



**PUNTLAND STATE OF SOMALIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

APRIL 2020

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FOREWORD

On 16th March, 2020, Somalia recorded its first case of coronavirus. Somalia comes top of the Inform Global Risk Index with a vulnerability score of 8.9 out of 10. This makes it the country with the weakest capacity to cope with the added stress of a pandemic such as COVID-19 in the world- With a health system already at breaking point, if attention was not given to this looming crisis, Somalia will likely suffer the effects of the pandemic more severely than many other countries. Puntland has taken precautions to curb the spread of the virus such as banning of flights and closure of schools.

While a general approach to COVID-19 throughout Somali is generally beneficial, it was deemed that a local response at the State level best serves the citizenry. The fact that the states not equally endowed with resources – be it technology, educated workforce, or sources of income – means that the states are the most knowledgeable about how to lead the charge against COVID-19, especially when it's at the level of the education sector. Thus, this is strategy note is Puntland education sector's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Since closing schools to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, Puntland have been deploying distance learning solutions and grappling with the complexity of provisioning education remotely, from delivering content and supporting teachers to providing guidance to families and addressing connectivity challenges. Equity is the paramount concern because closures disproportionately hurt vulnerable and disadvantaged students. This strategy encompasses the needs of the state and offers three clear objectives:

- a. Sensitization of communities, learners and school managements to prevent the spread of COVID 19.
- b. Continuation of teaching and learning process affected by COVID-19 school closure.
- c. Facilitate the safe return to quality learning for teachers, learners and school communities after the COVID-19 emergency

In line with these objectives and to mitigate the effects of COVID 19, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in collaboration with education partners would like to continue the provision of the teaching and learning processes to counter the closure of all educational institutions. Thus, this strategy, particularly aims to present a distance-learning program that is antidote to the disruption.

Abdullahi Mohamed Hassan
Minister of Education and Higher Education

COORDINATION AND MONITORING

Monthly progress reports will be submitted to the government and donors highlighting the progress of the strategy implementation, best practices, lessons learned, and the design corrections needed to address any problems until the next progress report. We also use the Somali Education Cluster Response Monitoring Tool/5W Matrix (Who is doing What, Where, When and for whom) for monitoring Education Cluster partners activities. Joint monitoring and supervision for MoEHE to see how supporting offices are working, meet students/parents representatives to know how they are being assisted by distance teachers/ professionals/support offices.

The COVID-19 task force appointed by the ministry of Education and higher Education, to work closely with all stakeholders in planning and responding to the COVID19 crisis will lead the response. On 24th March 2020, the MoE&HE conducted the first coordination meeting specifically on COVID19. In that meeting all education stakeholders such as national and international organizations, UN and government bodies were invited to discuss about the impact of COVID19 and possible mitigation strategies to limit the damage and make sure continuity of learning outside of schools. Task force of 7 members comprising MoEHE officials, humanitarian, UN and government bodies led by MoE&HE were formed. The primary responsibility of this task force is to ensure coordinated and complementing response for the COVID19 crisis.

NEEDS OVERVIEW

In late 2019, an acute respiratory disease, known as COVID-19, emerged. The pathogen responsible for COVID-19 is severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), a member of the coronavirus family. There are two main routes of transmission of COVID-19; respiratory and contact. Respiratory droplets are generated when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Any person who is in close contact with someone who has respiratory symptoms (e.g., sneezing, coughing, etc.) is at risk of being exposed to potentially infective respiratory droplets. Droplets may also land on surfaces where the virus could remain viable and thus the immediate environment (WHO/UNICEF Technical brief: Water, sanitation, hygiene and waste management for COVID-19).

As of 16th March, the first case of COVID-19 in Somalia was announced. In response to the outbreak the Somali authorities instituted necessary measures to curb the spread of the pandemic. These measures include the closure of schools, restricting of all kinds of gatherings, and international flights to be more pro-active since the country's health facilities and skilled health personnel are very limited.

With regard to educational institutions, the President of Puntland announced the closure of all schools, universities and other educational training institutions; this closure of schools will negatively affect the teaching-learning processes, including the student performance as they have yet to complete the syllabus as planned on first week of May, 2020.

