

CASE STUDY REPORT

EVALUATION OF UNICEF CONTRIBUTION TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

Case Study: Nigeria

May 2023

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Acronyms

CSO	Civil society organization
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EiE	Education in emergencies
EiEWG	Education in Emergencies Working Group
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
ICT	Information and communication technology
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NNGO	Nigeria Network of Non-Governmental Organizations
SBMCs	School-Based Management Committees
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board
UBEC	Universal Basic Education Committee
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 Nigeria Country Office about possible activities and to better position the organization to improve its performance in support of teaching and learning efforts.

The Nigeria 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 8 interviews conducted with key country informants in August 2022. Evidence was triangulated using information from a global online survey administered between September and October 2022 to contextualize the analysis. Active participation of reference group members and UNICEF Nigeria Country Office staff gave 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 response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Conclusion 1: The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office played a key role in supporting the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) with technical assistance to build data, knowledge, evidence and

tools to gather information, as well as to inform and advocate for youth populations on the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector.

Conclusion 2: The education response to COVID-19 was implemented using a cross-sectoral approach within the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office, with the Education, Child Protection, Gender, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) teams collaborating on a range of activities. The cross-sectoral approach also extended to supporting government departments, external development partners, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Nigeria Network of Non-Governmental Organizations (NNGO), civil society organizations and the private sector.

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

Conclusion 3: The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office leveraged public–private partnerships to support the government’s nationwide investment in transformative digital technology and remote learning solutions, as well as the development of other alternative remote learning tools and digital assessment tools, including for children in emergency contexts. Efforts to improve access to digital tools have not been fully implemented, and their contributions and reach are yet to be assessed.

Conclusion 4: The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office supported teacher capacity enhancement programmes during and after school reopening as a strategy to reform and improve teaching, learning and assessment practices, and to mitigate the negative impacts on learning outcomes.

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

Conclusion 5: The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office’s existing education in emergencies (EiE) framework was adapted to support the FME’s education response, including in conflict-affected states. It was also key to convening and securing the engagement of government institutions and high-level actors to strengthen frameworks and capacities. However, the work of mainstreaming the enhancements into the system to strengthen preparedness for future global public health emergencies is yet to be completed, having been delayed due to slow approval processes both within UNICEF and within the Government of Nigeria.

Lessons learned

Lesson 1: There is a need to increase advocacy with the FME, education authorities at the state level and other relevant education stakeholders to support better integration of emergency preparedness and learning recovery, and to build government capacity to deal with future disruptions to education.

Lesson 2: Delivery of education through digital tools is emerging as one of the key solutions to promote access to and participation in education, to deliver education during crises and to broaden the learning ecosystem and tools for all learners, in emergency and non-emergency contexts.

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 the 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 report presents in-depth analysis of the work done by the UNICEF Nigeria 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 Nigeria country context

With a population of around 206 million people, Nigeria is Africa's most densely populated country. It has a federal structure of governance that consists of 36 states and 774 local government areas. The population of Nigeria is expected to reach 401 million people by 2050, making it the third most populous country in the world. It is also a young country, with 43 per cent of the population below the age of 15 years.

The performance of Nigeria's economy is central to the country's objective of safeguarding its increasing population. Already in a challenging situation before COVID-19, the economy went into recession in 2020, resulting in the loss of 25 per cent of jobs and making millions of people unemployed. With the government social protection system covering only approximately 13 per cent of the population and excluding the majority of poor and vulnerable people, the 2020 recession made a dire situation worse in terms of economic and multidimensional poverty. Around 70 per cent of households experienced income loss due to the pandemic, while 54 per cent of children lived in poverty and multiple forms of deprivation.

