

CASE STUDY REPORT

**EVALUATION OF UNICEF
CONTRIBUTION TO TEACHING AND
LEARNING**

**Case Study: Bolivarian Republic
of Venezuela**

May 2023

unite for
children



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**Evaluation of UNICEF contribution to teaching and learning
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May 2023

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Acronyms

ASEINC	Asociación para el Desarrollo de la Educación Integral y Comunitaria
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
EiE	Education in emergencies
GEC	Global Education Cluster
MPPE	Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Educación
NGO	Non-governmental organization
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene

Executive summary

Introduction

This case study is one of seven case studies conducted within the global evaluation of the UNICEF contribution to improved teaching and learning. The overall objective of the global evaluation was to determine to what extent and how successfully UNICEF activities and outputs at the global, regional and country levels contributed to the following outcomes: (1) strong evidence and resource base provided for the education sector's response to COVID-19; (2) education solutions are evidence-based, cross-sectoral and partnership-based; (3) children continue to learn while schools are closed; (4) marginalized children are reached, and their needs are addressed; (5) children are safe and protected during school reopening; and (6) in-school learning is reinstated. The global evaluation was carried out between February 2022 and March 2023, covering UNICEF activities and documents generated between March 2020 and December 2021.

The main purpose of the case study was to produce in-depth analysis to further inform the global evaluation, as well as to derive lessons learned to advise the UNICEF Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Country Office about possible actions and to better position the organization to improve its performance in support of teaching and learning efforts.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela case study was guided by questions from the global evaluation, based on three specific objectives: Objective 1: to examine the role of UNICEF in building the knowledge, research and global public goods required to mount an effective education response to the COVID-19 pandemic; Objective 2: to examine the extent to which UNICEF-supported strategies were deployed effectively to enhance government initiatives for continuity of learning during school closures and to reinstate safe and equitable in-school learning opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic; and Objective 3: to examine the extent to which UNICEF Education teams used the existing frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools to mount an effective education response to COVID-19, and whether adjustments are being made to enhance preparedness for future disruptions of a similar scale. Conducted over the same time period, the case study follows the same utilization-focused evaluation approach and methodology as the one used in the global evaluation, and a similar in-depth data collection method to assess the evidence.

Over 60 internal documents were reviewed, complemented by 6 interviews with key country informants. Evidence was triangulated using information from a global online survey administered between September and October 2022 to contextualize the analysis. The active participation of reference group members and the UNICEF Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Country Office staff provided the triangulation process an additional layer of validity. The conclusions and lessons are summarized below.

Conclusions

Objective 1: Building the evidence and resource base for the education sector's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Conclusion 1: As the Global Education Cluster (GEC) co-lead and a key partner to the Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Educación (MPPE), the Education team at the UNICEF Venezuela

Country Office played a leading role in monitoring and reporting on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. Efforts included the use of innovative remote data collection tools and field-level partners; generating evidence and collecting experiences from countries with similar economic, social and infrastructure contexts to inform decision-making; and supporting the MPPE to develop national strategies, frameworks and capacity-building tools.

Conclusion 2: Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education team worked effectively and efficiently in close collaboration with Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Health, Nutrition and Child Protection colleagues. However, differences in internal UNICEF structures, such as funding streams and donor reporting requirements, posed a challenge for joint planning, funding and implementation.

Conclusion 3: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education team worked closely with GEC members and other implementing partners to develop evidence-based solutions, playing a key role in establishing links between partner organizations and government stakeholders, building trust between the two groups, and enabling the successful delivery of education in emergencies (EiE) solutions. However, UNICEF internal administrative requirements inhibited collaboration with some local partners that had the necessary expertise and presence to contribute more, particularly at the subnational and field levels.

Objective 2: Reopening schools and reinstating face-to-face learning

Conclusion 4: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office took a multifaceted approach to support the MPPE in ensuring the continuity of learning and worked to strengthen the technical capacity of teachers during each stage of the pandemic. However, poor technological infrastructure available to learners in Venezuela prevented many children and teachers from accessing and engaging in home-based learning due to a lack of technological equipment and unstable access to electricity and the internet.

Conclusion 5: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office recognizes the need for greater investment to reach the most vulnerable groups such as young children in early childhood development programmes, girls, indigenous children and adolescents, out-of-school children and adolescents, and students with disabilities. The limited evidence available on the specific activities targeting different groups of marginalized children adds to the challenges faced by the Venezuelan education sector.

Objective 3: UNICEF preparedness frameworks and readiness to handle similar future crises

Conclusion 6: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office has a well-established EiE team that moved swiftly and efficiently to adapt and build on existing infrastructure, capacities and tools to respond to the disruptions to the education sector caused by COVID-19. The Country Office is yet to review and update EiE frameworks and tools, informed by good practices and lessons learned, including the rapid adaptation of resources from other regions with contexts similar to those in Venezuela, to enhance their readiness to handle future crises of a similar magnitude.

Lessons learned

Lesson 1: Investments in evidence generation efforts are critical to ensuring that UNICEF remains a trusted partner in the organization's role as a GEC co-lead, as well as in its engagement with key government stakeholders and field-level implementing partners.

Lesson 2: UNICEF future responsiveness and success in mitigating education sector disruptions at a magnitude similar to the COVID-19 pandemic depend on the organization's capacity and the robustness of its preparedness and emergency response plans, processes, guidance tools and relationships with key government stakeholders.

Lesson 3: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's collaboration across programmatic sectors was key to achieving coherent, effective and efficient solutions to reduce the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Replicating similar collaboration strategies across different sectors in Venezuela can ensure that marginalized children are fully included in strategic and operational country plans.

Resumen ejecutivo

Introducción

Este estudio de caso es uno de los siete estudios de casos que se realizaron dentro de la Evaluación de la Contribución de UNICEF a la Mejora de la Enseñanza y el Aprendizaje. El objetivo general de la evaluación global era determinar en qué medida y con qué éxito las actividades y los productos de UNICEF en los planos global, regional y de país contribuyeron a los siguientes resultados: 1) proporcionar pruebas sólidas y una base de recursos para la respuesta a la educación; (2) soluciones educativas basadas en evidencia, intersectoriales y en asociaciones; (3) las niñas y niños continúan aprendiendo mientras las escuelas están cerradas; 4) llegada a niños y niñas marginadas y sus necesidades atendidas; (5) las niñas y niños están seguras y protegidas durante la reapertura de la escuela; y 6) restablecimiento del aprendizaje en la escuela. La evaluación global se ejecutó entre febrero del 2022 y marzo del 2023, abarcando las actividades de UNICEF y los documentos generados entre marzo del 2020 y diciembre del 2021.

El propósito principal del estudio de caso fue producir un análisis a profundidad para informar la evaluación global, así como para aprovechar la experiencia adquirida a fin de asesorar a la oficina de país de UNICEF de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela sobre posibles acciones y posicionar mejor a la organización para mejorar su desempeño en apoyo de las actividades de enseñanza y aprendizaje.

Los análisis del estudio de caso de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela se guiaron por las preguntas de evaluación global, organizadas en tres objetivos específicos: Objetivo 1: Examinar el rol de UNICEF en la construcción de conocimiento, investigación y bienes públicos globales necesarios para organizar una respuesta educativa efectiva a la pandemia de COVID-19; Objetivo 2: Examinar la medida en que el equipo de Educación de UNICEF empleó de estrategias de apoyo para mejorar las iniciativas gubernamentales sistémicas para la continuidad del aprendizaje durante el cierre de las escuelas y para restablecer el aprendizaje en la escuela de forma segura, equitativa y presencial durante la pandemia de COVID-19; Objetivo 3: Examinar la medida en que el equipo de Educación de UNICEF usó marcos de trabajo, infraestructura, capacidad y herramientas existentes para organizar una respuesta educativa eficaz y la preparación para crisis futuras similares. Ejecutado durante el mismo período de tiempo, el estudio de caso sigue el mismo enfoque de uso y metodología de evaluación utilizado para la evaluación global y un método similar de recopilación de datos a profundidad para evaluar la evidencia.

Se examinaron más de 60 documentos internos, que se complementaron con un total de seis entrevistas realizadas a informantes clave del país. La evidencia se trianguló utilizando información de una encuesta global en línea administrada entre septiembre y octubre del 2022 para contextualizar los análisis. La participación de los miembros del grupo de referencia y del personal de la oficina de país de UNICEF de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela proporcionó un nivel adicional de validez al proceso de triangulación. A continuación, se resumen las conclusiones y las enseñanzas.

Conclusiones

Objetivo 1: Construcción de evidencia y base de recursos para la respuesta educativa a la pandemia de COVID-19

Conclusión 1: Como colíder del Clúster de Educación Global (CEG) y socio clave del Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Educación (MPPE), el equipo de Educación de la oficina de país de UNICEF de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela desempeñó un papel de liderazgo en el monitoreo y la presentación de informes sobre los efectos de la pandemia de COVID-19 en los niños, niñas y las familias. Entre las actividades realizadas cabe mencionar el uso de instrumentos innovadores de recolección de datos a distancia y la presencia en el campo de socios implementadores; la generación de evidencia y recopilación de experiencias de países con contextos económicos, sociales y de infraestructura similares para informar la toma de decisiones; y el apoyo al MPPE para desarrollar estrategias, marcos y herramientas para el desarrollo de capacidades nacionales.

Conclusión 2: A lo largo de la pandemia de COVID-19, el equipo de Educación de la oficina de país de UNICEF de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela trabajó en estrecha colaboración con colegas de WASH, salud, nutrición y protección infantil de manera efectiva y eficiente. Sin embargo, las diferencias en las estructuras internas del UNICEF, como las fuentes de financiamiento y los requisitos de presentación de informes para los donantes, planteaban un problema para la planificación, financiamiento y ejecución conjunta.

Conclusión 3: El equipo de Educación de la oficina de UNICEF de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela trabajó en estrecha colaboración con los miembros del CEG y otros socios implementadores para desarrollar soluciones basadas en evidencia, desempeñando un papel clave estableciendo vínculos entre los socios implementadores y representantes relevantes del gobierno, creando un vínculo de confianza entre los dos grupos y permitiendo una entrega de soluciones exitosas para la educación en emergencias (EiE, por sus siglas en inglés). Sin embargo, los requisitos administrativos internos de UNICEF crearon barreras para la colaboración con socios implementadores locales que tenían conocimientos especializados y la presencia en el campo, necesarios para mejorar la contribución de UNICEF, en particular a nivel subnacional y en el campo.

Objetivo 2: Reapertura de las escuelas y restablecimiento del aprendizaje presencial

Conclusión 4: La oficina de país de UNICEF de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela adoptó un enfoque multifase para apoyar al MPPE a fin de garantizar la continuidad del aprendizaje y trabajó para fortalecer la capacidad técnica de los docentes durante cada etapa de la pandemia. Sin embargo, la deficiente infraestructura tecnológica disponible para los estudiantes en Venezuela impidió que muchas niñas, niños, maestras y maestros accedieran o pudieran participar en el aprendizaje en el hogar, debido a la falta de equipos tecnológicos y al acceso inestable a la electricidad e internet.

Conclusión 5: La oficina de país de UNICEF en Venezuela reconoce la necesidad de mayores inversiones para llegar a los grupos más vulnerables, incluidos las niñas y niños que participan en programas de desarrollo para la primera infancia; todas las niñas; los niños, niñas y adolescentes indígenas; las niñas, niños y adolescentes no escolarizadas; y estudiantes con

discapacidades. La limitada evidencia disponible sobre las actividades dirigidas a diferentes grupos de niñas y niños marginadas se suma a los desafíos que enfrenta el sector educativo de Venezuela.

Objetivo 3: Marcos de trabajo de preparación para UNICEF para hacer frente a crisis similares en el futuro

Conclusión 6: La oficina de país de UNICEF en Venezuela cuenta con un equipo de EiE muy establecido que actuó rápida y eficientemente para adaptarse y aprovechar la infraestructura, las capacidades y las herramientas existentes para responder a las interrupciones causadas por COVID-19 en el sector de educación. Dentro del periodo de la evaluación, la oficina de país de UNICEF en Venezuela aún no había revisado ni actualizado los marcos y herramientas de EiE, basados en buenas prácticas y lecciones aprendidas, incluida la rápida adaptación de recursos de otras regiones con contextos similares a los de Venezuela, para mejorar su preparación para manejar futuras crisis de magnitud similar.

