The education needs of indigenous, stateless and refugee children, as well as children in detention require targeted approaches that are best planned by consultation with the relevant CSOs and rural community leaders, especially in remote areas. The learning needs of indigenous and stateless children are best identified by the respective village and community heads. The relevant Resident's Office will need to facilitate discussions between federally-employed school heads and rural communities.

3.   **Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required**

It is suggested that MOE, in partnership with other entities,:

3.1   Work with the Treasury Department to support all families identified as vulnerable, especially those lacking food security and whose children are not able to return to school due to financial difficulties. Assure these families that they will have adequate, monthly financial support for the next 2 years that is tied to their children returning to school.

3.2   Fund after-school care services in PPR flats (urban areas) and local community centres (rural areas). Obtain human resources by funding neighbouring childcare centres that are struggling financially or have closed down in the past two years. These centres can be identified via national early childhood care and education networks or TASKA associations.

3.3   Identify, in partnership with community leaders, vulnerable indigenous children who have dropped out/are at-risk of dropping out or are seriously struggling to catch up, and take mutually agreed and culturally-appropriate measures to enhance child participation, including overcoming practical problems in remote areas.

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[25] "Growing Healthy Communities in School Gardens during COVID-19" in <https://rethinkoutside.org/growing-healthy-communities-in-school-gardens-during-covid-19/>.
"The Importance of School Gardens" in <https://www.fao.org/3/a0218e/A0218E01.htm>, followed by 12 Parts on rationale and tips on how to start, run, mobilize help for, and maintain school gardens.

3.4 Give Resident Officers covering remote rural areas, and other relevant stakeholders, a report by the respective Divisional Education Officer detailing the situation after the first semester of the new school year.

3.5 Enable children without the standard documentation to enrol in the nearest public school and link them to assistance required to regularize their status.

3.6 Support CSOs providing education to marginalised groups.

3.7 Urge the Managers of detention centres with school-aged children to work with their Boards of Visitors to find means of ensuring that the educational needs of the children are met and to report on their progress to MOE.

E.   Institute Staggered Terms and Years to Catch up on Lost Years

1.   A two-year staggered catch-up period is proposed.

For example, Standard 3 students could have 3 terms in the 2022 education year:
1st term, to catch up on Standard 1 work;
2nd term, to catch up on Standard 2 work;
3rd term, to catch up on Standard 3 work.

When the students are in Standard 4 in 2023:
1st term, to catch up on Standard 3 work;
2nd and 3rd terms, to focus on Standard 4 work.

When the students are in Standard 5 in 2024:
1st term, to catch up on Standard 4 work;
2nd and 3rd terms, to focus on Standard 5 work.

See the tables below.

For children in Primary 1 class in 2022

Year	2022			2023			2024		
Class	Primary 1			Primary 2			Primary 3		
Term	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Syllabus	Primary 1	Primary 1	Primary 1	Primary 2	Primary 2	Primary 2	Primary 3	Primary 3	Primary 3

For children in Primary 2 class in 2022

Year	2022			2023			2024		
Class	Primary 2			Primary 3			Primary 4		
Term	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Syllabus	Primary 1	Primary 1	Primary 2	Primary 2	Primary 3	Primary 3	Primary 4	Primary 4	Primary 4

For children in Primary 3 class in 2022

Year	2022			2023			2024		
Class	Primary 3			Primary 4			Primary 5		
Term	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Syllabus	Primary 1	Primary 2	Primary 3	Primary 3	Primary 3	Primary 4	Primary 4	Primary 5	Primary 5

For children in Primary 4 class in 2022

Year	2022			2023			2024		
Class	Primary 4			Primary 5			Primary 6		
Term	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Syllabus	Primary 2	Primary 3	Primary 3	Primary 4	Primary 4	Primary 5	Primary 5	Primary 6	Primary 6

For children in Primary 5 class in 2022

Year	2022			2023		
Class	Primary 5			Primary 6		
Term	1	2	3	1	2	3
Syllabus	Primary 3	Primary 4	Primary 5	Primary 5	Primary 6	Primary 6

For children in Primary 6 class in 2022

Year	2022			2023		
Class	Primary 6			Primary 6		
Term	1	2	3	1	2	3
Syllabus	Primary 4	Primary 5	Primary 6	Primary 6	Primary 6	Form 1

For children in Form 1 class in 2022

Year	2022			2023			2024		
Class	Form 1			Form 2			Form 3		
Term	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Syllabus	Form 1	Form 1	Form 1	Form 2	Form 2	Form 2	Form 3	Form 3	Form 3