As the pandemic continues to spread throughout the world and has reached Somalia, the situation may deteriorate and closure of schools continues for a longer period, which affects children's learning and payment and retention of teachers. As the Government continues to closely monitor the situation, the education sector partners and MoEHE came together to mitigate and minimize the impact of the school closure and the interrupted student's learning. In addition to that, due to the lack of clarity about how the COVID-19 situation and how evolving globally, and locally in Puntland is, the education sector begins to develop relevant measures to ensure that the students continue to learn even if schools are closed long-term.

A school closure represents a form of social distancing and is being used as a mechanism to minimize social contact, transmission, and spread of the disease. However, school closures have educational and social costs to learners, as well as the livelihood of both the teaching and non-teaching staff at household levels.

It's important to continue educating Puntland's school children, K-12, during the world-wide Coronavirus episode. Knowing that Puntland's healthcare system doesn't have adequate medical resources or medical resources to combat the onslaught of the pandemic. In particular, in Somalia education is stymied by lack of adequate digital resources Somalia education and in particular Puntland and poor network connection and availability of power in remote areas, however it can maintain its educational system at a slower pace than usual during COVID-19 and continue engaging students and robustly via the use of digital and TV/radio methods and mobile application.

Ministry of Education and Higher Education in consultation with education partners have developed a Puntland specific COVID-19 Response Strategy which targets 229,896) students in primary and secondary schools. The Response Strategy aims at providing children with alternative options for learning while schools are closed and ensure a safe re-opening of schools.

Here are the figures (students and teachers) disaggregated by region and gender affected by school closure (EMIS data).

Region	Primary	Secondary
Gardafuu	4227	243
Ayn	8633	1504
Haylaan	6963	683
Mudug	44635	8647
Nugaal	42475	6612
Karkaar	19555	2521
Saanag	12627	1544
Sool	13441	2426
Bari	41999	11134
Total	194555	35314

Primary	Boys	Girls	Total
	108,627	85,928	194,555
Secondary	20,129	15,185	35,314

Teachers		
Male	Female	Total
6635	1170	7805
Schools	921	

STRATEGIC ASSUMPTIONS

The COVID-19 crisis is defined by a fluid situation, rapid changes and uncertainty. As such, the Education Sector Response Plan is based on the following assumptions:

- The effect of the Coronavirus is mild and resources are adequate while MoEHE and education partners able to respond and implement education programs,
- The effect of the Coronavirus is mild but the resources are not enough for all the required activities to respond.
- The effect of the Coronavirus is severe and takes more time and schools remain closed for unknown period of time.

GUIDING PRINCIPALS

Key concepts will be the base for our response plan:

Access: is the ability of all affected learners to have equal opportunity in education, regardless of their social class, gender, ethnicity background or physical and mental disabilities.

Equity: calls for the system to treat all individuals fairly and justly in the provision of services and opportunities. It requires that every learner is provided with an opportunity for a good education at this difficult time.

Relevancy requires that the proposed alternative system is meaningful, recognized, applicable and useful to one's life. In essence, it is a system that is largely localized and contextualized, reflecting the language, cultural, and spiritual values.

Efficiency means optimum use of human, financial and material resources at all levels, timely and quality service delivery, unhampered communication and coordinated decision-making excellence in management practice at all levels needs.

Sustainability requires the wise utilization of human, financial and material resources, to ensure balanced and continual development in the system. Transparency and accountability are necessary at all levels.

RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

MoEHE and educational partners represented by COVID 19 task force in Puntland developed the objectives, activities and indicators for Puntland response plan. MoEHE's response to COVID-19 is premised on the belief that all difficulties are surmountable when people work together for common good to continue the provision of teaching and learning in Puntland under limited hand technological is daunting but surmountable. Sensitization, the safe reopening of the schools are an extension of the same process of keeping the children of Puntland engrossed in learning and being hopeful. The response plan is about the provision and saving lives at the same time.

The response plan has three objectives addressing needs during the different phases of the emergency including school closure and re-opening. The plan covers an initial six months period. A review will be done after the six months period and depending on the situation, the plan may be updated and extended for an additional six months if necessary. The plan is based on the following three objectives:

1. Enhance community awareness and prevent the spread of COVID-19;
2. Context appropriate strategies for continuing teaching-learning process; and
3. Facilitate the safe return to quality learning for teachers, learners and school communities after the COVID-19 emergency.