Lecciones aprendidas

Lección 1: Las inversiones en los esfuerzos de generación de pruebas son fundamentales para garantizar que UNICEF continúe siendo un socio de confianza en su función de colíder en el CEG, así como en su compromiso con los principales representantes gubernamentales y los socios implementadores con presencia en el campo.

Lección 2: La capacidad de respuesta y el éxito futuro de UNICEF en la mitigación de interrupciones en el sector educativo con una magnitud similar a la de la pandemia de COVID-19 dependen de la capacidad existente de la organización, la solidez de sus planes de preparación y respuesta a emergencias, procesos, herramientas de orientación y relaciones existentes con los principales representantes del gobierno.

Lección 3: La colaboración interna dentro de la oficina de país de UNICEF en Venezuela entre sectores programáticos fue clave para lograr soluciones coherentes, efectivas y eficientes que ayudaron a reducir los efectos negativos de la pandemia de COVID-19. El replicar estrategias de colaboración similares en diferentes sectores en Venezuela puede garantizar que las niñas y niños marginadas estén plenamente incluidas en los planes estratégicos y operativos de los países.

1.0 Introduction and background

1.1. Introduction

Even before the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, a global learning crisis was in effect, due to the limited progress made towards achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4: “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. The COVID-19 pandemic has, however, caused the largest disruption to education in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries. School closures, which recurred with successive waves of COVID-19, affected 19 in every 20 students.

During the COVID-19 emergency, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) worked to support the priorities of national governments in close coordination with the World Health Organization, the United Nations Global Team and country teams, humanitarian agencies and civil society partners. Its objectives were to protect children, their families and teachers from exposure to COVID-19, to minimize the impacts of public health measures, to address the immediate socioeconomic consequences of the pandemic, and to increase access to and the provision of basic social services.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, had guided UNICEF work on education as a priority, as described in Goal Area 2. Its theory of change was developed assuming that the economic, political and social environment would remain stable. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, this key assumption ceased to hold true. Although a revised theory of change was not developed explicitly for the UNICEF response to COVID-19, the overarching goal of UNICEF, and the goals of its education programme, remained relevant. The three key change strategies of Goal Area 2’s theory of change included in the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 – namely, global partnerships and public goods, systems-strengthening and service delivery – remained relevant following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This case study presents in-depth analysis of the work done by the UNICEF Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (República Bolivariana de Venezuela) Country Office during the period from March 2020 to December 2021, assessing the UNICEF education response to COVID-19. This exercise was designed to gather in-depth evidence to inform the global evaluation of the UNICEF contribution to improved teaching and learning. Guided by its mandate to provide inclusive and equitable education and learning opportunities to girls and boys, including the most marginalized, this evaluation aimed to determine to what extent and how successfully UNICEF activities and outputs at the global, regional and country levels contributed to the following outcomes:

- Strong evidence and resource base provided for the education response
- Education solutions are evidence-based, cross-sectoral and partnership-based
- Children continue to learn while schools are closed
- Marginalized children are reached, and their needs are addressed
- Children are safe and protected during school reopening
- In-school learning is reinstated.

1.2. Venezuela country context

A combination of political, social and macroeconomic challenges in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has led to limited internal capacity for robust planning and inhibited public service delivery over the past few years. At the household level, this has translated into insecurity and an

inability to meet basic needs,¹ with close to 6 million Venezuelans migrating, causing losses of human capital.² The economic crisis has also reduced imports of life-saving goods, including medicines, and replacement parts for water and electricity systems, and caused a decrease in investment that has led to deteriorating public infrastructure and public services, including public transportation, health and education.³ Access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) is also a major challenge for the government, with 4.3 million people in need of water and sanitation assistance. Long-standing inflation and reduced access to food, medicines and basic goods have caused the world's largest food crisis, resulting in one in three Venezuelan citizens being food-insecure.⁴

The country, and especially its children, are chronically vulnerable to health challenges, including the sustained diarrhoea outbreak in 2016, a high median infant mortality rate of 26 per 1,000 live births, and a decline in life expectancy due to health challenges such as yellow fever.⁵ These health challenges were further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was under these tight budget constraints that the government was obliged to allocate scarce resources to procure COVID-19 vaccines, with the great risk of the resurgence of other illnesses such as measles.

The Venezuelan education sector, also greatly affected by internal crisis, faced exacerbated disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic, there were 900,000 out-of-school children. An additional 1.1 million children are expected to drop out because of COVID-19. High teacher absenteeism is another major issue for the country's education sector. Estimated at 22 per cent in 2018, the rate of teacher absenteeism was expected to be higher in the aftermath of COVID-19 school closures.⁶

1.3. COVID-19 and the education sector in Venezuela

The first two cases of COVID-19 in Venezuela were confirmed on 13 March 2020. On the same day, the National Plan for the Preparation and Containment of COVID-19 was announced. The objectives of the plan were to issue timely guidelines and disseminate necessary information to the public to limit the spread of the virus, and to improve coordination and timely response by different sectors, including education.⁷

Schools were closed from 16 March 2020, and on the same day the government launched the Pedagogical Plan for Prevention and Protection – Every Family One School. The plan focused on a switch to distance education modalities, including television, radio, and virtual and printed media, which were to be implemented between March and December 2020. It called for the

1 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2020: Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

2 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2021: Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2022.

3 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2020: Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

4 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2021: Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2022.

5 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2020: Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

6 Ibid.

7 United Nations Children's Fund, 'Alternatives for Educational Continuity during the Preventive Closure of Schools in the Face of COVID-19', UNICEF, New York, 2020.

country's 30,000 schools to activate all distance learning means and deliver continuity of learning during school closures.⁸

The Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Educación (MPPE) developed a strategy to mitigate health and learning losses among students, based on international evidence. It included three dimensions: (1) biosafety; (2) welfare and protection; and (3) continuity of learning.⁹ The first dimension of biosafety stipulated three salient lines of action focusing on: (a) health and risk analysis; (b) local solutions primarily for WASH; (c) and the development and implementation of salient protocols at all levels. The second dimension of welfare and protection focused on two aspects: (a) mobilization of technical support; and (b) protection and well-being of students and teachers. The third dimension of learning continuity targeted hybrid models of learning, including blended learning, drawing on virtual and online media.

The government also facilitated teacher support and training, coaching and mentoring through accelerated learning and an online support service. Additionally, the government prepared risk assessment protocols to inform the return to school, as well as psychosocial support for students and teachers. This was linked with communication campaigns and messaging to facilitate a staggered return-to-school approach, starting with schools in regions and areas deemed at lower risk.¹⁰

Despite efforts by the government to ensure the continuity of remote learning, the socioeconomic conditions in the country meant that many students did not have access to the necessary tools to benefit fully from the arrangements. Only 6 per cent of households had a relatively stable internet connection, while 84 per cent of households had no internet access. More than 77 per cent of households did not have computers or tablets, hence children were unable to access remote education from their homes.¹¹

1.4. UNICEF Venezuela Country Office response to COVID-19 in education

The COVID-19 pandemic began with Venezuela already suffering from a prolonged crisis due to the economic situation in the country. The education system was facing several challenges, such as a low number of qualified teachers and poor infrastructure, including a lack of running water, electricity, furniture and education supplies in schools. The education in emergencies (EiE) programme was already in place at the start of the pandemic, and the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office worked to adapt these programmes to the context of the COVID-19 response.

New activities were introduced, including supporting government efforts to provide remote education and strengthen the capacity of teachers. The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education team coordinated with government stakeholders to carry out a range of activities, using existing EiE resources, global partnerships, technical support for systems-strengthening, knowledge management tools and direct service delivery.

Global partnerships and public goods: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's response to the pandemic was achieved through a number of partnerships. In its role as Global Education Cluster (GEC) lead, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office provided support and resources for

8 Ibid.

9 Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Educación, 'Ministerial orientation: The UNICEF Educational Kit Goes Home', MPPE, Caracas, 2021.

10 Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Educación, 'National Accelerated Education Program', MPPE, Caracas, 2021.

11 Centro de Investigación Social, 'Results of Third Party Monitoring Carried out by the Cisor Social Research Center', Centro de Investigación Social, Caracas, 2020.

service delivery and data collection, and provided tools and frameworks to promote continuity of learning. Protocols developed in collaboration with headquarters (HQ) and the regional offices and learning from other countries' experiences were shared through EiE workshops. These global public tools and frameworks were adapted by the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office (i.e., a framework for action for the COVID-19 response) in collaboration with the UNICEF Latin American and Caribbean Regional Office and the GEC.¹² They were also used to support the Venezuelan MPPE to build its capacity to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office organized workshops on best practices in distance education with over 30 specialists from Latin America and Europe,¹³ and helped establish links between national implementing partner organizations and the Venezuelan MPPE. These new partnerships with national implementing partners were instrumental in scaling up UNICEF-supported programmes.¹⁴

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office also contributed to building the data, knowledge and tools for understanding and addressing the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector, and repurposed the 5W ('Who does, What, Where, When and for Whom') monitoring and reporting tool for remote implementation. Using smartphones for data collection and relying heavily on implementing partners in the field, this tool was used to monitor UNICEF-led programmes and was able to provide data on specific indicators to HQ programme managers every 15 days. The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office also built knowledge and tools for safely reopening schools, providing the MPPE with regional and global data and experiences, which were then used to inform the government's approach to reopening schools.

Systems-strengthening and knowledge management: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office supported the MPPE with technical support to develop several strategies and frameworks to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the national distance learning strategy 'Cada Familia es Escuela' ('Every Family is a School'), guidance for the safe reopening of schools, and a national accelerated education programme. They also supported the development and roll-out of several courses and seminars to strengthen the technical capacity of teachers and educational staff. Capacity-building workshops covered distance education practices, guidance on safe school reopening, training on a new life-skills programme for adolescents in schools, and training on the new accelerated education programme.¹⁵

Service delivery: Service delivery activities included a school feeding programme for students and teachers, remote learning programmes, WASH infrastructure reconstruction and delivery of basic WASH supplies, provided through the different phases of the pandemic. At the beginning of the pandemic, the existing school feeding programme was adapted and scaled up to ensure children could continue receiving well-balanced meals during school closures. Hot meals were prepared daily for collection or delivery to children at home, to ensure that families remained engaged in the distance learning process. Additionally, bags of non-perishable food items were delivered to children's households monthly. As schools reopened, UNICEF launched another

12 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'UNICEF Venezuela Situation Report End-year 2020', UNICEF, Caracas, 2020.

13 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2020: Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

14 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2022: Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2023.

15 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2021: Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2022.

adaptation of the programme to incentivize children to return to in-person learning, through the provision of hot meals in schools.

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's support for remote learning included distributing learning kits containing materials such as notebooks and pencils, designing and distributing guidelines for learning activities, and supporting the national radio programme *La Escuela en la Radio* ('School on the Radio'). The Country Office also played a key role in supporting efforts to ensure teacher retention and engagement in distance education. Activities included the provision of teacher training materials and technology devices, as well as teacher retention incentives, such as the distribution of non-perishable food bags and cash transfers.

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office worked to support the rebuilding of school WASH infrastructure affected by looting of toilets and water tanks. These improvements ensured that children had access to adequate WASH facilities once schools reopened. Additionally, the Country Office provided key WASH supplies, including 3 million bars of soap, over 70,000 hygiene kits, and personal protective equipment for technical staff.

2.0 Purpose, objectives and scope

2.1. Purpose of the case study

The overall purpose of this case study is to provide in-depth analysis to build a robust evidence base for the global evaluation¹⁶ and to derive lessons that can inform new programme activities by the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office. The case study also aims to inform necessary adjustments in the education strategic planning process and bring about alignment and coherence with any changes in national priorities and needs. This will help better position UNICEF to improve its performance in support of teaching and learning efforts in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

2.2. Objectives of the case study

This case study follows the same three objectives as the global evaluation, namely:

- Objective 1: To examine the role of UNICEF in building the knowledge, research and global public goods required to mount an effective education response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Objective 2: To examine the extent to which UNICEF-supported strategies were deployed effectively to enhance government initiatives for continuity of learning during school closures and to reinstate safe and equitable in-school learning opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Objective 3: To examine the extent to which UNICEF Education teams used the existing frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools to mount an effective education response to COVID-19, and whether adjustments are being made to enhance preparedness for future disruptions of a similar scale.