For children in Form 2 class in 2022

Year	2022			2023		
Class	Form 2			Form 3		
Term	1	2	3	1	2	3
Syllabus	Form 1	Form 1	Form 2	Form 2	Form 3	Form 3

For children in Form 3 class in 2022

Year	2022			2023		
Class	Form 3			Form 4		
Term	1	2	3	1	2	3
Syllabus	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 3	Form 4	Form 4

2. Proposals are required for upper secondary schools that allow flexibility with subjects and examinations.

3. It is important not to cram learning and 'frog-march' children through the curricula. A staggered system would help them understand, build confidence and re-familiarise themselves with the curricula. They need to be motivated, rather than overwhelmed. Children need to have adequate time for the important social interaction that school provides in developing young people: learning through activities that evoke joy, engage their interest and de-stress. It would be very useful to look at the UNICEF 'Core Capacities for Living and Learning' that identify 9 evidence-based areas[26] which should be nurtured to enable successful performance in school and life. These include 'discerning patterns,' 'embodying,' 'empathizing,' 'inquiring,' 'listening,' 'observing,' 'reflecting,' 'relaxing' and 'subtle sensing.'

4. There needs to be a flexible system for the next two years that allows students to stay back or repeat an educational year, if they need more time to catch up. School time could be extended to 3 pm for children in Primary 6 classes, with Government provision for lunch.

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[26] UNICEF (2021). Core Capacities for Living and Learning in <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/1303-what-makes-me-core-capacities-for-living-and-learning.html>.

5. It is suggested that the Government allow children to stay in school longer, past conventional pre-COVID-19 age guidelines, if necessary. At the same time, we must understand and appreciate that, to reengage children in school and learning, it will be necessary to find ways to make school more attractive to them – one way of doing this would be for schools to collaborate with community-oriented partners such as corporations, Local Councillors, State Assemblypersons (ADUNs), MPs, CSOs, State and Local Government Departments, Parent-Teacher Associations and other local community groups, to provide alternative enrichment activities in school that will draw children back to schools (in between the catching up that those children will have to do).[27]

6. **Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required**

    It is suggested that MOE, supported by the Public Services Commission of Malaysia, consider the following for its action:

    6.1 Formulate a two-year staggered catch-up period – see tables above as an example. This will need to be reviewed with teachers after 6 and 12 months of use. Flexibility could be offered to local schools to adapt this approach to their children's progress.

    6.2 Meet the need for more teachers to support the extra years of schooling by hiring retired teachers, unemployed university graduates, and upper secondary school leavers, and reassigning civil servants with light workloads.

    6.3 Inform parents and children of the option for the children to repeat any year, if they require more educational support to catch up. This includes staying in school longer, for an extra 1 to 2 years. Those deterred due to financial reasons could be informed that help would be available to those children who meet the established criteria.

    6.4 Authorize schools with limited physical space for classrooms to accommodate the extra years of schooling by reducing the number of new students for enrolment and redirecting them to schools with low enrolment.

    6.5 Authorize teachers to focus on core subjects that are non-negotiable: Science, Mathematics, Bahasa Malaysia, English, Basic Literacy and Life Skills, if the catch-up education volume is deemed too extensive for some students/areas. Other subjects could be taught in reduced volume or be offered as optional electives. Art and Physical Education should remain, as these subjects are valuable for nurturing creativity and physical fitness which is beneficial to mental health. Furthermore, both subjects combined only occupy a small fraction of the school schedule.

    6.6 Avoid adding to teachers' existing workload (especially as not all teachers have the competencies to teach those subjects) by recruiting additional teachers to teach the aforementioned core subjects.

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[27] Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) (July 2021). "Learning, Equity & Accelerated Pathways (LEAP) Task Force Report," U.S., in:
<https://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/COVID19/LEAPTaskForceReport.pdf?ver=2021-04-28-150118-777>.

F.   Monitor the Progress of Each Student

1.   For post-COVID-19 rehabilitation, the individual education plan (IEP) has now become far more important. The IEP must be designed and planned for all children and no longer only for children with disabilities.

At this critical juncture, it is suggested that MOE play an exemplary ASEAN role in ensuring that IEP planning involves each child, along with the child's parents. This SOP on joint parental and individual child participation in IEP planning and review must also be followed with regard to children with disabilities. Regular review discussions on progress must be held with the children and their parents, using the IEPs, and updating the IEPS, as needed. This process, involving the IEP, will be useful for monitoring progress and introducing timely corrective action.

2.   **Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required**

It is suggested that MOE consider the following for its action:

2.1   Ensure that all children have an individual education plan (IEP) that is discussed with parents/guardians and that older children are involved in those discussions.