Three critical barriers have inhibited social development in Nigeria: (1) entrenched gender inequalities; (2) the dominance of out-of-pocket expenditures, leaving most Nigerians to finance education, health and other basic services, thereby excluding millions; and (3) limited human and financial capacities of state and local governments to ensure basic service delivery. Furthermore, there is a general perception of insecurity in Nigeria resulting from security threats, including those from the protracted crisis in the north-east, as well as domestic criminal activity. In 2021, there were 25 attacks on schools, resulting in 1,440 children being abducted, 16 children killed and 618 schools closed in 6 northern states.¹

Only 46 per cent of the Nigerian population have access to basic sanitation facilities, and only 18 per cent can safely use managed sanitation facilities. Girls and women find it even more difficult, particularly in conflict settings. Only one in seven Nigerians have access to safely managed drinking water. Malnourishment is rampant, with 14 million children under 5 years of age experiencing stunting, and 3 million experiencing wasting. These numbers underline the highest burdens in Africa and the second highest in the world. The rate of maternal, infant and under-5 mortality and morbidity are among the highest in the world. Gender disparity is extremely high in Nigeria, as the country ranks 139th among 156 countries in the Gender Gap Index. There is high inequality in rural and urban regions, as well as among states. The poverty rate in 36 states across the country ranges from 4.5 per cent to 88 per cent.

The education sector, like other social sectors, faces multiple challenges. Around 10.1 million children are out of school – 27 per cent of them at primary school age. Learning outcomes are also poor, with 70 per cent of primary school children unable to perform basic reading and numeracy tasks. Many children attend religious schools that do not include foundational literacy and numeracy in their curriculum. Safety concerns have impacted school enrolment and attendance, particularly for girls in northern regions. These problems were exacerbated by the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3 COVID-19 and the education sector in Nigeria

When COVID-19 hit Nigeria in February 2020, the education system, as in many countries, was not fully prepared to respond to the pandemic. This led to unprecedented activities, including

¹ United Nations Children's Fund, Nigeria, 'Country Office Annual Report 2021: Nigeria', UNICEF, Abuja, 2022, <www.unicef.org/media/116321/file/Nigeria-2021-COAR.pdf>, accessed 1 September 2023.

school closures in March and a nationwide lockdown to prevent the movement of people. Even before the pandemic, the country had a high number of out-of-school children, estimated at 10.1 million at the primary school level. The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office, a co-lead for the Education in Emergencies Working Group (EiE WG) along with Save the Children, and the overall grantee of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) education grant that was provided to deal with the negative effects of COVID-19, took up the role of coordinating key aspects of the country's response to the pandemic. This work was done to support the federal and state governments of Nigeria, in collaboration with local civil society organizations (CSOs) such as Slum2School.

UNICEF Nigeria also supported the 'COVID-proofing' of existing UNICEF-supported programmes in health, education, nutrition, child protection, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and other areas of UNICEF and government collaboration to safeguard progress towards attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, with particular emphasis on the most vulnerable children. This was in line with the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, which expressed then aim "...to realize the rights of every child, especially the most marginalized". With COVID-19 disrupting learning across the country, UNICEF Nigeria carried out a diverse range of activities under three change strategies as part of the emergency response:

- Ensuring that children continue to learn through alternate and remote learning programmes
- Recovery of education systems from school closures and ensuring safe school operation
- Ensuring children's safety and well-being by enhancing the capacity and preparedness response of education systems and their resilience for future shocks.

Ensuring that children continue to learn through alternate and remote learning programmes: To ensure continuity of learning during school closures and as children were transitioning back to school, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office directly funded and coordinated a variety of alternate and remote learning programmes that included implementation of formal and non-formal learning programmes. These programmes sought to provide learning materials, broadcast learning lessons via radio and television, provide radios to vulnerable families, and implement community- and home-based learning programmes. The UNICEF response also included the establishment of diverse partnerships, including coordinating with national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as Save the Children, and donor agencies such as the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. UNICEF Nigeria also partnered with private companies such as Microsoft (on the Learning Passport) and Airtel (on data connectivity), to promote digital learning. On the other hand, national CSOs took the lead in implementing community-led learning programmes, while technical experts such as Pratham Educational Foundation and JPAL Africa supported the implementation of foundational literacy and numeracy programmes.