2.3. Scope of the case study

The case study for the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office covers the period from March 2020 until the end of 2021, while its thematic focus is aligned with the three themes described in the objectives. Stakeholders included individuals and institutions who contributed to, collaborated with or supported UNICEF efforts in the education sector in Venezuela, including UNICEF Venezuela Country Office staff, and government and non-government local partners.

16 The global evaluation serves two main purposes: to enhance organizational learning and to strengthen organizational accountability. The evaluation is situated in the context of the 'UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021' and 'Every Child Learns: UNICEF Education Strategy 2019–2030'. The implementation period for the latter strategy began less than 12 months before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to an immediate and significant change of direction for UNICEF in much of its work to support children's learning. The three key change strategies (global partnerships and public goods; systems-strengthening; and service delivery) included in the theory of change for Goal Area 2 of the strategic plan remained relevant, however.

3.0 Case study approach and methodology

3.1. Case study approach and methods

This case study follows a methodological design consistent with the one used for the global evaluation, using the same evaluation questions and evaluation criteria for the data collection and data analysis processes. As in the associated global evaluation, this case study adopts a utilization-focused and participatory approach, involving key users throughout the evaluation.

Primary stakeholders from the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office were engaged in validating findings and recommendations. This design allowed stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the UNICEF contribution to improved teaching and learning, to increase learning, ownership and the likelihood of using evidence to inform future decisions. This section presents the questions guiding this case study (see Table 1), and a summary of the approach and methodology. A detailed description of the evaluation questions, approach and methodology deployed in the global evaluation is presented as Annex A.

Table 1. Questions guiding the Venezuela Country Office case study

Objective 1: To examine the role of UNICEF in building the knowledge, research and global public goods required to mount an effective education response to the COVID-19 pandemic
1.1 What has been the role and contribution of UNICEF in building the data, knowledge and tools for understanding and addressing the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector?
1.2 To what extent have UNICEF Education teams worked across sectors coherently and efficiently to develop evidence-based solutions to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector?
1.3 To what extent has UNICEF mobilized and worked with external partners coherently and efficiently to develop evidence-based solutions to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector?
Objective 2: To examine the extent to which UNICEF-supported strategies were deployed effectively to enhance government initiatives for continuity of learning during school closures and to reinstate safe and equitable in-school learning opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic
2.1 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to promote home-based learning?
2.2 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to enhance children's safety, well-being and protection during the reopening of schools?
2.3 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to reinstate in-school learning?
2.4 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to introduce reformed teaching, learning and assessment practices?
2.5 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported governments during the COVID-19 pandemic to target and reach different groups of marginalized children and adapt programmes to their learning needs?
2.6 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives to recover learning lost during the COVID-19 pandemic?
Objective 3: To examine the extent to which UNICEF Education teams used the existing frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools to mount an effective education response to COVID-19, and whether adjustments are being made to enhance preparedness for future disruptions of a similar scale
3.1 In what ways, and how successfully, did UNICEF Education teams deploy the existing education-in-emergencies (EiE) frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools in the education sector response to the COVID-19 pandemic?
3.2 In what ways, and how comprehensively, has UNICEF adapted the education-in-emergencies (EiE) frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools to prepare UNICEF education programmes in different contexts for future global public health emergencies?

A mixed-methods approach to data collection and analysis was used. Six remote interviews were conducted with key country informants in August 2022, including UNICEF Venezuela Country Office staff, government officials and a representative of a civil society organization implementing partner. Over 60 internal UNICEF Venezuela Country Office documents were also reviewed. Evidence was triangulated using information from a global online survey administered between September and October 2022 to contextualize the analysis.

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office case study was one of seven case studies used to inform the global evaluation report, to compare which strategies, processes and activities worked well, why, how, for whom and in what type of geographical contexts, to tackle the type of problems that target groups faced. All country case studies were designed to leverage both contextual and institutional knowledge from within each of the countries. These studies produced comparative evidence and in-depth insights into strategies and activities adopted to respond to the COVID-19 crisis in diverse contexts. Although the country sample selection was designed to capture the diversity of countries where UNICEF works, it was not designed to be representative of all UNICEF education programmes, hence the discrete findings are not necessarily generalizable beyond the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office.

4.0 Case study findings and conclusions

4.1. Objective 1: Building the evidence and resource base for the education response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Conclusion 1: As the GEC co-lead and a key partner to the MPPE, the Education team at the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office played a leading role in monitoring and reporting on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. Efforts included the use of innovative remote data collection tools and field-level partners; generating evidence and collecting experiences from countries with similar economic, social and infrastructure contexts to inform decision-making; and supporting the MPPE to develop national strategies, frameworks and capacity-building tools.

Conclusion 2: Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education team worked effectively and efficiently in close collaboration with WASH, Health, Nutrition and Child Protection colleagues. However, differences in internal UNICEF structures, such as funding streams and donor reporting requirements, posed a challenge for joint planning, funding and implementation.

Conclusion 3: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education team worked closely with GEC members and other implementing partners to develop evidence-based solutions, playing a key role in establishing links between partner organizations and government stakeholders, building trust between the two groups, and enabling the successful delivery of EiE solutions. However, UNICEF internal administrative requirements inhibited collaboration with some local partners that had the necessary expertise and presence to contribute more, particularly at the subnational and field levels.

Question 1.1: What has been the role and contribution of UNICEF in building the data, knowledge and tools for understanding and addressing the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector (within case study country, plus any contributions to regional and global levels)?

Finding 1.1.1 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office contributed to gathering monitoring data on programme activities aimed to reduce the negative effects of COVID-19 and to document the impact of the lockdowns and challenges that families encountered in supporting children with distance education. However, a robust assessment of the success of some of the programme activities was not possible due to the lack of monitoring data on school attendance prior to the onset of the pandemic.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office distributed supplies, including food bags, hygiene kits and educational materials, to families with children who were enrolled in educational centres. These efforts received funding support from the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) project. They benefited from the partnerships with the Asociación para el Desarrollo de la Educación Integral y Comunitaria¹⁷ (ASEINC) and the Asociación Venezolana de Educación Católica¹⁸ (AVEC), two non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The civil society organization Asociación Civil Centro de Investigación Social (CISOR) was commissioned by the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office to administer a telephone survey to a sample of households receiving

17 Association for Comprehensive and Community Education.

18 Venezuelan Association of Catholic Education.

this support and to analyse the results. The survey sample included 2,500 parents and caregivers in 6 of the 24 states where ASEINC and AVEC were operating.¹⁹

Information was gathered on aspects such as the relevance, quality, usefulness and timeliness of the supplies provided, as well as on the impact of COVID-19-related lockdowns. Respondents were asked about their perceptions of continuity of learning during school closures, the availability of computers and the internet at home, home schooling, household food insecurity, changes in household income, and changes observed in children and adolescents. The three main limitations of distance education were identified as unstable internet connectivity, a lack of electronic equipment, and a lack of capacity or capability of parents and caregivers to support children with school activities.²⁰

Although the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office was able to successfully collect information on activities rolled out during the COVID-19 pandemic, the lack of data on school attendance before and after the pandemic impeded the assessment of the success of any initiative. Also, due to weak monitoring systems, neither the Country Office nor the Government of Venezuela was able to assess impacts on children's outcomes.

Finding 1.1.2 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office made significant contributions to the COVID-19 response in Venezuela by curating global country lessons and experiences on safe school reopening, co-developing the Framework for Reopening of Schools with the MPPE, and adapting teacher training packages for the safe reopening of schools to the Venezuelan context, among others.

Once schools around the world began to reopen, countries looked to one another for examples of how to safely re-introduce classroom-based learning. Through the GEC, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office supported the MPPE by documenting country experiences (within the region and globally) on the safe reopening of schools. This evidence informed Venezuela's approach to reopening schools. Additionally, the Country Office, in collaboration with the UNICEF Latin American and Caribbean Regional Office, translated the package developed by the Middle East and North Africa Regional Office ('Ready to go Back to School'), adapted it to the Venezuelan context and rolled it out to 500 teachers across the country.²¹

Finding 1.1.3 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office adapted monitoring tools to be used for remote data collection through smartphones and expanded its teams in the field by incorporating education consultants, to strengthen the monitoring of interventions and the frequency of reporting during the pandemic.

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office monitored UNICEF-led programmes, including the school feeding programme (collecting data on the number of children receiving school feeding kits) and the national radio programme (monitoring coverage and the quality of content). The Country Office continued using the existing 5W reporting template, introduced in 2018, to track services implemented by local implementing partners and to provide monthly reports on the progress and

19 The six states considered in the survey sample were Amacuro, Bolívar, Capital District, Delta, Miranda, Táchira and Zulia.

20 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2021: Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2022.

21 This package was based on the global Framework for the Reopening of Schools, developed by UNICEF, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Bank, the World Food Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) between April and June 2020.

reach of UNICEF-led activities. These were shared with the government, United Nations agencies and other counterparts.

Data were summarized through dashboards, to update managers on progress and to make necessary adjustments. Because monitoring and evaluation was challenging due to the travel restrictions imposed during COVID-19-related lockdowns, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office adapted its performance monitoring tools for remote use. Field teams were expanded, adding education consultants to strengthen the monitoring of interventions across the country. Also, the frequency of reporting also increased, providing data on specific indicators to UNICEF HQ every 15 days at the height of the pandemic.

Question 1.2: To what extent did UNICEF Education teams work across sectors coherently and efficiently to develop evidence-based solutions to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector?

Finding 1.2.1 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education team worked with its WASH, Health, Nutrition and Child Protection teams very efficiently and coherently. These cross-sectoral collaborations were established and/or strengthened during the COVID-19 response.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Education team worked in close collaboration with WASH, Health, Nutrition and Child Protection counterparts. Cross-sectoral work was aligned coherently with the WASH, Health and Nutrition teams in their efforts to support safe school reopening and school feeding activities. The WASH team was credited for running the school feeding programme successfully. For every school feeding component, there was also a component for access to safe water and hygiene promotion (i.e., the school feeding kits provided to families also contained hygiene kits), including several activities to promote hygiene, hand washing and COVID-19 prevention. Additional activities included:

- Provision of personal protective equipment to staff working on distributing school feeding kits
- Household water storage and treatment
- Sharing materials on hand washing, COVID-19 prevention, and hygiene at home
- Developing guidelines for children and families on how to prepare posters, concept maps and other educational activities for COVID-19 prevention.²²

WASH in schools was regarded as a top priority for the Country Office throughout the pandemic, allowing teams to work in a fully integrated, agile manner, quickly mobilizing funding allocated to education efforts to these complementary efforts. For example, with the direct support of the WASH team, assessments were carried out at each of the UNICEF-supported schools to inform their WASH strategies. The strategy included the delivery of hygiene and cleaning supplies, provision of water tanks and connections to the water network, hygiene promotion activities, and teacher training.

Additionally, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education and Child Protection teams strengthened their collaboration around activities for the safe reopening of schools. The teams designed tools to support teachers to return to classroom-based learning. Although beyond the scope of this case study, the teams continued to work closely together in 2022 to explore joint programming on mental health and psychosocial support. These experiences and lessons

22 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'UNICEF Venezuela Situation Report Mid-year 2021', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

presented UNICEF Venezuela Country Office staff with an opportunity to reflect on ways to improve the collaboration between the Education, WASH and Social Protection teams. In particular, the two teams set out to improve internal systems for joint planning, funding and implementation, and revising internal structures which were not designed for collaborative working, despite having a joint strategy. However, limitations related to differences in funding and donor reporting requirements have persisted.

Question 1.3: To what extent has UNICEF mobilized and worked with external partners coherently and efficiently to develop evidence-based solutions to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector?

Finding 1.3.1 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education team relied on the GEC global partnership to provide knowledge management support to the MPPE and to present coherent messaging and evidence to support recommendations to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector.

UNICEF and Save the Children are the co-leads of the GEC, which comprises 24 international and national organizations. The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office relied on the GEC to provide knowledge management support to the MPPE in Venezuela, presenting coherent messaging and evidence to support recommendations to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector. The GEC shared reports and information later used by the MPPE to develop strategies to ensure continuity of education during the pandemic. This information was particularly important for the joint planning and frequent communication between UNICEF, the MPPE, NGOs and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), among others. It allowed them to define goals, make decisions, plan more flexibly and rapidly resolve any issues that arose. These collaborations helped develop a sense of shared responsibility with the MPPE and other members of the GEC.