2.2   Utilise the existing IEP format which is used by special education teachers and make some modifications for general education students. An IEP could be made only for the subjects that an individual student is struggling with.

2.3   Give teachers the necessary guidance and support as they assess and implement IEPs. Link special education teachers in the Special Education Integrated Programme (Program Pendidikan Khas Integrasi, PPKI) of the respective schools with general education teachers to serve as a source of support for preparing and monitoring IEPs. Arrange for Genius Kurnia to conduct, for general education teachers, an introductory course on preparing and monitoring IEPs.

2.4   The IEP should be periodically modified and made available online via the Sistem Rancangan Pendidikan Individu (e-RPI) to parents and students.

G.   Pursue Special Initiatives to Support Standard 1 Entry

1.   The Government needs to plan for and support those who did not receive pre-school education, as well as those with learning disabilities who did not benefit from early intervention.

2.   **Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required**
It is suggested that MOE consider the following for its action:

2.1   Harness additional human resources for the next 1 to 2 years to support children who did not receive adequate pre-school education or have a learning disability. There should be 1 extra teacher in all Primary 1 and 2 classes in every school.

2.2   Secure the additional human resources by hiring retired teachers, unemployed university graduates, and upper secondary school leavers, and reassigning civil servants with light workloads. The type of human resources to be mobilised would depend on the location and type of school; for example, rural schools in

the interiors may opt to hire local school leavers given their availability, need for employment opportunities/work experience and ability to relate better to the children's culture and context.

H. Assure Parents of Classroom COVID-19 Safety

1. Many parents and children are cautious about a return to school, as they perceive the school environment to be not COVID-safe. Strict adherence to SOPs is important. For all schools and pre-school environments, it is vital that the following is implemented as soon as possible:

   1.1 Vaccinate all children aged 5 to 11 years old.[28]

   1.2 Ensure significant improvements in ventilation, with the routine use of reliable portable air cleaners.

   1.3 Ensure mask improvement for teachers and students, especially those in poorer communities.

   1.4 Promote frequent use of COVID-19 saliva Ag test[29] (this is very operator-dependent and requires training).

2. **Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required**

   MOE, in partnership with school authorities/corporations/donors and other entities, as appropriate, is urged to implement the following:

   2.1 Equip all classrooms with reliable High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA)-based portable air cleaners[30] and reliable CO_2 monitors.[31]

   2.2 Offer FFP2/KF94 quality masks to all:
   (a) Students from households that meet one criterion or more of the following:
   (i) B40;
   (ii) Are disabled, indigenous, rural, refugee, stateless and/or in other especially vulnerable and high-risk situations;
   (b) The teachers of the children of such households.

   2.3 Make COVID-19 saliva Ag test kits freely available to schools that serve communities living in vulnerable and high-risk circumstances.

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[28] 16 January 2022 announcement by YB Khairy Jamaluddin, Minister of Health that the COVID-19 vaccination programme for children will begin at the end of January 2022. See: <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2022/01/16/vaccination-for-kids-to-begin-at-the-end-of-the-month>.

[29] Ministry of Health, Malaysia. "Guide To Using COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Test (Saliva Home Kit)." <https://www.infosihat.gov.my/index.php/multimedia/video/item/panduan-menggunakan-covid-19-rapid-antigen-test-saliva-home-kit>; WHO. "Standard Q COVID-19 Ag Test," in <https://www.who.int/diagnostics_laboratory/eual/eul_0563_117_00_standard_q_covid19_ag_ifu.pdf>.

[30] United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). "Air Cleaners, HVAC Filters and Coronavirus (COVID-19)" in <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/air-cleaners-hvac-filters-and-coronavirus-covid-19>.

[31] National Education Union (NEU). (16 December 2021). "Use of CO_2 Monitors," U.K., in <https://neu.org.uk/advice/use-co2-monitors>.

I. Move Downstream to Support Pre-school Services

1. Keep open Early Intervention Centres run by CSOs (non-commercial, not-for-profit) that deliver early intervention programmes (EIPs), a vital lifeline for children with disabilities, as existing services are so limited.

2. Most Early Intervention Centres run by CSOs (non-commercial, not-for-profit) and that deliver EIPs are struggling due to loss of community funding. Some will close down and others lose staff. Many pre-school services (kindergartens) are also struggling financially.

3. **Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required**

    It is urged that the Government:

    3.1 Allocate budgetary provisions to cover half the operating costs (staff remuneration and running charges) for the early intervention programmes (EIPs) delivered by CSOs for the next two years, to keep vital services alive for children with disabilities, covering both pre-school and older children with disabilities, as children are especially vulnerable.