To ensure increased coverage, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office, through various partnerships, also supported the government to establish a digital learning platform referred to as the Nigeria Learning Passport, though this was completed after the end of the evaluation period for this study. To ensure its successful launch and establishment of the learning platform structure, UNICEF Nigeria trained 150 officers on content development. It also helped establish 37 information and communication technology (ICT) hubs – one in each of the 36 states in Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) – to support content production and dissemination. The ICT hubs were established after a teacher needs assessment funded by UNICEF Nigeria was carried out to determine teachers' and schools' capacity to use ICT in learning. Partnerships with five CSOs also led to the implementation of the community learning initiative in over 7,500 locations, benefiting over 1 million children across the 16 target states.

Recovery of education systems from school closures and ensuring safe school operation:

To ensure adequate preparation of the education system for the reopening of schools, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office planned, funded and coordinated several advocacy meetings with the government and education stakeholders in Nigeria that resulted in the operationalization of the Safe School Declaration at the state level, which resulted in the development of minimum standards for school safety in 11 states. UNICEF Nigeria supported 33 out of 36 states to review their education sector plans to ensure that COVID-19 response was included. This was achieved by assisting states to strengthen data quality and evidence-generating mechanisms, including digitizing the Education Management Information System (EMIS).

To ensure that a large proportion of learners returned to school, UNICEF Nigeria funded and coordinated various enrolment drives, including the development and distribution of jingles and posters on safe school return, and conducting back to school campaigns, cash transfer programmes that ensured vulnerable children returned to school, and peer-to-peer support programmes. UNICEF Nigeria 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. It funded and coordinated a COVID-19 perception survey to inform school reopening by providing evidence on the country's readiness for and commitment towards school reopening.

Ensuring children's safety and well-being by enhancing the capacity and preparedness response of education systems and their resilience for future shocks: The UNICEF Nigeria Education team collaborated with the Health, WASH and Child Protection teams to support the government's plan for safe school reopening and supported the government in the implementation of minimum standards on safe schools in 6 of the 11 UNICEF-targeted states. Technical assistance was provided to develop and implement school improvement plans, including school emergency and preparedness plans for 6,878 School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs). Also, UNICEF Nigeria provided training to strengthen teaching approaches and psychosocial skills for 27,806 primary teachers, to enable them to support children traumatized and affected in various ways by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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 evaluation² and to derive lessons that can inform new programme activities by the UNICEF Nigeria 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 Nigeria.

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 Nigeria 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 Nigeria, including UNICEF Nigeria Country Office staff, and government and non-government local partners.

² 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 education 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 Nigeria 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 UNICEF Nigeria 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. Eight remote interviews were conducted with key country informants in August 2022, including UNICEF Nigeria Country Office staff (four), government officials (two), and implementing partner representatives from a civil society organization (one) and an academic organization (one). Over 60 internal UNICEF Nigeria 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 Nigeria 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 Nigeria Country Office.

4.0 Findings and conclusions

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

Conclusion 1: The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office played a key role in supporting the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) with technical assistance to build data, knowledge, evidence and tools to gather information, as well as to inform and advocate for youth populations on the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector.

Conclusion 2: The education response to COVID-19 was implemented using a cross-sectoral approach within the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office, with the Education, Child Protection, Gender and WASH teams collaborating on a range of activities. The cross-sectoral approach also extended to supporting government departments, external development partners, international NGOs, the Nigeria Network of Non-Governmental Organizations (NNGO), CSOs and the private sector.

Question 1.1: What was 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?

Finding 1.1.1 The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office played a leading role in collecting evidence by funding and providing technical support to the federal government through the development of a variety of data collection tools to monitor the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office supported the Universal Basic Education Committee (UBEC) and the FME to develop the Education Sector Performance Assessment Tool (ESPAT). ESPAT would also be used to monitor and measure implementation of the states' education sector plans and to strengthen planning and resource allocation for the COVID-19 emergency response. At the state-level, ESPAT was used to develop a national basic education sector performance report to strengthen decision-making processes, advocate for transparency in the use of funds and encourage more citizen engagement through SBMCs for greater accountability. Also, the UBEC agreed to use ESPAT as a monitoring and evaluation component of the Medium-Term Basic Education Strategic Plan for the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), thus showing the government's buy-in and the increased likelihood of its sustainability.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office supported the FME by providing funding and technical resources to conduct a national survey on the perception of pandemic-related school closures. The survey was designed in collaboration with members of the EiEWG, the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council and the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and implemented across all 36 states. A total of 7,403 stakeholders were interviewed, including parents and guardians, students, teachers/facilitators and education managers. The report was designed to collate the views and perceptions of critical stakeholders on COVID-19 risk and control measures, including the initial closure of schools, and to understand the country's readiness for and commitment towards reopening schools. UNICEF Nigeria and the federal government used the results of the study to improve service delivery during the development of education sector plans.³