The Venezuelan GEC's 'Marco de Acción Sector Educación ante el COVID-19' ('Framework for Action for the COVID-19 Response') was developed in collaboration with the UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office and the GEC, in direct coordination with national education officers, and in consultation with national NGOs. In 2020, the GEC organized four international seminars to support the exchange of good practices for distance education, with over 30 specialists from Latin America and Europe and over 800 people in Venezuela participating. The seminars registered more than 10,000 interactions and views on the GEC's social media channel.²³

The GEC also collaborated with the Universidad Abierta de Recoleta in Chile, the MPPE, UNESCO and Save the Children to design a free, seven-week course entitled 'Right to education in times of crisis: alternatives for learning continuity'.²⁴ The course was intended to build the capacity of public, private and social actors in the Venezuelan education sector to ensure equitable, inclusive and quality educational continuity during school closures. The training was rolled out virtually to 4,550 public officers, teachers and local educational staff across the country.²⁵

23 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'UNICEF Venezuela Situation Report End-year 2020', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

24 Ibid.

25 For more information, see Universidad Abierta de Recoleta, 'Manual de Transferencia Tecnopedagógica y Audiovisual', Universidad Abierta de Recoleta, Santiago, Chile, n.d.

Finding 1.3.2 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office’s Education team worked coherently and efficiently with several partners, enabling new UNICEF national implementing partners to establish and strengthen trusted relationships with government stakeholders. However, UNICEF internal administrative requirements limited the Country Office’s ability to work with other potential implementing partners with field-level presence.

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office collaborated with several non-governmental implementing partners, including Fe y Alegría, AVEC, ASEINC, Construyendo Futuros, Dividendo Voluntario para la Comunidad, Fevic, Coopi, CEPIN and Otro Enfoque, and brokered relationships with new implementing partners and education officials at all levels – from Ministers, Vice Ministers and Director-Generals to national technical teams, zonal authorities and zonal technical teams. This support allowed partners to establish a mutually beneficial working relationship with government stakeholders, and to benefit from each other’s knowledge, tools and monitoring arrangements. New trusted relationships were also formed between partner organizations and the government, and opened up opportunities to work in public schools and deliver supplies to students, and to adapt to different national contexts. These arrangements were managed under ministerial guidelines and joint agreement with UNICEF. Box 1 presents an example of such a practice.

Box 1: Good practice: How the UNICEF Venezuela Education team worked with Construyendo Futuros to develop a back-to-school programme

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office supported the implementation of a school feeding programme, providing hot meals to children in schools to encourage their attendance and retention. Construyendo Futuros was a key implementing partner in this programme. At the onset of the pandemic, the Country Office helped adapt and expand this programme to provide school feeding at the household level, benefiting 110,772 children and adolescents in 11 out of the 24 states in the country. Once schools reopened in October 2021, the Country Office helped the programme revert to providing hot meals in schools to incentivize children to return to in-person learning.

Based on anecdotal evidence, informants stated that the school feeding activities were very successful, even leading to an unintended positive effect during the COVID-19 lockdowns: greater parental involvement and accountability for their children’s school performance – that is, when parents came to collect school feeding kits from the schools, they would also deliver their children’s homework, creating a positive incentive for parents to support their children to complete their homework.

Construyendo Futuros was a key implementing partner in the delivery of school feeding kits around Venezuela. The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office supported Construyendo Futuros to build trust with local leaders, known as the ‘street bosses’, who are linked to specific political parties. According to anecdotal information from key informants, many NGOs had reservations about working with these leaders. The Country Office helped break down those barriers and build trust between the two groups, enabling the successful delivery of school feeding kits and learning materials to children within these communities. Moreover, anecdotal information described the Country Office supporting Construyendo Futuros to become more adaptable to different school settings and to overcome challenges with working in rural schools, such as the cost of transportation and the lack of electricity and internet access. Feedback from Construyendo Futuros suggested that the work with the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office allowed it to grow from being a local implementing partner to becoming a national-level implementing partner.

Nevertheless, the case study highlighted challenges in working with the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office, mainly in terms of stringent operations and administrative requirements. For example, UNICEF procurement requirements demand that prospective partners should have an international bank account. This resulted in a missed opportunity to work with field-level partners

that had the required expertise and field/community-level presence in the country but did not have the capacity to open an international bank account.

4.2. Objective 2: Reopening schools and reinstating face-to-face learning

Conclusion 4: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office adopted a multifaceted approach to support the MPPE in ensuring the continuity of learning and worked to strengthen the technical capacity of teachers at each stage of the pandemic. However, poor technological infrastructure available to learners in Venezuela prevented many children and teachers from accessing and engaging in home-based learning due to a lack of technological equipment and unstable access to electricity and the internet.

Conclusion 5: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office recognizes the need for greater investment to reach the most vulnerable groups such as young children in early childhood development programmes, girls, indigenous children and adolescents, out-of-school children and adolescents, and students with disabilities. The limited evidence available on the specific activities targeting different groups of marginalized children adds to challenges faced by the Venezuelan education sector.

Question 2.1: In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to promote home-based learning?

Finding 2.1.1 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office supported the government by jointly developing the national distance learning strategy ‘Cada Familia una Escuela’, using multiple distance learning modalities and supporting teachers to deliver supplies to students’ homes. Children with disabilities and those from indigenous populations were reached through offline solutions only.

To support home-based learning, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office provided technical support to the MPPE to design the national distance learning strategy ‘Cada Familia una Escuela’ (‘Every Family, a School’). The strategy was implemented by the MPPE in collaboration with the GEC, using multiple distance learning modalities, including television and radio programmes, digital media and offline solutions, including distribution of didactic guides and learning kits, publication of learning activities on school doors and noticeboards, and the pick-up and delivery of notebooks to children’s homes by teachers.

In addition, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office provided technical advice to the MPPE to produce educational and communication resources and to conduct virtual seminars on EIE, featuring best practices in distance education, strengthening the technical capacity of the education community. The Country Office also distributed individual ‘School in a Box’ learning kits, containing materials such as notebooks, pencils and coloured crayons, to 555,659 children in 15 of the country’s 24 states.²⁶ Approximately 7,353 children with disabilities and 8,319 children from indigenous populations benefited from these learning kits.

Finding 2.1.2 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office supported the MPPE’s efforts to train and retain teachers, creating incentives to remain committed and engaged in distance education activities.

²⁶ Amazonas, Anzoátegui, Apure, Bolívar, Carabobo, Capital District, Delta Amacuro, Lara, La Guaira, Miranda, Mérida, Monagas, Falcón, Táchira and Zulia.

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office worked with the MPPE to offer additional training and financial and food transfers, providing technological incentives to teachers to encourage their commitment and adapt their teaching approaches to distance learning during school closures, and a strategy to retain them. With the support of the GEC, the Country Office developed and provided training to 12,258 teachers to strengthen their capacity in EiE. Training included provisions for learning continuity to students, as well as emotional well-being, good health and hygiene habits, and fundamental reading, writing and mathematical skills. Incentives reached 7,794 teachers in 7 of the country's 24 states, including 112 teachers from indigenous populations.²⁷

Question 2.2: In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to enhance children's safety, well-being and protection during the reopening of schools?

Finding 2.2.1 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office supported the government's efforts to enhance children's safety, well-being and protection during the reopening of schools by rebuilding school infrastructure and providing key WASH supplies.

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education and WASH teams worked together to support the rebuilding of infrastructure in 94 schools in 10 states, such as kitchens, canteens, toilet facilities and boreholes, ensuring that 38,487 children had access to adequate WASH services once schools reopened in October 2021. The teams also worked with the MPPE to adjust standard Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) protocols, and provided schools with key sanitation, hygiene and waste management supplies, including 3 million bars of soap, 70,864 hygiene kits and personal protective equipment.

Additionally, the Education and WASH teams supported school committees, parents and families with important information based on the updated IPC protocols. They also collaborated to mobilize stakeholders for Global Handwashing Day in October 2020 and Global Water Day in March 2021, successfully bringing together the Ministry of Water, the MPPE and the Ministry of Health in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Global Handwashing Day enabled the launch of a cross-sectoral campaign and mobilized the participation of the 3 ministries, 25 partners and 15 private companies.²⁸

Finding 2.2.2 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office, in collaboration with the UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office and the UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office, translated a training package for teachers, school administrators and educational staff and adapted it to the national context. However, there is no evidence of monitoring data collected to assess the effects of the training on learning achievement.

The Framework for the Reopening of Schools developed at the global level by UNICEF, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Bank, the World Food Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was used by the UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office to develop a training package for educators, teachers and educational staff called 'Ready to go Back to School'. The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office, in collaboration with the UNICEF Latin America

27 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2021: Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2022.

28 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2020: Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

and Caribbean Regional Office, used this adapted training package, as it provided guidance for country conditions closer to those observed in Venezuela than those observed in neighbouring countries.

This training package was translated and adapted to the Venezuelan context and rolled out to 500 teachers and educational staff across the country.²⁹ The training reflected on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on everyday teaching practices and provided teachers with practical tools and information to address challenges relating to the safe reopening of schools.³⁰ However, by the end of this evaluation, no monitoring information was available to capture or assess the effects of such training efforts on students' learning achievement.

Finding 2.2.3 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office supported the development of psychosocial activities and home-based recreational programmes to assist children's physical and emotional well-being, as well as life-skills development programmes for adolescents.

During the phase of school reopening, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office supported government initiatives that provided psychosocial training to 2,443 teachers in 339 schools across 17 of the country's 24 states. It is estimated that these initiatives potentially benefited 172,152 children.³¹ This support involved the provision of activities to be carried out at home, with an emphasis on the recognition and management of emotions and the establishment of healthy routines and self-care during COVID-19 lockdowns. A recreational programme was also rolled out in 7 of the 24 states for 61,628 children, promoting home-based play to support children's well-being through extended periods of isolation due to the pandemic.³²

Additional activities included support with life-skills development programmes for adolescents targeting communication and self-expression, building self-esteem, leadership and influence, conflict management, coping with the stress and controlling emotions, cooperation and teamwork, empathy and respect, goal-setting, decision-making, creativity and innovation.³³ The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education team also adapted the existing UNICEF 'Skills for Life' adolescent training kit to conduct training to support secondary school teachers. This programme was aimed at eliciting positive change in the lives of adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic, with anecdotal information suggesting positive feedback from participating adolescents and their families.³⁴ This pilot programme was adapted and scaled up, in coordination with the MPPE, for implementation in 700 secondary schools across the country. Although beyond the scope of this evaluation, anecdotal information shared suggests that the MPPE plans to make this life-skills programme part of the national curriculum for the 2022/23 school year, with a goal of reaching 380,000 adolescents nationwide.³⁵

29 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Ready to Go Back to School: Training Package for Teachers and Educational Personnel', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

30 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2021: Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2022.

31 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'UNICEF Venezuela Situation Report Mid-year 2021', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2020: Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

35 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2021: Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2022.

Question 2.3: In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to reinstate in-school learning?

Finding 2.3.1 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's high-level engagement with the government and prominent role in the education sector made it a credible and reliable partner. In coordination with the MPPE and NGOs, the Country Office designed a framework for the progressive reopening of schools.

Its high-level engagement with the government and prominent role in the education sector as a credible and reliable partner enabled the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office to advocate strongly for the reopening of schools at the highest levels of the MPPE. This was possible through evidence generation efforts around three key dimensions – namely, biosecurity, welfare and protection, and continuity of learning. The Country Office provided the government with key resources and recommendations based on recent international, regional and national evidence, which was used to guide the discussion and evidence-based decision-making of national, community and local education actors. In addition, in coordination with the MPPE and NGOs, the Country Office designed a framework for the progressive reopening of schools, including advice on when, where and which schools to reopen, as well as key considerations and steps for safely returning to schools. In line with this framework, schools were partially reopened in October 2021 and reopened at full capacity in March 2022.

Finding 2.3.2 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office supported the government's efforts to reinstate in-school learning through the delivery of the school feeding programme, using their experience of an existing programme and adapting it to incentivize children to return to in-person learning.

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office also supported government efforts to adapt the existing school feeding programme to deliver meals during school closures. The adapted programme was estimated to have benefited 110,772 children in 11 states (including 4,585 children from indigenous populations and 29 children with disabilities). Once schools reopened in October 2021, the Country Office continued to support government efforts to safely reinstate the in-school hot meal programme as a way to incentivize a return to in-person learning.