    3.2 Work with the National Early Childhood Intervention Council (NECIC) and national associations of early childhood education, to identify kindergartens in need of support and provide them financial incentives for the next 1 to 2 years, as pre-school education services require incentives to rebuild, as well as to maintain facilities and staffing, particularly for pre-school children in remote areas with only a few young children.

J. Continue to Use Some Digital Means of Learning

1. Some students have reflected that they have enjoyed and benefited from online learning. Teachers need to adapt to the new norm in teaching. This also means providing support to parents to help their children continue learning at home.

2. Furthermore, online learning requires stable and easily affordable WiFi connectivity all over the country, including in rural and remote areas, especially covering B40 households.

3. There is an urgent need for a coordinated initiative at all levels (national, State and community) and involving diverse sectors (including Internet Service Providers) to bridge the digital divide that is harming the present generation of Malaysian children's educational advancement.

    Government leadership and support are most urgently required for initiating measures that include the following:

    3.1 Enable, via a special scheme and in consultation with Malaysia's Internet Service Providers, the following to have stable access to Internet connectivity at specially reduced or zero rates, to support the learning of especially vulnerable children:

       (a) B40 households with children enrolled in pre-school programmes, early intervention programmes, schools, institutions of higher learning, and technical and vocational training institutions;

     (b)   Children with disabilities;

     (c)   Schools, especially those serving rural and remote areas and urban communities with high poverty rates;

     (d)   CSOs and teachers that are delivering services to the children of poorer families.

3.2   Expand Malaysia's Internet coverage and stability across the country, including remote areas.

3.3   Negotiate with multinational corporations[32] on the provision of a free package of software required by the children of B40 families to kickstart or reboot their individual learning programmes;

3.4   Introduce a scheme for enabling online learning that includes community-level initiatives such as:

     (a)   Collecting and distributing still usable Chromebooks and other smart devices for learning, to the children of poorer families;

     (b)   Encouraging citizens with technical expertise to sign up on an eRoster for providing to community members in their neighbourhood free services in:

          (i)   Teaching children and their parents to use smart devices for the children's learning;
          (ii)   Troubleshooting advice;
          (iii)   Developing tips on deleting files from donated smart devices and installing free open-source software;
          (iv)   Fixing hardware issues.

3.5   Encourage corporations to fund directly Malaysian CSOs that are delivering early intervention programmes and other services that support the education of children in poorer families.

4.   **Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required**

4.1   Spearhead and complete, within 6 months of 2022, a major boost to the learning capabilities of poorer students: a heightened and nation-wide initiative in working with national telecommunications companies (e.g., Celcom, Digi, Maxis) and multinational corporations, to make available a digital device (Chromebook or tablet) and pre-paid internet access to every B40 school student.

4.2   Introduce, in tandem, online safety information and training, with an expansion of online access and systems (that are periodically assessed to monitor effectiveness), to empower children so that they know how to stay safe online and whom to inform, if they find themselves in uncomfortable situations.

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[32] Such as Microsoft.

K.   Be Aware of and Address the Mental Health Needs of Students

1.   Malaysia must address the mental health issues of the children damaged by the pandemic. That is central to rekindling their interest in school.

2.   In this regard, Government action is required to implement measures that include the following:

    2.1   Increase federal funding dedicated to ensuring that all families and children, from infancy through adolescence, can access evidence-based mental health screening, diagnosis, and treatment to appropriately address their mental health needs, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of under-resourced populations.[33]

    2.2   Provide, in every school, dynamic and accessible mental health support for all students, including those with disabilities;

    2.3   Develop, by involving mental health professionals as well as using established tools, like the Super Skills for Life project[34] that can be used by teachers and parents, a focus on supporting social and emotional skills development for all children including those with disabilities.

    2.4   Train a large number of counsellors to support children, as well as facilitate group discussions, to enable students to express and process the emotional impact of the pandemic.

3.   Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required

    MOE, in partnership with concerned entities, may consider undertaking the following:

    3.1   Offer all teachers guidance on how to recognise students with potential mental health issues and referral avenues to help them.

    3.2   Partner with mental health professionals/associations to identify or design a quick screening tool that teachers can use.

    3.3   Support students in addressing mental needs by:

        (a)   Considering the nationwide use of the 'Super Skills for Life' programme, which is ready to be rolled out;

        (b)   Engaging the Malaysian Medical Association and mental health professionals/associations in the country.