In September 2020, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office published an education response action report on mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on Nigeria's education sector. The report included

³ United Nations Children's Fund, Nigeria, 'Country Office Annual Report 2020: Nigeria', UNICEF, Abuja, 2021.

findings from a survey of schools. It revealed that nearly 50 million children were not attending schools and missing learning opportunities, and that 67 per cent of households had a radio or television.⁴ However, it also reported that 82 per cent of children in Nigeria did not have access to the internet, and highlighted the wide disparities in the availability of home-based learning opportunities, inadequate grade-specific content coverage, and minimal parental support due to competing parental priorities and the lack of adequate monitoring mechanisms.⁵

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office also conducted a teacher needs assessment in March 2021. This was funded through the accelerated fund by the GPE, as part of the UNICEF COVID-19 response plan. The teacher needs assessment was used to develop a capacity-building strategy, to improve the skills of teachers in using flexible digital and remote/home-based learning resources. Data were used to develop training modules for teachers on digital literacy and ICT.

UNICEF Nigeria and the EiEWG developed a monitoring framework that was aligned with the amended 2019–2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), to enable efficient implementation of the EiEWG COVID-19 response plan and better coordination among education stakeholders, and to ramp up field monitoring. The monitoring framework used common reporting methods and coordinated the response of all education actors to mitigate duplication, thus ensuring harmonization and alignment in geographic and thematic areas of response. The monitoring framework that was piloted in some UNICEF Nigeria field offices focused on guiding field offices to plan activities in the context of the field office and enabled corrections for improved performance and support to programme delivery. The monitoring system also aimed to minimize reporting requirements to partners, while at the same time providing information about the progress of programme implementation and ensuring alignment with the amended HRP.

Finding 1.1.2 The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office used the U-Report platform for advocacy among youth on COVID-19 and to collect data on children’s levels of learning during school closures.

In 2020, UNICEF Nigeria partnered with Airtel Nigeria, a mobile network operator, to provide free SMS to over 7 million subscribers as a way of scaling up U-Report across the country.⁶ Existing assessment tools, such as the Early Grade Reading Assessment and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment, were adapted for delivery through the U-Report platform. U-Report allowed children to complete assessments safely at home and at their convenience, and enabled parents to report on children’s progress in their home-based learning sessions. The assessment was sent through an SMS poll to the registered children or their parents and was used to measure whether children had mastered the learning objectives of each lesson. The assessment reached learners directly, without intermediary steps, and created a space for them to reflect on their personal learning journeys. This method of data collection was particularly helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic, since in-person data collection was limited due to curfews, and health and safety concerns.

To increase engagement with the U-Report platform, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office engaged with and registered telephone numbers of parents provided by the government, community and school management committees, teachers and school administrative staff. The UNICEF team also removed time limitations that had prevented users from accessing the platform at a particular

4 United Nations Children’s Fund, Nigeria, ‘COVID-19 Situation Report, Humanitarian Response 2020’, UNICEF, Abuja, 2020.

5 United Nations Children’s Fund, Nigeria, ‘Country Office Annual Report 2021: Nigeria’, UNICEF, Abuja, 2022, <www.unicef.org/media/116321/file/Nigeria-2021-COAR.pdf>, accessed 1 September 2023.

6 U-Report, an information chatbot to support communication and community engagement, was developed to enable young people to express their opinion on topics they care about and to act as positive agents of change in their communities.

time, thus allowing parents to give their children their telephone during their free time to access the platform. As a measure of control, a parent could only access the platform once: a response could only be given once for a given grade's questions set for that week. By November 2021, 8,010 children aged 6–11 years (including 3,924 girls) had responded to the learning assessment using U-Report. About 24 per cent were from Katsina State, 36 per cent from Jigawa State and 40 per cent from Kano State. This was a substantial number given the limitations of access to telephones and the internet and network challenges in the states where UNICEF was implementing the project.