Anecdotal information supported perceptions that the school feeding programme fostered connections between families and schools, improved the pedagogical follow-up of students, and enabled wider dissemination of key public health messages during food deliveries during the remote learning phase. An increase in the number of registrations in target schools and greater incentives to access learning services for out-of-school children were also observed during this period. Overall, the school feeding activity was consistently described as an important part of the UNICEF response to the COVID-19 pandemic by supporting remote learning. However, no systematic analysis was found that assessed the direct impact on students' school retention, performance and overall well-being.

Question 2.4: In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to introduce reformed teaching, learning and assessment practices?

Finding 2.4.1 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office supported government efforts to strengthen teachers' digital literacy through the development, adaptation, contextualization and roll-out of a series of training courses and seminars. These training courses focused on methods and resources for distance learning, psychosocial support for children, strategies for distance care of children with disabilities, and remedial learning.

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education team helped strengthen teachers' digital literacy and skills through all the stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Activities included building teachers' capacity to support children's learning and development during school closures; preparing teachers for the safe reopening of schools; and training teachers on accelerated education programmes to make up for learning lost during the pandemic. These training activities were rolled out through courses and specialized seminars and focused on methods and resources for distance learning, particularly for fundamental skills in reading, writing and mathematics.

In addition, training provided psychosocial support for children and strategies for distance care of children with disabilities, supported children to adopt good health and hygiene habits, and supported the implementation of the 'Skills for Life' programme.³⁶ An estimated 12,258 teachers and managers, 4,550 public officers in 19 of the country's 24 states, and local education staff benefited from these various training activities.³⁷

In 2021, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office, in collaboration with the MPPE, developed an accelerated education programme for children aged 10–14 to allow them to complete their primary education in a maximum of two school years. Alongside this, UNICEF and the MPPE developed the National Diploma in Teacher Training: Accelerated Education. The training programme emphasized the pedagogical processes of accelerated education, having an awareness of each student's personal situation and considering their mental well-being, methods of evaluation and monitoring of students' progress, and establishing communication channels with families or adults responsible for children entering the accelerated education programme.³⁸

Question 2.5: In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported governments during the COVID-19 pandemic to target and reach different groups of marginalized children and adapt programmes to their learning needs?

Finding 2.5.1 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's planning and reporting documents describe efforts to reach and target indigenous communities and children with disabilities through education programmes. However, certain marginalized groups, such as children of preschool age, girls and out-of-school children, were not sufficiently targeted.

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's planning and reporting documents described activities to reach marginalized children, such as those from indigenous communities and children with disabilities, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Country Office reported that 22,852 indigenous children and adolescents received school materials, and 12,794 indigenous children received school feeding and socio-emotional programmes in 2020.³⁹ A further 10,528 children and adolescents with disabilities and 29,237 indigenous children and adolescents benefited from UNICEF support. Additionally, 8,319 children from indigenous populations and 7,353 children with disabilities in 17 out of the country's 24 states received educational kits.⁴⁰

Other support included the design and distribution of didactic guidelines for school activities to 219,985 children, including guides adapted for children from indigenous populations. Additionally,

36 Ibid.

37 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'UNICEF Venezuela Situation Report End-year 2020', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

38 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2020: Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

39 Ibid.

40 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2021: Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2022.

the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office reached an agreement with the national radio network Fe y Alegría to develop and broadcast daily the programme *La Escuela en la Radio* ('School on the Radio'), providing learning content to an estimated 3.9 million children in 21 of the country's 24 states.⁴¹

Despite these initiatives to reach marginalized children, informants acknowledged the need for greater efforts to reach the most vulnerable groups. For example, evidence showed that the radio programme reached only 3 per cent of the indigenous population.⁴² Informants identified the need to target children of preschool age, girls and out-of-school children, in addition to children and adolescents from indigenous populations and those with disabilities.

4.3. Objective 3: UNICEF preparedness frameworks and readiness to handle similar future crises

Conclusion 6: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office has a well-established EiE team that moved swiftly and efficiently to adapt and build on existing infrastructure, capacities and tools to respond to the disruption to the education sector caused by COVID-19. The Country Office is yet to review and update EiE frameworks and tools, informed by good practices and lessons learned, including the rapid adaptation of resources from other regions with contexts similar to those in Venezuela, to enhance its readiness to handle future crises of a similar magnitude.

Question 3.1: In what ways, and how successfully, did UNICEF Education teams deploy the existing EiE frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools in the education sector response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Finding 3.1.1 The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office was highly successful in adapting and using EiE programmes and tools that were in place prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, a humanitarian operation and EiE strategy were in place and implemented to support the humanitarian and economic crisis in the country. At the onset of the pandemic, the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office adapted and ensured the continuity of its existing programmes within this new emergency context. Its existing EiE operational strategy, capacity at the field level and relationships with the MPPE and local NGOs meant that UNICEF could provide a rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to collaboration in programme activities (*see Finding 1.1.3*), the production of situation reports, produced regularly prior to the pandemic due to the emergency context, was adapted using the 5W remote data collection tool. Anecdotal information suggests that these reports were largely used within the Country Office and by donors for management purposes.

Question 3.2: In what ways, and how comprehensively, has UNICEF adapted the EiE frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools to prepare UNICEF education programmes in different contexts for future global public health emergencies?

Finding 3.2.1 There is very limited evidence to suggest that UNICEF Venezuela has made official changes to the EiE frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools to prepare UNICEF education programmes for future global public health emergencies.

41 United Nations Children's Fund, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 'Country Office Annual Report 2020: Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela', UNICEF, Caracas, 2021.

42 Ibid.

Any additional adaptations to the existing EiE frameworks, infrastructure, capacities or tools have not yet been officially reflected in documentation produced, based on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, there is no evidence that lessons were documented or used to prepare for future global public health emergencies, despite anecdotal discussions and clear descriptions of such lessons by UNICEF Venezuela Country Office staff within the scope of this exercise.

5.0 Lessons learned and possible actions

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office made significant investments in different activities to tackle different aspects on the COVID-19 response. The key message from this case study is that it played an invaluable role in the country's education response to the COVID-19 pandemic, delivering on its mandate as co-lead of the GEC. UNICEF support to the MPPE and other government stakeholders resulted in the desired outputs in the short term. However, the impact of these investments on improvements in child outcomes associated with learning had not been measured or assessed by the time this evaluation concluded. That said, the following three lessons learned were derived from the case study to position the Country Office to have a greater impact in future crises:

Lesson 1: Investments in evidence generation efforts are critical to ensure that UNICEF continues to be a trusted partner in the organization's role as GEC co-lead, as well as in its engagement with key government stakeholders and field-level implementing partners.

The leadership role of the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office in the GEC partnership was recognized as key to the support that UNICEF provided in monitoring and evidence generation efforts. The following good practices were reported:

- Innovative solutions for education data collection and monitoring efforts, using a combination of digital tools and field-level partners
- The leadership role helped build strong links between local partner organizations and government partners to successfully deliver EiE solutions.

Lesson 2: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's future responsiveness and success in mitigating education sector disruptions at a magnitude similar to the COVID-19 pandemic depend on the organization's capacity and the robustness of its preparedness and emergency response plans, processes, guidance tools and relationships with key government stakeholders. Lessons from this experience must be used to inform revisions and adjustments to existing preparedness and emergency response plans, for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and other countries with similar emergency and socioeconomic contexts.

The swift and efficient response by the UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's Education team, co-leading efforts and mobilizing GEC resources to support the Government of Venezuela, were consistently perceived as highly successful. Existing EiE frameworks, processes and guidance tools, including adaptations from other regions with similar humanitarian and economic contexts to those observed in Venezuela, were efficiently adapted and used. These actions were instrumental in informing planning and implementation efforts by government stakeholders to reduce the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Systematic data collection and evidence generation efforts to inform any decisions and adjustments to existing EiE plans will be critical to ensure evidence-based decision-making.

Lesson 3: The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office's collaboration across programmatic sectors was key to achieving coherent, effective and efficient solutions to reduce the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Replicating similar collaboration strategies across different sectors in the country can ensure that marginalized children are fully included in strategic and operational country plans.

The UNICEF Venezuela Country Office has derived many lessons and good practices from cross-sectoral programme collaborations to increase school retention, equity and inclusion approaches, advocacy and communication, and work with field-level implementing partners to reach geographically isolated populations. In considering these lessons, greater effort should be made to integrate girls, indigenous children and adolescents, those with disabilities, out-of-school children and students at risk of school dropout into national programme strategic plans and priorities, taking the country's specific contextual realities into account.

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Annex A: Evaluation questions, approach, and methodology

A.1. Evaluation questions

Objective 1: To examine the role of UNICEF in building the knowledge, research, and global public goods required to mount an effective education response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Theme 1: Building the evidence and resource base for the education response to the COVID-19 pandemic

OECD-DAC criteria: coherence and efficiency

ToR Evaluation Questions

Final Evaluation Questions

1.1 What is the role and contribution of UNICEF in building the knowledge and tools for combating COVID-19 in the education sector?	1.1 What has been the role and contribution of UNICEF in building the data, knowledge and tools for understanding and addressing the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the education sector?
1.2 To what extent did UNICEF Education teams work coherently and efficiently across different sectors to develop evidence-based education solutions to combat COVID-19 disruptions?	1.2 To what extent have UNICEF Education teams worked across sectors coherently and efficiently to develop evidence-based solutions to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the education sector?
1.3 To what extent did UNICEF mobilize and work coherently and efficiently with external partners to develop evidence-based education solutions to combat COVID-19 disruptions?	1.3 To what extent has UNICEF mobilized and worked with external partners coherently and efficiently to develop evidence-based solutions to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the education sector?

Objective 2: To examine the extent to which UNICEF-supported strategies were deployed effectively to enhance government initiatives for continuity of learning during school closures and to reinstate safe and equitable in-school learning opportunities during in the COVID-19 pandemic

Theme 2: Reopening schools and reinstating face-to-face learning

OECD-DAC criteria: relevance and effectiveness

ToR Evaluation Questions

Final Evaluation Questions

2.1 How successful were UNICEF-supported education strategies to promote home-based learning and to address the needs of children in a range of contexts?	2.1 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to promote home-based learning?
2.2 How successful were UNICEF-supported education strategies in enhancing children's safety and protection during re-opening of schools?	2.2 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to enhance children's safety, wellbeing and protection during the re-opening of schools?
2.3 How successful were UNICEF-supported education strategies in reinstating in-school learning and reforming teaching, learning and assessment practices in the context of COVID-19?	2.3 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to reinstate in-school learning?
	2.4 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to introduce reformed teaching, learning and assessment practices?
2.4 How successful were UNICEF-supported strategies in targeting and reaching the different groups of marginalized children and tailoring programmes to their learning needs?	2.5 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported governments during the COVID-19 pandemic to target and reach different groups of marginalized children and adapt programmes to their learning needs?
2.5 What are the key defining characteristics of countries schools that were successful in keep schools open and recovering lost learning loss during the COVID-19 pandemic?	2.6 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives to recover learning lost during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Objective 3: To examine the extent to which UNICEF Education teams utilized the existing frameworks, infrastructure, capacities ,and tools to mount an effective education response to COVID-19, and whether adjustments are being made to enhance preparedness for future disruptions of a similar scale

Theme 3: UNICEF preparedness frameworks, readiness to handle similar future crises

OECD-DAC criteria: relevance and effectiveness

ToR Evaluation Questions

Final Evaluation Questions

3.1 How successful were Education teams in deploying the existing EIE infrastructure, capacities and tools in the education sector response to COVID-19?	3.1 In what ways, and how successfully, did UNICEF Education teams deploy the existing education-in-emergency (EIE) frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools in the education sector response to the COVID-19 pandemic?
3.2 Are the necessary adjustments being made to the education in emergency frameworks, infrastructure, capacities, and tools to prepare UNICEF education programmes in different contexts for future global public health emergencies?	3.2 In what ways, and how comprehensively, has UNICEF adapted the education-in-emergency (EIE) frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools to prepare UNICEF education programmes in different contexts for future global public health emergencies?