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[33] A declaration from the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Children's Hospital Association (October 2021). <https://www.aap.org/en/advocacy/child-and-adolescent-healthy-mental-development/aap-aacap-cha-declaration-of-a-national-emergency-in-child-and-adolescent-mental-health/>.

[34] A useful tool is the 'Super Skills for Life' project designed by Prof. Cecilia Essau, a Malaysian based in the U.K., and Prof. Thomas Holendick. It is being implemented in 21 countries and a study in Spain discovered pupils who had undergone the course of 8 sessions coped better with lockdown than those who had not. The course aims to help students learn how to cope with situations that they find challenging/anxiety-provoking and improve their emotional well-being. See: <https://www.superskillsforlife.com/>. It has already been translated into Bahasa Malaysia and is ready to be implemented with 7 local universities able to train facilitators and monitor impact. Several Ministries gave approval for a TOT in Penang, pre-COVID-19, which was given to over 550 educators.

3.4   Encourage each school to have one trained mental health first aider.[35]

L.   Give Teachers the Support Required to Meet Unique Challenges

1.   In moving towards the rehabilitation of children's education, the biggest casualties may be teachers, unless measures are put in place to support them. The measures include financial support, perhaps for an interim period with data allowances/free data and some kind of overtime/allowance to compensate teachers for the extra hours that these measures will take.

2.   The burden of going online has impacted teachers who are now required to pay for adequate data to enable them to conduct lessons online viably (it is noted that during the pandemic, teachers also reported having had to buy additional furniture and equipment to enable them to run online classes).

3.   Some of the measures advocated here place additional burdens on teachers' time and finances. For example, teachers may have to give up part-time incomes because their new tasks require them to work over and beyond their working hours.

4.   Teachers have in the past complained that they have had to incur out-of-pocket expenses for paper, printer cartridge costs and stationery to carry out individual PT3 assessments. It is especially tough when a teacher has more than 60 students and perhaps teaches 2 subjects. This expense will increase with the introduction of some of the assessments advocated here - unless some way is found that these assessments are completely paperless.

5.   Furthermore, the burden on teachers to meet current demands has grown significantly. Teachers struggling with stress need support for their mental health, both for their own well-being and for that of their students. They should be able to access this support through their employer without fear of consequence and being subjected to prejudice.

6.   **Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required**

    It is suggested that MOE consider the following for action:
6.1   Reroute/Harness school finances/budgets (that have been underutilized during the pandemic) towards implementing the more urgent measures indicated above.

6.2   Recruit, for schools with a high number of vulnerable students needing more individual attention, suitable people (as outlined in recommendation 6[36] as detailed in G.2 above) to assist in mentoring, during the next 1 to 2 years.

6.3   Reduce administrative tasks and provide support, as needed, to facilitate the system-wide adoption of more child-centred teaching methods (e.g., Individual Education Plans).

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[35] An internationally-recognized Mental Health First Aid training is provided by the Malaysian Mental Health Association and by its affiliate in Sarawak.

[36] Recommendation 6, Executive Summary, on "Pursue special initiatives to support Standard 1 entry for those who did not receive pre-school education, including those with learning disabilities."

6.4 Encourage discussions on preventing and managing staff burnout in the workplace.

6.5 Identify and provide assistance to teachers experiencing burn-out and mental health issues.

M. Leave No Child Behind --- Give More Individual Attention to Help At-risk Children

1. Government measures that are designed to help children overcome the impact of the pandemic on their learning must:

    1.1 Create a supportive, individualised school environment that is responsive to their needs.

    1.2 Recognize that the shaping of such an environment will require not only the appropriate attitude, including flexibility in adjusting the curriculum and structure, but must also factor in more time that is needed for communicating with each child and the child's parents/guardians.

    1.3 Provide, as support for young people transitioning from education to employment in a time of economic uncertainty, temporary paid employment suited to young adults, ideally from the local community, to assist the teaching staff in schools with a high proportion of children markedly disadvantaged by the pandemic; this investment would benefit both those of schooling age and young persons in need of work experience.

2. Government may consider providing certification options for young people in the above-mentioned transition programmes who have the aptitude and inclination, to pursue on-the-job training reinforced by online professional training courses in diverse subjects from early childhood development and intervention to the learning and teaching of Malaysian Sign Language (Bahasa Isyarat Malaysia (BIM)).

3. **Operationalise and Mobilise Resources Required**

    It is suggested that MOE consider the following for its action:

    3.1 Communicate clearly to all head teachers and divisional educational officers the zero reject policy that is in keeping with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the SDGs that Malaysia has committed to implement.