Question 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?

Finding 1.2.1 The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office coordinated cross-sectoral efforts to support access to learning for street children, address violence against children as schools reopened, and provide WASH supplies to schools.

UNICEF coordinated education stakeholder meetings, inviting technical experts from the WASH, Gender, Child Protection and other sectoral teams working together in the COVID-19 response. For instance, the Child Protection team worked with the Education team to develop a programme that ensured that children living on the streets also had access to learning opportunities during school closures. The programme provided formal education, life-skills and social protection schemes to street children (including Almajiri). Later, the UNICEF Child Protection team worked again with the Education team to develop child safeguarding policies and frameworks that were used during school reopening to address violence against children, particularly girls.

Also, the Education team coordinated with the WASH, Health and Social Behaviour Change teams to prepare schools. The WASH team assisted in the provision of supplies to schools and in increasing advocacy on health and safety measures that needed to be adapted for the reopening of schools. About 1,700 WASH-distressed schools were supported with WASH stations and liquid soaps across 16 states and 34 local government areas, benefiting over 1.5 million children in the safe school reopening initiative. However, evidence of the level of coherence or efficiencies gained through these efforts is lacking.

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 Nigeria Country Office leveraged its role as co-leader of the EiEWG and its relationships with federal and state ministries and key NGOs to lead and support a coherent education response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

After the outbreak of COVID-19, the EiEWG, led jointly by the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office and Save the Children, developed an education COVID-19 response strategy for the states targeted by the working group. UNICEF Nigeria used its existing partnerships and its technical and strategic support to ensure that the COVID-19 strategy was aligned with the strategic plans of key international NGO and NNGO partners to minimize duplication and promote improved transitions to recovery-focused programming.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office worked with key international NGOs and the NNGO to establish additional monitoring tools for the COVID-19 response that minimized reporting requirements while providing regular information about the progress of programme

implementation. To coordinate implementation of the COVID-19 response, the Country Office also convened virtual monitoring meetings twice per month with implementing partners and other stakeholders to discuss the response. The updates from the meetings and reports were shared with the FME and the SUBEB to allow for seamless integration with FME data.

Many of the activities around home-based learning were achieved with the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Educate a Child, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian aid Operations (ECHO), the European Union, the Government of Norway, the German Development Bank and the GPE. For example, the partnership with the GPE led to the development of the Nigeria Learning Passport, an online, mobile and offline platform. Also, FHI 360 provided technical assistance to develop take-home learning materials.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office's coordination efforts supported the development of a gender equality package to ensure that the Learning Passport, once launched, would enhance gender equality, including by advancing girls' education through digital learning. The Country Office also collaborated with two private sector organizations: with Microsoft on the provision of the Learning Passport, and with Airtel, a local mobile network provider, to ensure connectivity of the digital learning platform in Nigeria.

UNICEF Nigeria partnered with CSOs (Slum2School Africa, His Marvellous Grace Support Foundation, the Doma Education Development Foundation, Voluntary Services Overseas and His Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme) to implement a community learning programme, including a catch-up learning programme for learners in P1–P6 in over 7,500 locations, benefiting over 1 million children across the 16 target states. These CSOs provided technical and financial support (164 million naira) to implement the programme. By engaging and using the technical and financial support from the CSOs, UNICEF Nigeria was also able to establish community reading hubs and broadcast radio literacy programmes that offered learning opportunities to children in the UNICEF target states.

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

Conclusion 3: The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office leveraged public–private partnerships to support the government's nationwide investment in transformative digital technology and remote learning solutions, as well as the development of other alternative remote learning tools and digital assessment tools, including for children living in emergency contexts. Efforts to improve access to digital tools have not been fully implemented, and their contributions and reach are yet to be assessed.

Conclusion 4: The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office supported teacher capacity enhancement programmes during and after school reopening as a strategy to reform and improve teaching, learning and assessment practices, and to mitigate the negative impacts on learning outcomes.