The evaluation assessed against the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and coherence. Each of these is defined below:

- **Relevance:** assess whether the intervention did the right things. It is the extent to which the intervention objectives and design responded to beneficiaries' global, country and partner/institution needs, policies and priorities, and continued to do so as circumstances changed.
- **Efficiency:** how well the resources were used. It is the extent to which the intervention delivered results in an economic and timely way. This evaluation only focused on timeliness.
- **Effectiveness:** extent to which the intervention achieved its objectives and results, including any differential results across groups.
- **Coherence:** compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution and the extent to which other interventions supported or undermined the intervention. Internal coherence addressed the synergies and interlinkages between the intervention and other interventions carried out by UNICEF, as well as the consistency of the intervention with the relevant international norms and standards to which UNICEF adhered. External coherence considered the consistency of the intervention with other actors' interventions in the same context. This included complementarity, harmonisation and co-ordination with others, and the extent to which the intervention added value while avoiding duplication of effort.

A.2. Evaluation approach

The evaluation used a utilisation-focused and participatory approach, involving key users throughout the evaluation. In particular, primary stakeholders were engaged in validating the findings and recommendations. This approach allowed stakeholders to gain a better understanding of UNICEF contribution to improved teaching and learning thereby increasing ownership and the probability of using the evaluation findings and recommendations to inform their future decisions.

The evaluation adopted a theory-based design, combined with comparative case studies. It was non-experimental and used mixed methods. With an overarching theory-based evaluation design the evaluation predominantly used qualitative research to assess the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and efficiency of UNICEF COVID response in the education sector.

Using case studies, via selection of specific countries as cases, we were able to compare and contrast which types of strategies, and activities worked well, why, how, for whom, in what type of geographical contexts and in tackling the type of problems that target groups faced. By developing country-based case studies, the evaluation was able to obtain in-depth insights into strategies and activities adopted for responding to the COVID crisis in “natural real-life [and diverse] contexts”. Country-based case studies were designed to leverage both contextual and institutional knowledge from within each of the countries. The case studies provided in-depth analyses of each country and helped to understand the extent to which interventions were aligned to needs of target groups, and the effects of the support, under specific conditions.

The evaluation developed seven unique case studies, using specifically designed selection criteria. In selecting the countries, the evaluation used “literal replication” as a method of case selection which means that the same type of results was predicted for each of the cases, although using diverse interventions in differing contexts. The case study countries varied in terms of contexts, barriers, interventions, structures and geographical location. Variation along these dimensions provided the greatest coverage and best chance of identifying patterns of difference

or similarity, in terms of the extent to which UNICEF strategies and interventions were effective and contributed to delivering results. Due to the low number of case studies conducted, as compared to the scale of the COVID response globally, it is unlikely that the findings can be generalized more broadly. For this reason, they were supplemented by data collected via online survey, desk review, interviews, and analysis of secondary data to incorporate evidence from around the globe.

Whilst each of the geographic case studies differed in terms of context and partners, they enabled similar themes to be explored across the selected contexts. This means the case studies had both geographic and thematic focus. Efforts were made to select themes that allowed a specific topic to be explored in more depth across number of contexts. While geographic case studies functioned as stand-alone studies for each country, the thematic aspects focused on a topic, which enabled analysis and comparison across countries.

A.2.1. Case study countries sampling selection

The sample selection design for the seven country case studies is presented in table A.1, using three essential and nine additional criteria. The specific characteristics for each of the select seven countries is presented in table A.2. The selected case studies provided a broad and diverse profile of countries where UNICEF works on education programming.

Table A1: Case study country selection criteria

Country Selection Criteria	Assessment Method	Sources
Essential criteria		
Availability and interest of UNICEF CO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High: high interest and availability to take an active part sharing secondary documentation and identifying and engaging stakeholders for all primary data collection methods: include in sample - Medium: moderate interest and availability to take part sharing secondary documentation and identifying and engaging stakeholders for partial primary data collection methods: include in sample - Low: no indication of interest nor availability to spend time on either document sharing or stakeholder engagement or both: exclude from sample 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with UNICEF HQ Education team and Reference Group Follow-up consultation with UNICEF country office
Availability of quality data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (include in sample) - No (exclude from sample) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with UNICEF HQ and country offices
Within the top 20 countries in UNICEF expenditure on education programming in 2020 and/or 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (include in sample) - No (exclude from sample) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Annual Results Report – Goal Area 2 for 2020 and 2019
Additional criteria		
Country within a UNICEF regional classification	Countries from a diverse range of UNICEF regions but not necessarily all	UNICEF website
Economic status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - low income - lower-middle income - higher-middle income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Bank classification on website
Population size	Diverse range of countries from large to small population sizes	World Bank data from 2020
Fragile and conflict affected states (FCAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (eligible for inclusion) - No (eligible for inclusion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Bank classification on website
GPE funded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (eligible for inclusion) - No (eligible for inclusion) 	GPE website
Progress towards SDG 4.1.1 (b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (eligible for inclusion) - No (eligible for inclusion) 	Most recent UIS data
UNICEF spending on education programming in country (in millions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (eligible for inclusion) - No (eligible for inclusion) 	UNICEF 2020 Annual Results Report
Human Development Index Ranking (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (eligible for inclusion) - No (eligible for inclusion) 	UNDP website
Information on school closure and reopening durations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (eligible for inclusion) - No (eligible for inclusion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 Global Education Recovery Tracker

Table A2: Selected case study countries

Country	Compulsory criteria			Additional criteria								
	Interest	Data quality	Top 20 expenditure	RO	Econ. status	Pop. size (2020 millions)	FCAS	GPE funded	Progress SDG 4.1.1(b)	Educ spending (in mill.)	HDI ranking	School closure source:
Bangladesh	TBC	TBC	Y	SA	lower-middle	164	N	Y	Maths: 47.3%, Reading: 52.6%	43	133	all schools closed on March 18, 2019 Hybrid model began for all grades except pre-primary in November 2021 Current status unknown
Jordan	Y	Y	Y	MENA	upper-middle	29	Y	Y	Maths: N/A, Reading: N/A	27	102	Frequent school closures and reopening in 2021. No data after Sep 2021
Lebanon	TBC	TBC	Y	MENA	upper-middle	6	Y	N	Maths: 26.8%, Reading: N/A	172	92	No data for 2019 or 2020 Feb - March 2021 school closure April - Jun 2021 hybrid Jun - Nov 2021 open
Nigeria	TBC	TBC	Y	WCA	lower-middle	206	Y	Y	Maths: N/A, Reading: N/A	43	161	Feb - Aug 2021 hybrid Sep - Oct 2021 closed Nov 2021 Hybrid
South Sudan	TBC	TBC	Y	ESA	low	11	Y	Y	Maths: N/A, Reading: N/A	31	185	Feb - May 2021 hybrid Jun - Nov 2021 open
Mongolia	Y	Y	N	EAP	lower-middle	3.27	N	Y	Maths: N/A Reading: N/A	tbc	99	Apr - Aug 2021 closed Sep 2021 – Jan 2022 hybrid Feb 2022 Open
Venezuela	TBC	TBC	Y	LAC	upper-middle	28.00	N	N	Maths: N/A, Reading: N/A	14	113	Mar – Sep 2021 remote Nov – Dec 2021 open Dec – Jan 22 closed Jan – Feb 22 open

A.3. Data collection methods and sampling

This evaluation used a mixed-method approach to address the evaluation questions. Both primary and secondary data were collected to address the evaluation questions.

Primary data collection included individual and group interviews as well as an online survey. Interviews were carried out with UNICEF staff and key informants from strategic partners at the regional and global levels (69 key informant interviews conducted July–October 2022). The online survey was used to gather data from UNICEF Chiefs of Education from UNICEF country offices (74 country offices responded to the survey, which was conducted September–October 2022, signaling a 56 per cent response rate). A sample of seven countries was selected for in-depth data collection and in-depth comparative analyses: Bangladesh, Jordan, Lebanon, Mongolia, Nigeria, South Sudan and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Secondary data collection included a desk review of relevant documentation and data sets from all levels at which UNICEF operates (global, regional and country) and, in particular, from the seven countries selected from in-depth analyses. A total of 338 documents were reviewed, 52 per cent of which were country-level documents, with regional-level documents (related to all seven regions where UNICEF works) and global-level documents accounting for 20 per cent each.

A.3.1 Primary data collection

Primary data collection for the global evaluation was conducted between end July to beginning October 2022. Primary data collection was used to follow up specific areas of enquiry identified through the analysis of the secondary data and documentation. The list of key informants interviewed for this case study are listed in table A3. Interviews were conducted between August 4 to 11, 2022.

Table A3: List of key informants, Venezuela case study

Organisation / institution	Key Respondent Information	
	Position	Name
UNICEF CO	Chief Education	Andres Felices
UNICEF CO	Education Officer	Mariella Adrian
UNICEF CO	Chief WASH	David Simon
UNICEF CO	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	Cecilia Torres
MPPE	Deputy Minister of Education	Rosangela Orozco
Building Futures	Managing Director	Jennifer Belisario

A global online survey was administered for completion by UNICEF Chiefs of Education from across UNICEF network of country offices. These were particularly valuable for certain evaluation questions that required information from many country contexts to be adequately addressed. This included evaluation questions related to, for example, interventions deployed for home-based learning, recovering learning lost during the COVID-19 pandemic and where Education teams deployed the existing EIE infrastructure, capacities, and tools in the education sector response to COVID-19.

A.3.2. Secondary data collection

The secondary data was collected predominantly from online sources (organization websites and online libraries) that were authentic and verifiable. Two members of the evaluation team had access to the UNICEF intranet and scanned the database for any relevant documentation that

may not have been in the public domain. The evaluation team also made direct requests to people within UNICEF and key stakeholder organizations to share relevant documentation and data sets. UNICEF Education Team also compiled a set of relevant data and documentation for review. The list of secondary data sources is included in table A4.

Table A4: Secondary data sources

Level	Source
Global & Regional	UNICEF publications – strategies, reports, case studies, evaluations, and data sets UNICEF internal monitoring data sets Publications and data sets from technical and delivery partners such as UNESCO, UIS, WHO etc. Publications, webinars, and data sets from global initiatives UNICEF is a part of such as the Global Education Coalition, and GEC Publications and data sets from donors such as World Bank, GPE, ECW, FCDO etc.
Country	In addition to the above sources that may have had information on the seven target case study countries, secondary data was also collected from the following sources: Government documents, publications, and data sets in the public domain Publications and data sets from UNICEF in-country partners such as NGOs/ INGOs, other Donors and UN agencies and the private sector

The following criteria was applied to the process of collecting documents:

- Documents in English, French or Spanish
- Documents and data sets published between March 2020 and December 2021
- Documents with the focus on UNICEF Goal Area 2 – education teaching and learning

A.4. Data analysis

As the primary and secondary data analyses were undertaken, the evaluation team generated a set of robust evaluation statements that answered each evaluation question based on the evidence collected. These statements were tested, elaborated on, and refined through an iterative process as the analysis progressed. The statements also included assessments of the quality of the evidence base. Once the data analysis was completed in full, the evaluation statements were developed into evaluation narratives that provided nuanced answers to each evaluation question. These narratives also included assessments of the overall strength of evidence available for each evaluation question.

The analytical framework used to guide the analysis process was based on the evaluation questions. The methods of analysis included:

- Thematic analysis: A coding framework based on the evaluation questions was developed and data collected from the document review, interviews, group interviews and survey were coded and analysed. Developing and using a coding framework helped to ensure consistency across the Evaluation Team, therefore providing greater reliability of results.
- The evaluation team used Dedoose, an online and cross-platform app for analysing qualitative data, whether text-based or other data including photos, audio, and videos. All qualitative data collected was uploaded on Dedoose and entire documents or sections were tagged as per pre-defined categorisations linked to the evaluation questions. This allowed for real time collaboration within the evaluation team. It also helped to identify where gaps existed in evidence. It was used directly to write the evaluation report and maintain proximity to the evidence base as evaluation questions were addressed.

- Triangulation, using multiple data sources, was used to corroborate findings and deepen understanding to construct a rich, rigorous, and comprehensive account against the evaluation questions being addressed. In addition, triangulation was used to check for consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods.