    3.2 Provide schools that have a high number of vulnerable students the human resources to meet the need for giving individual attention to students by recruiting temporary teacher assistants/mentors drawn from local unemployed university graduates living in the same or nearby catchment area, suitable recent school leavers or retired teachers. Engaging appropriate young people will benefit the students and the young people who will gain work experience while waiting for the economy to pick-up.

    3.3 Introduce as a KPI the design, planning and regular review of the IEP of each student with the concerned student and parents/guardians that they physically sign off on after each consultation.

3.4   Assess school performance/KPIs with a focus on cultivating an environment/organisational climate that is supportive of and responsive to individualized student progress by, among others, giving due attention to COVID-19-related challenges and crediting efforts to address the needs of vulnerable students.

3.5   Incorporate into the visits of school inspectors the creation of a supportive, learner-centred climate and the identification of challenges and effective means of addressing them.

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III.   Post-COVID-19 Rehabilitation Measures for Education: Medium- to Long-term Initiatives

Below are some suggestions to address critical long-term measures involving the restructuring of the education system in Malaysia that is urgently needed.

A.   Make Provision for All Students with Special Learning Needs

The Government has to plan, organise and budget for the education system based on the reality that 15% of every batch of students in every class has 'special learning needs.'

B.   Implement Universal Design for Learning[37]

1.   In the present crisis, Malaysia needs to break free from widespread complacency with standardised approaches for all children, to embrace Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as the benchmark for all education services. The futility of continuing a damaging 'one size fits all' approach has to be stopped.

2.   The key is to understand how individual children learn and grow, to enable their optimal participation in the learning process. Critical actions to introduce the vitality and dynamism required in solutions include the following:

   2.1   Government promotion of UDL, with curriculum/programme modifications, will enable all children to 'keep learning' and give all children an opportunity to succeed;

   2.2   Government leadership in the adoption of UDL and inclusive approaches will enable monitoring and evaluation of individual children's progress for tailored action that saves children from being dropouts;

   2.3   Government adoption of flexible competencies-based education and support that is individualised will significantly benefit all children in the inclusive learning environment, not just children with disabilities;

   2.4   Government transition to a more flexible curriculum that permits more project-based learning, modified from the curriculum's core learning objectives, with the focus on enduring skills, and drawing learning opportunities from each child's own environment, as well as bridging the child to a wider world – always stimulating the child's curiosity and developing a love for learning;

   2.5   Government initiation of policy and directive on accepting alternative means of demonstrating learning, e.g., instead of writing, permitting students to type or draw; and instead of oral speech, to use text-to-speech software, or video recordings, or selecting from a range of options;

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[37] Amar-Singh HSS, Lai-Thin Ng (2021). Future of Early Intervention Services in Malaysia. National Early Childhood Intervention Council. Malaysia;
Amanda Morin. "What is Universal Design for Learning?" in <https://www.understood.org/articles/en/universal-design-for-learning-what-it-is-and-how-it-works>;
"CAST UDL Guidelines" in <https://udlguidelines.cast.org/>.

2.6 Government emphasis on promoting social and emotional learning (SEL) in schools, to activate and nurture the process of developing self-awareness, self-control and interpersonal skills that are vital for success in school, work and life.

2.7 The science of reading research has been very consistent in its findings on learning to read and the teaching of reading for all children. The Government can seriously look into this by, among others, training teachers to implement effective literacy instruction right from the start in preschools and kindergartens and right through primary schools. This will reduce the number of children who fail to learn to read and write. It will also reduce the need for intervention work outside schools and the number of children diagnosed with a specific learning disorder, for example, dyslexia.

3. At the same time, in recognition of the challenges that teachers and educators face, it is recommended that the Government introduce adaptation measures that include the following, to tackle the present crisis:

3.1 Modify the teaching methodology to enable teachers to cope with the various challenges of online teaching, hybrid teaching and classroom teaching, to foster more effective child-centred learning that benefits all children and especially those who do not see the world reflected in their workbooks;

3.2 Provide teachers with emotional intelligence training, to enable them to understand and guide better those students who are scarred by the pandemic;

3.3 Enable teachers of children with disabilities to have more support, to modify instructions, curricula and learning materials to address the individual learning needs of students;

3.4 Encourage proactive collaboration between mainstream teachers and special education teachers, including in demonstration initiatives, to be more adaptive and more learner-focused and modify teaching to foster learning outcomes;

3.5 Launch, in the catch-up period, a movement among teachers in preschools/kindergartens and in Primary 1 through 3, to use structured phonics, the UDL for all children to efficiently learn reading and writing skills and to stop using the far less effective and more time-consuming conventional methods of teaching reading and writing by using letter names or hybrid letter names-letter sounds;