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 Nigeria Country Office supported federal and state governments by forging private–public partnerships to provide diverse types of home-based learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, including transforming access to digital technologies, television, radio, community-based and customized options for children in conflict-affected states.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office, co-lead of the EiEWG and the GPE, provided technical support and coordinated with education partners to prioritize continuity of learning during school closures. The support to federal and state governments was reported to be timely.

At the federal level, UNICEF Nigeria collaborated with a technical committee within the FME under the leadership of the National Teachers' Institute (NTI). The committee comprised experts in language and numeracy from various universities, SUBEB, the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council and the NTI, and its role was to develop or adapt the take-home learning materials, worksheets and assessment cards, as well as materials for radio and television education programmes. By the end of 2021, 1,179,324 learners (644,469 girls and 534,855 boys) out of an estimated 82.3 million children aged below 15 years had benefited from these resources.

Also, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office established ICT hubs to support content production in each of the 36 states and the FCT. Each of the ICT hubs was equipped with workstations, a high-quality camera, relevant software, backup power and interactive boards. Some 148 ICT administrators were trained to support states in content production and the dissemination of content using different platforms (radio, television or digital) and deployed across the 36 states and the FCT.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office promoted the adoption of digital learning by supporting the customization of a Learning Passport, an online and offline learning platform used in many countries for digital learning and development and to provide more opportunities to access quality education. The customized Nigeria Learning Passport was designed for pre-primary, primary and secondary levels. It allowed learners and teachers access to a digitalized curriculum and learning materials for all core curriculum subjects. Powered by Microsoft, it was developed with a suite of online and offline functionalities and abilities, allowing deployment in places with intermittent or no internet connectivity, thus making it accessible to vulnerable and marginalized learners. UNICEF Nigeria forged public-private partnerships with Microsoft to host the platform and with Airtel to ensure connectivity once it was launched. Simultaneously, UNICEF Nigeria also assisted the federal government to initiate the development process by providing technical and financial resources to develop content for the customized Nigeria Learning Passport.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office scaled up the Continuity of Learning in Conflict Setting education programme, which was part of its EiE interventions, to cater for COVID-19 school closures. The scale-up comprised developing self-paced radio lessons with recordings placed on USB drives. These lessons were developed through funding and technical support from UNICEF Nigeria, and in partnership with the FME, states and community teachers. The programme also provided solar-powered radios so that more learners had access to home-based learning opportunities. The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office distributed 15,000 solar-powered radios to vulnerable families in 2020.

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 Nigeria Country Office made a significant contribution to supporting government initiatives to enhance children's safety, well-being and protection during the reopening of schools through funding, supplies, technical support, teacher training and community-based learning initiatives.

As part of the preparations for the reopening of schools, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office provided technical expertise and financial support to both the FME and state governments for the

development and dissemination of the national framework for safe school return after COVID-19. Local community structures adapted and used these tools to lead the campaign for safe school reopening. This helped local authorities and communities own the framework and drive the initiative for the safe return to school. These activities continued into 2021, when UNICEF Nigeria supported six states in northern Nigeria to develop school improvement and emergency preparedness plans.

Remedial education was provided in 16 states by approximately 7,500 community-based learning hubs established by the 5 CSOs, reaching 1.2 million children. To maximize uptake, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office adapted the scheduling of classes offered through the community hubs by, for example, making accommodations for harvesting cycles on family farms to ensure more parental engagement with the children's learning. However, the education partners/CSOs indicated that the contracting period given was short-term, as the activities should have extended beyond 2021 even after schools reopened, especially in northern Nigeria, where great efficiencies would have been derived from redeploying volunteers trained over the COVID-19 period.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office also worked to improve teachers' knowledge and skills on psychosocial support to enhance the resilience of both the teachers and children to deal with stress and COVID-19-related trauma. Through capacity-building and technical and financial support, UNICEF Nigeria also trained teachers and SBMCs on sanitation and hygiene measures for schools as a preventive measure to enhance learner safety while in school.