A.5. Ethical considerations

The evaluation adheres to the required international norms and standards for evaluations. These include the 'UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation' (as updated by the United Nations Evaluation Group in June 2020), which encompass four guiding principles: integrity, accountability, respect and beneficence. The required norms and standards also include the 2021 'UNICEF Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation and Data Collection and Analysis'.⁷ The following were ethical considerations guiding the evaluation:

- Respect for the command and operational capability - remained committed to respect the terms of reference; the additional instructions made at the start of the mission as well as advice received during the performance of the contract.
- Confidentiality: Beyond the transparency that was required in all participatory processes of consultation and communication of results with all stakeholders, the confidentiality of strategic, technical and financial data collected was secured.
- Close collaboration and communication: A highly participatory approach was critical to the success of this evaluation. Regular remote communication via email and the Microsoft Teams platform was scheduled, with the team of external consultants who worked under the supervision of the Evaluation Office evaluation manager.
- Efficient and dynamic management: Among the team of external consultants, the evaluation education experts were attentive to establishing a precise and rigorous management framework, together with a flexible timetable.
- Ethical behaviour: The team of external consultants, interviewed staff, and implementing partners, including government and civil society organization partners, were required to always comply with the highest standards of ethical behaviour in all respects and as reflected in UNICEF mandatory ethics policy and training. A zero-tolerance policy was executed around issues of fraud, bribery, corruption, child and adult safeguarding, and abuse, exploitation and harassment.

A.6. Evaluation users and uses

The primary audience for the evaluation included UNICEF Venezuela country office staff responsible for the design and implementation of education programmes, the coordination of education responses in emergencies and monitoring of learning; and staff from other sections who collaborate and coordinate with education programme teams. Findings and lessons learned from the evaluation should be used to inform changes in UNICEF education sector programmatic plans; approaches to support government partners and work with other implementing partners ; and to ensure preparedness for future emergencies.

The secondary audiences of the evaluation included government officials as duty bearers; children as right holders and beneficiaries of education programmes, their parents/guardians and school communities. Additional users of this evaluation are key country-level implementing partners ; and whenever relevant, other donor agencies such as the World Bank, Global Partnership for Education (GPE), UNESCO, Inter-Agency for Education in Emergencies (INEE), Education Cannot Wait (ECW) and other strategic education sector partners.

Annex B. Evaluation framework

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data/Information sources	Data collection methods
Objective 1: To examine role of UNICEF in building the knowledge, research, and global public goods required to mount an effective education response to the COVID-19 pandemic				
Theme 1: Building the evidence and resource base for the education response to the COVID-19 pandemic				
OECD-DAC criteria: coherence and efficiency				
1.1 What has been the role and contribution of UNICEF in building the data, knowledge, and tools for understanding and addressing the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the education sector?	Evidence of UNICEF contribution to building the data, knowledge, and tools for understanding and addressing the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the education sector.	Statement of UNICEF role at global, regional, and country level #/type of evidence and tools developed by UNICEF or in collaboration with other organisations	UNICEF Staff: HQ and regional UNICEF teams with a remit for creating or communicating data, evidence, research, and tools, as well as country office teams, including education, involved in using the tools and knowledge created by HQ/RO as well as creating their own. Partners at HQ, CO (including governments), RO: that UNICEF has worked with who can speak about UNICEF role and contribution Documents: produced documenting design, response, progress, lists of data/tools/evidence produced	Document review (programme and other documents from HQ, RO and CO) Interviews (UNICEF staff and partners at HQ, RO, CO). At CO also includes government personnel Online Survey (UNICEF staff and partners at HQ, RO, CO)
1.2 To what extent have UNICEF Education teams worked across sectors coherently and efficiently to develop evidence-based solutions to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the education sector?	Coherence: Evidence of co-working/authoring, complementarity, alignments and non-duplications between UNICEF Education teams, other sector teams within UNICEF and (at country-level only) government departments or agencies outside of education at the design stage of solutions Evidence of alignment with the wider policy frameworks and with other interventions in the same operating	#/type of staff working on the response # of staff reporting collaborating during response Difference in timing between planned and implementation of activities	UNICEF Staff: including education teams at HQ, RO, CO, and teams from other sectors with UNICEF to develop evidence-based solutions Documents: detailing evidence-based solutions developed, workplans, human and financial resources	Document review (programme and other documents, workplans, financial and staffing information) Interviews (UNICEF Staff at HQ, RO, CO including education and other sector teams) Online survey (UNICEF staff at HQ, RO, CO including education and other sector teams)

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data/Information sources	Data collection methods
	<p>context, how harmonised and complementary these activities were, and if duplication of effort and activities occurred.</p> <p>Efficiency: Evidence of volume of solutions developed as well as the speed and timeliness of their development.</p>			
<p>1.3 To what extent has UNICEF mobilized and worked with external partners coherently and efficiently to develop evidence-based solutions to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the education sector?</p>	<p>Coherence: Evidence of co-working/authoring, complementarity, alignments, and non-duplications between UNICEF Education teams and relevant external (technical) partners at the design stage of solutions</p> <p>Efficiency: Evidence of volume of solutions developed as well as the speed and timeliness of their development.</p>	<p>Difference in timing between planned and implementation of activities</p> <p># of partnerships developed</p> <p># of joint working groups</p> <p>Type of collaborate solutions developed</p> <p># of countries with collaborative programmes</p>	<p>UNICEF Staff: at HQ, RO, CO who may have been involved in working with and mobilising partners to develop evidence-based solutions</p> <p>External partners: at HQ, RO, CO that UNICEF mobilised and worked with to develop evidence-based solutions</p> <p>Documents: detailing information about the partners, ways of working and work carried out by working with them.</p>	<p>Document review (MOUs/partnership agreements, progress reports)</p> <p>Interviews (UNICEF staff and partners at HQ, RO, CO)</p> <p>Online survey (UNICEF staff and partners at HQ, RO, CO)</p>
<p>Objective 2: To examine the extent to which UNICEF-supported strategies were deployed effectively to enhance government initiatives for continuity of learning during school closures and to reinstate safe and equitable in-school learning opportunities during in the COVID-19 pandemic</p> <p>Theme 2: Reopening schools and reinstating face-to-face learning</p> <p>OECD-DAC criteria: relevance and effectiveness</p>				
<p>2.1 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to promote home-based learning?</p>	<p>Evidence of extent to which UNICEF was instrumental (1) in home-based learning happening at all, (2) whether that support was instrumental in improving the home-</p>	<p>List /type of education strategies used to promote home-based learning</p> <p># of countries, schools, children using home-based learning strategies</p>	<p>Government staff: national, subnational government ministries/departments. UNICEF CO staff, partners at CO level: involved in working with government entities within countries</p> <p>RO staff: involved in working with Gov at CO level or supporting CO to work with government</p>	<p>Document review (design and implementation documents, strategies, plans, resourcing, progress reports for home leaning)</p>

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data/Information sources	Data collection methods
	based learning initiatives in terms of quantity, reach or quality.	Amount/type of support to households for home learning	Documents detailing support provided to government entities as well as progress made etc. in relation to home based learning.	Interviews (government personnel, UNICEF staff and partners at CO, RO) Online survey (UNICEF staff and partners at RO, CO) U- Report (young people and communities)
2.2 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to enhance children's safety, wellbeing, and protection during the re-opening of schools?	Evidence of extent to which UNICEF was instrumental in strengthening the protection, wellbeing, and safety of children through the three phases of school re-opening (prior to re-opening, in the re-opening process and with schools re-opened).	List /type of education strategies used to enhance children's safety and protection during re-opening of schools # of countries with safety and protection protocols and plans	Government staff: national, subnational government ministries/departments. UNICEF CO staff, partners at CO level: involved in working with government entities within country RO staff: involved in working with Gov at CO level or supporting CO to work with government Documents detailing support provided to government entities as well as progress made etc. in relation to children's safety, wellbeing, and protection during the re-opening of schools.	Document review (protection protocols, strategies, plans, progress reports, resourcing, in relation to children's safety, wellbeing, protection) Interviews (government personnel, UNICEF staff and partners at CO, RO) Online survey (UNICEF staff and partners at RO, CO) U- Report (young people and communities)
2.3 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to reinstate in-school learning?	Evidence of the extent to which UNICEF was instrumental in (1) schools opening sooner than would otherwise have been the case and (2) schools operating in "business as usual" ways and levels quicker or more completely than would otherwise have been the case (e.g. through addressing any obstacles experienced by teachers, such as vaccinations, unpaid wages, provision of	List /type of education strategies used to re-instate in-school learning # of countries, schools, teachers using UNICEF supported education strategies to re-instate in-school learning Incidences of changes reported in teaching, learning and assessment practices after reinstatement of in school learning # of countries reporting change in teaching, learning and assessment practices after reinstatement of in school learning	Government staff: national, subnational government ministries/departments. UNICEF CO staff, partners at CO level: involved in working with government entities within country RO staff: involved in working with Gov at CO level or supporting CO to work with government Documents: detailing support provided to government entities as well as progress made etc. in relation to reinstating in-school learning.	Document review (strategies, plans, progress reports, resourcing, in relation to reinstating school learning) Interviews (government personnel, UNICEF staff and partners at CO, RO) Online survey (UNICEF staff and partners at RO, CO) U- Report (young people and communities)

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data/Information sources	Data collection methods
	PPE or handwashing facilities).			
2.4 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to introduce reformed teaching, learning and assessment practices?	Evidence of the extent to which UNICEF was instrumental in schools and teachers using reformed teaching, learning and/or assessment practices designed to address the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's education, such as lost learning across all children or among particular groups of children.	# of countries reporting reformed teaching, learning and assessment practices to address the negative effects of COVID-19 # of countries reporting using teaching, learning and assessment practices to address the negative effects of COVID-19	Government staff: national, subnational government ministries/departments. UNICEF CO staff, partners at CO level: involved in working with government entities within country RO staff: involved in working with Gov at CO level or supporting CO to work with government Documents: detailing support provided to government entities as well as progress made etc. in relation to reformed teaching, learning and assessment practices.	Document review (strategies, plans, progress reports, resourcing, in relation to reformed teaching, learning and assessment practices, reports of classroom/school assessments, monitoring visits) Interviews (government personnel, UNICEF staff and partners at CO, RO) Online survey (UNICEF staff and partners at RO, CO) U- Report (young people and communities)
2.5 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported governments during the COVID-19 pandemic to target and reach different groups of marginalized children and adapt programmes to their learning needs?	Evidence of the extent to which UNICEF was instrumental in the initiatives to identify and reach (provide for learning needs) children in particular the most marginalised groups, e.g. girls, children with disabilities, refugees, minority ethnic/language groups Evidence of whether particular groups of children were omitted or not sufficiently targeted through	Type of targeting strategies used by UNICEF to identify and reach marginalized children disaggregated by group #/type of needs assessments conducted # of programmes designed based on results from needs assessment	Government staff: national, subnational government ministries/departments. UNICEF CO staff, partners at CO level involved in working with government entities within country RO staff: involved in working with Gov at CO level or supporting CO to work with government Documents: detailing government entities at national/subnational level, CO/RO UNICEF staff and CO partners identifying target groups, identifying their needs and/or tailoring the approach and support provided to different groups of marginalized children.	Interviews (government personnel, UNICEF staff and partners at CO, RO) Online survey (UNICEF staff and partners at RO, CO) Document review (targeting strategies, reports of identified groups and those reached/not reached)

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data/Information sources	Data collection methods
	UNICEF supported interventions.			
2.6 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives to recover learning lost during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Evidence of design and implementation of initiatives to recover lost learning (including assessing the extent of learning lost and progress to recover this)		Government staff: national, subnational government ministries/departments. UNICEF CO staff, partners at CO level: involved in working with government entities within country RO staff: involved in working with Gov at CO level or supporting CO to work with government Documents: detailing support provided to government entities as well as progress made etc. in relation to initiatives to recover learning Secondary education data pre post covid (if available)	Document review (strategies, plans, design documents, progress reports, assessments) Interviews (government personnel, UNICEF staff and partners at CO, RO) Online survey (UNICEF staff and partners at RO, CO). U-Report Analysis of secondary education data pre post covid (if available)
Objective 3: To examine the extent to which UNICEF Education teams utilized the existing frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools to mount an effective education response to COVID-19, and whether adjustments are being made to enhance preparedness for future disruptions of a similar scale Theme 3: UNICEF preparedness frameworks, readiness to handle similar future crises OECD-DAC criteria: relevance and effectiveness				
3.1 In what ways, and how successfully, did UNICEF Education teams deploy the existing education-in-emergency (EIE) frameworks, infrastructure, capacities, and tools in the education sector response to the COVID-19 pandemic?	Evidence of extent to which the frameworks, infrastructure, capacities, and tools (FICT) were 1) used in their intended way and to their full extent and 2) used in all circumstances when their use was or would have been appropriate.	# of staff reporting using existing EIE infrastructure, capacities and tools	UNICEF staff: at HQ, regional and country levels Documents: detailing the education team's use of selected, key EIE frameworks, infrastructure, capacities, and tools in the COVID response work.	Document review (EIE tools, frameworks, reports) Interviews (UNICEF staff at CO, RO, HQ) Online survey (UNICEF staff HQ, RO, CO)
3.2 In what ways, and how comprehensively, has UNICEF adapted the education-in-emergency (EIE) frameworks, infrastructure,	Evidence of adaptations to EIE frameworks, infrastructure, capacities, and tools informed by lessons learnt from experience of the	Examples of changes initiated in preparation of future emergency responses	UNICEF staff at HQ, regional and country levels. Documents: including plans, policies, strategies, processes, working group TORs, regarding actual or planned changes to these frameworks, infrastructure, capacities, and tools and/or processes/structures in place for reflection and lesson learning from the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic.	Document review (revised EIE tools, frameworks, reports) Interviews (UNICEF staff at CO, RO, HQ) Online survey (UNICEF staff HQ, RO, CO)

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data/Information sources	Data collection methods
capacities, and tools to prepare UNICEF education programmes in different contexts for future global public health emergencies?	COVID-19 pandemic / Evidence of appropriate processes and/or structures in place for the reflection and adaptations to EIE frameworks, infrastructure, capacities, and tools informed by lessons learnt from experience of the COVID-19 pandemic.			