3.6 Establish and maintain an online hub for providing professional support to Malaysian teachers, to share online resources tried, experiences and insights from various methods used, with a facility to post questions and obtain answers from peers and/or specialist professionals;

3.7 Recognize the importance of helping teachers avoid "teacher burnout" or address teacher burnout by facilitating the organization of support groups among teachers to foster better physical and mental health, including by undertaking the following:

> (a) Deal with job-related stress;
> (b) Share tips on how to prioritize tasks, as well as manage time and the effectiveness of online teaching and learning;
> (c) Balance duties, including online teaching and in-person classroom teaching;
> (d) Manage self-care and health promotion;
> (e) Involve retired teachers who might be interested to help support younger colleagues with professional advice and different perspectives.

C. Invest in sex-segregated, accessible toilets and water and hygiene measures that girls can safely use

1. Malaysia, like all other countries, needs to focus on making schools more inclusive for all students, whatever their background, ability or identity. This requires better sanitation facilities in schools, greater attention to school-related gender-based violence, including online, and policies encouraging pregnant girls to go back to school. The message of inclusion resonates strongly at a time when COVID-19 has exacerbated inequality[38,39].

2. Even when single-sex sanitation facilities exist, they may not be accessible to all students. The majority of schools lack accessible facilities for students with disabilities.

3. When children have access to safe water, toilets and soap for handwashing at school, they have a better environment to study, to learn, and to realise their full potential.[40]

"Learning Recovery Programs ... must cover three key lines of action to recover learning:
1. Consolidating the curriculum;
2. Extending instructional time; and
3. Improving the efficiency of learning."

World Bank-UNESCO-UNICEF, 2021

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[38] UNESCO (2020). Global education monitoring report 2020 gender report. A new generation: 25 years of efforts for gender equality in education.
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374514/PDF/374514eng.pdf.multi>.

[39] United Nations OHCHR (2011). Women and girls and their right to sanitation.
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2011/10/women-and-girls-and-their-right-sanitation>.

[40] UNICEF East Asia and Pacific. Wash in schools fast facts: 11 facts you didn't know about water, sanitation and hygiene (wash) in schools <https://www.unicef.org/eap/wash-schools-fast-facts#:~:text=Over%20one%20third%20of%20schools,3%20million%20children%20a%20year>.

Annex

A.   Sample Subject-based Quick Assessment for Primary 3 Science: Life Science – Human Section

This sample quick assessment is created based on the curriculum standards as outlined in the Ministry of Education's (MOE) Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah (KSSR) for Primary 3 Science.

"Core knowledge/concept" is an enduring understanding that every student must know and needs to know, even until adulthood. Curriculum goals at this level are prerequisites to advancing to the next primary year.

"Important understanding/skill" is the generalisation of relevant concepts that most students will know. Curriculum goals at this level are not prerequisites to advancing to the next primary year, but may significantly affect students' grades.

"Complementary understanding/skill" is a concept/skill that only some students will master and usually requires (of the student) more complex problem-solving skills and advanced understanding. Curriculum goals at this level are good to have but are not necessary.

Topic: Teeth

Competency level	Description	Achieved (✔)
Core knowledge / concept (must know)	Demonstrate the importance of the practice of daily dental care.	
Important understanding / skill	Describe the types of teeth and their functions. Name the types of dental treatment.	
Complementary understanding / skill (worth knowing, but not necessary)	Label the cross-section of a tooth. Relate dental care with the structure of the tooth.	

Topic: Classes of Food

Competency level	Description	Achieved (✔)
Core knowledge / concept (must know)	Categorise food according to each class of food. Explain the importance of each class of food.	
Important understanding / skill	Demonstrate an example of a balanced diet based on the food pyramid.	
Complementary understanding / skill (worth knowing, but not necessary)	Explain the effects of imbalanced food intake. Identify the types of food that need to be avoided for someone with health problems.	

Topic: Digestion

Competency level	Description	Achieved (✔)
Core knowledge / concept (must know)	Name the body parts that are involved in digestion.	
Important understanding / skill	Arrange in sequence the flow of food during digestion. Explain what happens to food that is not digested.	
Complementary understanding / skill (worth knowing, but not necessary)	Describe actions that can disrupt food digestion and explain its consequences.	

B.   Sample Quick Assessment for Primary 3 Science

This sample quick assessment is created based on the curriculum standards as outlined in the Ministry of Education's (MOE) Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah (KSSR) for Primary 3 Science.