GEOGRAPHICAL PRIORITIES

The nine regions of Puntland (Mudug, Nugaal, Karkaar, Bari, Gardafuu, Sanaag, Haylaan, Sool and Ayn) will be the target geographical areas.

Objective 1: enhance community awareness and prevent the spread of COVID-19			
Activity	Indicator	Base line	Target
1.1 Disseminate prevention and control messages through media	# of children reached with prevention and control messages	0	229,869 (100%)
Objective 2: context appropriate strategies for continuing teaching-learning process			
2.1 Provide children with access to distance learning	2.1: # of children accessing distance learning	0	229,869 (100%)
2.2 Provision of emergency school feeding to the most vulnerable children	2.2: # of vulnerable children reached with school feeding/take home rations	0	68,960(30%)
2.3 Grade 8 and Grade 12 students to be supported to access their exam	2.3 # of students to be supported to sit their exam	0	20,000 (100%)
2.4 Provision of remote PSS and Child Protection support to school children	2.4 # of children reached with PSS and CP support	0	68,960 (30%)
2.5 Provision of teacher incentives	2.5# of teachers to be supported through incentives	0	7,805 (100%)

2.6 Development and distribution of learning materials for learning outside of school/at home (including the provision of textbooks)	2.6 # of Number of children provided with learning materials for learning outside of school/at home	0	68,960 (30%)
2.7 Provide children with key messages on access to alternative learning solutions (print)	2.7 # of children reached through messages printed on access to alternative learning solutions	0	68,960 (30%)
2.8 Provide children with key messages on access to alternative learning solutions (Online)	2.8 # of children reached through online messages on alternative solutions	0	229,869 (100%)
Objective 3: reopen schools safely			
3.1 Establishment of WASH facilities	3.1: # of schools with WASH facilities established	0	276 (30%)
3.1: Provision of WASH supplies (soap, water)	3.2: # of schools provided with WASH supplies	0	229,869 (100%)
3.2 Establishment of referral pathways from schools to health facilities and child Protection services	3.3# of schools with referral pathways established	0	921 (100)
3.3 Conduct back to school campaigns	3.4# of children reached with back to school campaigns	0	229,869 (100%)
3.4 Teachers trained on safe school protocols for re-opening of schools	3.5 #of teachers trained on safe school protocols (per school per one teacher)	0	921 (100%)
3.5 Provision of remedial classes upon re-opening of schools	3.6#of children accessing remedial classes upon return to school	0	229,869 (100%)
3.6 Provision of enhanced PSS and CP support	3.6# of children reached with PSS and CP support upon return to school	0	68,960 (30%)
3.7 Disinfecting school infrastructure, furniture and teaching and learning supplies and ongoing maintenance/cleaning protocols. (Ensuring safe return to students).	3.7 # of schools disinfected to make sure safe return of students	0	921 (100%)
3.8 Mobilization and sensitization of school community and stakeholders (ie. School heads, teachers, students parents,) and	3.8 # of people reached through pre-recorded radio messaging, TV and SMS messages on safe school reopen	0	229,869 (100%)

prevention key messages through pre-recorded <u>radio</u> messaging, TV programs, and SMS messaging after school reopen to make sure safe return of students			
3.9 Development, printing and distribution of appropriate IEC <u>print</u> materials (i.e. posters, leaflets, comics) on safe reopening of schools	3.9 # of schools reached through printed materials on safe reopen of schools	0	921 (100%)

BUDGET

Objective 1: enhance community awareness and prevent the spread of COVID-19				
Activity	Unit	Target	Unit Cost	Total Cost
1.1. Sensitization of communities, learners and school managements to prevent the spread of COVID 19 through Radio, TVs, SMS messaging during school closure.	Local FM Radios/TVs	15	\$10,000	\$150,000
1.2. Develop COVID -19 IEC materials on COVID-19 risks and symptoms, dissemination and internalization with head teachers, CECs, parents and child clubs.	IEC materials	68,960	\$2	\$137,920
Objective 2: context appropriate strategies for continuing teaching-learning process				
2.1. Develop recorded lessons application where all students will access to pre-recorded lessons.	Consultancy	1	\$40,000	\$40,000
2.4. Hosting costs for course resources and materials including videos, audio and documents for one year.	Hosting clouds	1	\$120,000	\$120,000
2.3. Contract with private TVs to cast pre-recorded lessons.	TVs	2	\$36,000	\$72,000
2.4. Distance training of subject expert.(training facilitators)	Facilitators	10	\$1000	\$10,000
2.5.Contract subject expert to prepare visual/audio lessons for primary schools to be aired sequentially at the Puntland State TV, FM radios and upload into software apps	Teachers	200	\$1500	\$300,000
2.6. Contract subject expert to prepare visual/audio lessons for secondary schools to be aired sequentially at the Puntland State TV, FM	Teachers	140	\$1500	\$210,000

