COVID-19: UN and partner responses to the disruption of student education, nutrition, health and well-being

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The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is disrupting children and adolescents’ education, but also their health, nutrition and well-being. As COVID-19 continues to spread, it is important that countries, communities and schools act to prevent further transmission, support control measures, and reduce the impact of the outbreak.

The mass closure of schools is affecting the education of over 90% of the world’s students. It is also having a major impact on their health and nutrition. Children and adolescents rely on schools for far more than just education. Closures disproportionately affect vulnerable and disadvantaged students who rely on schools for a range of social services, including health—for instance vaccinations, malaria control, sanitation and hygiene, and health
education- and school meals.

A range of health and protection risks emerge in the context of a global pandemic and school closures, including an increased risk of violence against children. It is vital to continue to provide critical health information and to promote the health, nutrition and wellbeing of learners and their families, enabling a strong transition back to school when they reopen.

When maintaining safe school operations, or reopening schools after a closure, precautions are necessary to prevent the potential entry and spread of COVID-19 by students and staff who may have been exposed to the virus, while minimizing disruption. Education settings should continue to be respectful, inclusive and supportive environments for all.

The work of UN agencies and their partners to promote children and adolescents’ health, nutrition and well-being during the pandemic is continually evolving. UNESCO [1], in coordination with the FRESH network [2], has compiled a list of available resources.

**Covid-19 education, nutrition, health and well-being resource list** [3]

Links