Curricular skills
Students are expected to develop the following skills:

Description	Achieved (✓)
Observe objects and events in the natural world using their senses.	
Collect simple data based on observed characteristics.	
Sort and classify data and information based on common characteristics.	
Safely use appropriate tools and instruments to make observations and measurements, using standard measurement units.	
Describe possible outcomes based on prior knowledge, observations and collected data.	
Record information or ideas in any form.	

Content expectations
Students are expected to know the following concepts or skills:

Description	Achieved (✓)
Importance of the practice of daily dental care.	
Food categories and the importance of balanced food intake.	
Food digestion process in the human body.	
Classification of animals based on animals' eating habits.	
Different ways of plant reproduction.	
How to measure area and volume using the appropriate tools and techniques.	
Relation between density with objects or materials that float or sink.	
How to test acidic, alkaline and neutral substances using litmus paper.	
Sequence of planets that orbit around the Sun.	
How a fixed pulley works.	

C.   Assessing Needs for Learning Recovery (Draft)

Prior to using this tool, schools, district and state educational departments **must** first conduct the <u>rapid assessment</u> of students' needs and/or <u>home visits</u> to school drop-outs, which should commence in the first phase of the recovery timeline.

This tool is designed to be used at school, district, state, and national level to identify the specific area of needs and the resources (additional teachers, cost) required to put in place measures for learning recovery.

Recovery period is estimated for a minimum 2-year period.

Targeted interventions

This section aims to address the factors that hinder students from returning to school.

Therefore, each school, district, and state education department is required to first gather information through rapid assessment of needs and home visits to the following groups of students:

1. School dropouts
2. Students lost in transition:
    - Preschool-primary;
    - Primary-secondary;
    - Form 3 to Form 5.

Fill in the table below where relevant. If the area of need is not present in the school, leave the item blank.

No.	Area of need	Quantity
1	School meals, including breakfast/lunch and tea break	**No. of students: _____** If school is extending school hours, specify the number of students who will need provision of breakfast, lunch and tea break.
2	After-school care - 20 students in each after-school care unit, minimum 2 carers	No. of students: _____ ÷ 20 **= No. of after-school care units: _____**
3	**Additional teaching staff**	
	a. Additional teacher in each class	**No. of classes: _____**

	b. Additional teacher for remedial classes (tutoring) based on subject, especially literacy, math, science
	    a. Student-tutor ratio not greater than 6:1
	    b. Number of teachers are obtained based on the number of students who lag behind in respective subjects
		Total no. of teachers: _____ (all subjects)
		
		<u>Calculation template</u> (<u>to be done for each subject</u>)
		
		No. of students with learning lag: _____ ÷ 6
		= No. of remedial teachers: _____

	c. Additional teachers for 2-years staggered catch-up	**Total no. of additional teachers:**

No.	Area of need	Quantity
		_____ (all school year cohorts) - Please specify no. of teachers for each subject. Calculation template per school-year cohort No. of students opting for additional schooling year: _____ ÷ no. of students per classroom _____ = No. of classes per school-year: _____ No. of catch-up classes _____ x No. of subjects _____ = *No. of additional teachers for catch-up classes per school-year* _____
	d. Additional teachers to support Primary 1 students a. Numbers based on rapid assessment of literacy and numeracy skills b. Student-teacher ratio not more than 6:1	No. of students requiring tutoring - Numeracy: _____ - Literacy (English): _____ - Literacy (BM): _____ - Literacy (Chinese / Tamil): _____ **No. of additional teachers:** (respective number from above divide by 6) - **Numeracy:** _____ - **Literacy (English):** _____ - **Literacy (BM):** _____ - **Literacy (Chinese / Tamil):** _____
4	Support to implement Individualised Education Plan – training and mentoring ● Minimum 2 workshops each school ● Minimum 2 mentoring session for each teacher (each mentoring session of 1 mentor to maximum 3 teachers)	**No. of workshops:** _____ No. of teachers: _____ ÷ 3 = **No. of mentoring sessions:** _____

Universal interventions

No.	Area of need	Quantity
1	**Air purifier** - (1 or 2 in each classroom) - Cost to include maintenance cost, i.e., changing of filter, routine service check	No. of classrooms _____ **Total air purifier needed:** _____
2	**Mask (FFP2/KF94)**	No. of students: _____ No. of teachers: _____ No. of non-teaching staff: _____ = **Total:** _____
3	Guidance to teachers on mental health support (Superskills for Life Programme) – training and consultation	**No. of training:** _____ **No. of consultations:** _____ (depending on needs of the school)

No.	Area of need	Quantity
	● Minimum 1 training programme for each school ● Minimum quarterly consultation with mental health professional for each school	