radios and upload into software apps				
2.7. Procurement of interactive radios (free play encore player with MP3 (8GP SD Card) with Bluetooth)for 2000 children in rural areas that hard to use pre-recorded lessons or receive local FM and TVs airing messages	Interactive Radios	10,000	100	1,000,000
2.8. Procure tablets for hard to reach areas to be uploaded for prerecorded lessons	Tablets	5,000	\$300	1,500,000
2.9. Provision of food ration to marginalized IDP and remote students for six months	Students	10,000	\$300	\$3,000,000
2.10. Grade 8 and Grade 12 students to be provided distance learning/remedial classes and test materials for core subjects. (Recruit teachers).	Teachers	40	\$500	\$20,000
2.11. Grade Eight and Grade 12 students to access exams	Students	20,000	\$20	\$400,000
2.10. Support teachers with incentives	Teachers	7,805	\$150	\$1,170,750
2.11. Development and distribution of learning materials for learning outside of school/at home (including the provision of textbooks)	Students	68,960	\$10	\$689,600
2.12. Development and dissemination of printing and distribution of appropriate IEC print materials (e.g. posters, leaflets, comics) on access to alternative learning solutions	School children	68,960	\$2	\$137,920
2.13 development of key messages through online messaging on access to alternative learning solutions	Lump sum	1	10,000	10,000

Objective 3: Safe school reopen

3.1. Establishment of case management and referral system between education authorities, schools and school communities and health and other social.	Schools	921	\$100	\$92,100
3.2. Disinfecting school infrastructure, furniture and teaching and learning supplies and ongoing maintenance/cleaning protocols. (Ensuring safe return to students).	Schools	921	\$250	\$230,000
3.3. Conduct back to school campaigns	Schools	921	\$100	\$92,100
3.4. Mobilization and sensitization of school community and stakeholders (ie. School heads, teachers, students parents,) and prevention key	TVs and	10	\$6,000	\$60,000

messages through pre-recorded <u>radio</u> messaging, TV programs, and SMS messaging after school reopen to make sure safe return of students	Radios			
3.5. Development, printing and distribution of appropriate IEC <u>print</u> materials (i.e. posters, leaflets, comics) on safe reopening of schools	IEC materials	2,000	\$10	\$20,000
3.6. Provision of psychosocial support (ie. counseling, group activities,) incl. recreational activities.	Lump sum	1	\$50,000	\$50,000
3.7 Provision of safe and adequate WASH facilities for schools that might not have such facilities.	Schools	900	\$120	\$108,000
3.8 Provision of hand WASH supplies, (sensitizers, soaps and water to remote areas and IDP settlements	schools	921	\$250	\$230,000
3.9. Provision of clean water to all schools in Puntland	Trucks	1,000	\$120	\$120,000
3.10. Improvement of ventilation in schools and (ie. through provision of fans)	Classes	5,000	\$60	\$300,000
3.11. Development and implementation of accelerated learning programme/remedial/catch-up programme to make up for lost learning/teaching.(teachers incentives)	Teachers	3900	\$150	\$585,000
3.12. Contextualize and translate into Somali languages WHO guidelines on how to help children cope with COVID-19 and UNICEF guidelines on how to talk to children about COVID-19.	Consultancy	1	\$5,000	\$5,000
3.13. Train teachers, Head teachers CEC and parents in enhanced child safe guiding "WHO guidelines" on how to help children cope with COVID-19 shocks and identify COVID-19 symptoms and referral path ways.	Persons	3,900	\$150	\$585,000
Total				\$11,445,390