Annex C: Primary data collection tools: Case study

C.1. UNICEF CO Chief of education and other senior education staff

1. Overall, how would you describe UNICEF role overall in regard to supporting children's education during the pandemic? What difference has UNICEF support made?
2. Which activities/initiatives would you highlight as being especially impactful or important? (Probe: why that/those? What impact?)

Joint working with the RO and HQ

3. How would you describe the support you received from HQ and the RO for constructing and delivery of the education response to COVID-19?

(Probes:

- What forms did the support take?
 - What was particularly helpful? What was less helpful? (Prompt: data, research, reports, webinars, EIE specialists, guidance, frameworks)
 - Did you feel this was timely/were there any delays and what was the effect of any delays?
 - What were the challenges and how were these overcome?
 - What did/did you not achieve as a result of working with them?
 - What worked well and what didn't and why?
4. In hindsight what would you have done differently/ What could be improved going forward in terms of working with teams at RO/CO to develop solutions in response to education emergency?
 5. Was there more or less/better or worse collaboration during the pandemic than before? And if so, why was this and what, if any, might be the long-term effects of this?

Different specialist UNICEF teams working together for COVID-19 response in the education sector.

6. Please tell me about how the Education Team worked together with other sections/teams within UNICEF for the COVID response (i.e., when preparing for the response, during the response and up till now).

(Probes:

- Which sections/teams/persons did you work with, why and when?
 - Did you feel this was timely/were there any delays and what was the effect of any delays?
 - What were the challenges in joint working and how were these overcome?
 - What did you achieve as a result of working with them/what did you not achieve?
 - What worked well whilst working across sections/team and what didn't work well and why? (e.g., ways of working, coordination, timeliness, adequate resources/expertise)?
7. In hindsight what would you have done differently/ What could be improved going forward in terms of working with other UNICEF teams/sections to develop and implement education emergency response solutions/interventions during a public health emergency?

Work with external partners

I would like to ask about how UNICEF worked with its external partners for the education response to COVID-19.

8. Which organisations (ask for specific teams/sections) did you partner with, when and what for?

(Probes:

- Were these partners already working with UNICEF (on education and prior to COVID-19) or were they new specifically mobilized for the COVID-19 response in education?

- How did UNICEF mobilize partners (new and old) for the COVID-19 response? Who was involved in mobilizing them? Any challenges faced, how were these challenges overcome?
 - Was mobilization of partners timely? Were there any delays and if so effect of these delays?
 - Why did UNICEF partner with these external organizations/what did it want to achieve by doing so and what are the implications of having these partners for the future? (e.g. avoid duplications, achieve complementarity)
 - What were roles and responsibilities of UNICEF and partners and how did these partnerships complement UNICEF work? Did this avoid duplications/increase complementarity?
 - Can you give examples of work undertaken in partnership with external partners (e.g., solutions developed to address negative effects of COVID-19 in education)?
 - What was the value of working jointly?
9. In hindsight what would you have done differently/ What could be improved going forward in terms of working with teams at RO/CO to develop solutions in response to education emergency?
 10. Was there more or less/better or worse collaboration during the pandemic than before? And if so, why was this and what, if any, might be the long-term effects of this?

To conclude

11. Finally, what are the main lessons you would take away from the past two years? Where has UNICEF been successful and why? How has UNICEF been less successful and why? How can UNICEF improve – whether at country, regional or HQ level – to respond better in future crises?

C.2. UNICEF CO Education in Emergency

[Re EQ3.1] I would like to ask about how UNICEF Education teams deployed the existing education-in-emergency (EIE) frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and extent to which it was successful in doing this.

1. Please describe the education-in-emergency (EIE) frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools (that existed pre-COVID-19)
2. Did UNICEF Education Teams utilise existing frameworks and tools developed by UNICEF for (pre-COVID-19) EIE contexts during the COVID-19 pandemic (what, how, when, where)? Were there any delays?
3. How did UNICEF deploy existing EIE organizational, financial, delivery, and coordination infrastructures and capacities to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic? Did this differ across regions, COs, at HQ?
4. To what extent was UNICEF successful in doing so? (Give examples of success)
5. How did Education teams work with EIE teams at HQ, RO, CO? What were the successes, challenges? How were these overcome? (Delays, duplication, complementarity)
6. What was achieved as a result of deploying existing EIE structures etc.? (What was HQ, RO, CO able to do as a result /or couldn't do without?)

[Re EQ 3.2] I would like to ask about how UNICEF has adapted the existing education-in-emergency (EIE) frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools to better prepare for future global public health, and how comprehensively it has done this.

7. To what extent has UNICEF, as a result of the COVID-19 response, adapted/changed/ developed more (EIE) frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools? Examples, who was involved, and why these changes? Are these for global use or specific to contexts?
8. How comprehensive have these changes been? (with examples)
9. What does UNICEF aim to achieve with new/adapted EIE frameworks, tools etc.?
10. At what stage of adaptation/development is UNICEF at and what are the next steps to test/use these?
11. What challenges have there been/or are foreseen/how have these been overcome?

12. Are there lessons to be learned from having used the EIE frameworks etc.? Have these lessons been documented and shared?

C.3. UNICEF CO Other education staff

1. Before we speak about some specific examples of UNICEF initiatives and activities, how would you describe UNICEF role overall regarding supporting children's education during the pandemic? What difference has UNICEF support made?

I would like now to ask specifically about [initiative/activity].

2. This is my understanding of this initiative/activity: outline UNICEF work]. Is that also your understanding? Would you like to add to or correct anything I have said?
3. How was UNICEF support complementary to or in support of the government's strategy and work?
4. What difference did UNICEF support make? (Probe: Why was it needed? What would have happened without UNICEF? How did it lead to change, for example in strategy, direction, approach, thinking about how to respond, outcomes for children, teachers and communities (if known, and where can evidence of those outcomes be found)?)
5. Were there any challenges? If so, how were these overcome?
6. To what extent did UNICEF work with other agencies? How well (or badly) did that go?
7. To what extent did you draw on support or resources (such as data, frameworks, tools, training etc.) from other parts of UNICEF at HQ and regional level in developing or implementing this initiative/activity? (Probe: Which parts of the organisation? Which resources? What difference did it make?)
8. To what extent did the Education team work with other specialists and teams in UNICEF? (Probe: Which teams/specialists? What difference did it make?)
9. How could UNICEF support to the government have been improved? What lessons could UNICEF learn for the future?

[Repeat questions 2-9 for another of UNICEF initiatives/activities to contribute to the education response during the pandemic. Realistically you might get through 2 initiatives in one hour so pick the 2 most significant ones. Capture responses for the other initiatives in the same text boxes above by clearly titling the different initiatives for which the answer is being provided.]

10. Because of time constraints, I have selected only some of your initiatives during the pandemic. Are there any other activities or initiatives that you would want to highlight in which UNICEF has supported the government's education response during the pandemic? If so, what are they and how have they made a difference?

To conclude

11. Finally, what are the main lessons you would take away from the past two years? Where has UNICEF been successful and why? How has UNICEF been less successful and why? How can UNICEF improve – whether at country, regional or HQ level – to respond better in future crises?

C.4. UNICEF CO DAPM staff

I would like to ask about the data, knowledge and tools that were developed by UNICEF (at HQ/RO/CO) for understanding and addressing the negative effects of COVID-19 pandemic in the education sector.

1. What tools did UNICEF develop, for understanding and responding to COVID-19 (in relation to education)? When were these developed, what were these used for and by whom?
2. What data did UNICEF collect, or contribute towards collecting, for understanding and responding to COVID-19 (in relation to education)? When was this collected, what was it used for and by whom?

3. What other knowledge products did UNICEF develop, for understanding and responding to COVID-19 (in relation to education such as reports, webinars)? When were these developed, what were these used for and by whom?
4. Did UNICEF provide any support to other partner organisations (e.g., WB, UNESCO, OECD) for developing data, tools, knowledge products (e.g., reports, webinars etc.)? What was this support, for whom, when and for what purpose)? (i.e., provided technical support, financial support, coordination)
5. Did you experience any challenges in developing data, tools and knowledge products and how were these overcome (including for supporting/working with partners)?
6. What could have been done differently and what can be improved for the future (for building data, knowledge and tools to respond to public health emergency - in relation to education)?

C.5. Government Entities

We understand that during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 UNICEF supported the government of [country] in the following ways:

(Read out a list of these activities, as specific as possible, perhaps structured around the list of generic activities below)

Promoting home-based learning

Enhancing children's safety, wellbeing and protection during the re-opening of schools

Reinstating in-school learning

Targeting and reaching different groups of marginalized children and adapt programmes to their learning needs

Recovering learning lost during the COVID-19 pandemic

Introducing reformed teaching, learning and assessment practices

Carrying out research, collecting data, producing reports, guidance and frameworks, running webinars and other learning opportunities

1. Before we speak about some of UNICEF specific initiatives and activities to support you, how would you describe UNICEF role overall in regard to supporting children's education during the pandemic? How important has their role been? What difference has their support made?
2. I would like now to ask specifically about [initiative/activity].
3. This is my understanding of UNICEF role: [outline UNICEF work]. Is that also your understanding? Would you like to add to or correct anything I have said?
4. How was UNICEF support complementary to the government's strategy and work? Was there any duplication with what government or any other agencies were doing?
5. What was the effect of this support? (Probe: What was achieved as a result? How successful was UNICEF in providing support in above areas?)
6. (If relevant) How well (or badly) did UNICEF work with other agencies?
7. Were you aware of UNICEF staff with different expertise working together with their education colleagues on this initiative? If so, what are your observations about this and what difference did it make, do you think?
8. What were the challenges faced and how were these overcome?
9. How could UNICEF support to the government have been improved? What lessons could UNICEF learn for the future?

[Repeat questions 2-8 for another of UNICEF initiatives/activities to contribute to the education response during the pandemic. Realistically you might get through 2 initiatives in one hour so pick the 2 most significant ones. Capture responses for the other initiatives in the same text boxes above by clearly titling the different initiatives for which the answer is being provided.]

10. Are there any other ways in which UNICEF has supported the government's education response during the pandemic? If so, what are they and how have they been helpful?
11. UNICEF, especially in the global and regional headquarters, have produced lots of data, reports, guidance, frameworks and learning opportunities for understanding and addressing the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the education sector. Did your government use any of these? Probe: If yes, how did you use these data, reports etc.? What was the effect of this? What did you achieve?
12. Finally, UNICEF would like to learn and improve their work. Are there any examples of what did not work well and should be avoided in the future? Do you have any recommendations for UNICEF on how they work with and support governments in future crises?