UNICEF provided comprehensive guidelines and advice to schools and their staff on how they could make the school environment safer for children. These plans were useful during the reopening of schools in the areas affected by conflict and insecurity. To localize, develop and monitor the implementation of the school emergency and preparedness plans, UNICEF also supported capacity-building for 6,878 SBMCs in these states. The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office also conducted fumigation in 4,086 schools to ensure better school reopening and the provision of safe learning environments.

In 2020, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office provided 749,292 learners with individual learning supplies. This was far above the annual target of providing individual materials to 195,000 children. In 2021, UNICEF Nigeria surpassed all its targets, as a total of 1,179,324 children received learning materials (against the target of 470,946). Within the humanitarian context, 430,561 children received learning materials (against the target of 33,412). Through UNICEF initiatives, 324,065 children received psychosocial support, which was significantly higher than the target of 185,431 children.

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 Nigeria Country Office achieved moderate success in its support for activities to reinstate in-school learning, which included conducting enrolment drives, cash transfers, girls' mentoring programmes and supporting the government in the development of safe school return plans.

Working with the government and education stakeholders, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office provided technical and financial support to various initiatives that assisted learners to return to school, such as back to school campaigns and cash transfers. UNICEF Nigeria also supported the production and dissemination of behaviour change communications materials and messages addressing the safe return to school, including jingles and posters. Twelve jingles in six languages

(English, Hausa, Igbo, Nupe, Tiv and Idoma) were produced and broadcast on state and national media channels, reaching an estimated 16 million Nigerians.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office scaled up its unconditional cash transfer programme in Kebbi and Zamfara states, enabling over 40,000 boys and girls to remain in school once they reopened. These initiatives resulted in the enrolment of more than 1.1 million additional children in school and an increase in the proportion (65 per cent) of girls in UNICEF focus states transitioning to secondary schools, against the 2021 target of 63 per cent. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the transition rate did not decline but actually increased steadily, reaching 58.9 per cent in 2020 and 65 per cent in 2021.⁷

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 Nigeria Country Office provided substantial support to the government's initiative to introduce a national learning assessment framework.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, 10.5 million children (6.3 million girls) in Nigeria were not in school despite primary education being free and compulsory. For those enrolled in school, 70 per cent were not achieving basic foundational literacy and numeracy skills, according to UNICEF reporting. In 2021, the Government of Nigeria began work to revamp the National Assessment of Learning Achievements in Basic Education to monitor the progress of learning in core subject areas (Mathematics, English, Basic Science and Technology) in primary and junior secondary schools. The aim was to help the FME focus on accessing 21st century and transferable skills, including problem-solving and critical thinking. The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office drew on its technical experience, using U-Report to conduct assessments and obtain real-time results to engage the FME and the UBEC.

Subsequently, UNICEF Nigeria provided technical and financial support that was used to conduct a series of capacity development workshops with the FME and the UBEC at the federal and state levels to strengthen education programme planning and policy formulation. These efforts aimed to achieve national endorsement of a national learning assessment framework. By the end of the evaluation period, although all associated instruments needed to conduct a national assessment had not been finalized, reports suggest that UNICEF Nigeria planned to support the government to administer the assessment at the end of the academic year in February 2022. This included the use of the U-Report platform in orientation, training and dissemination of the National Assessment of Learning Achievements in Basic Education results.

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 Nigeria Country Office's evidence-generation efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the successful scale-up of programmes to address violence against girls and the establishment of community-based learning centres to provide safe and protective learning spaces, including for children living in street-like conditions.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office retained a focus on the particular challenges and needs of girls throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, approximately 2,600 of the 7,500

⁷ United Nations Children's Fund, Nigeria, 'Country Office Annual Report 2020: Nigeria', UNICEF, Abuja, 2021.

community-based learning hubs that were provided as temporary learning spaces catered primarily for girls. The Country Office also used back to school campaigns, cash transfer programmes and mentoring programmes targeting girls to support their re-engagement in learning in school.

Additionally, a joint situation analysis report produced by UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme during this period helped identify children living in street-like conditions, which allowed programmes to better target them. The evidence produced with this report helped the development of a programme to enhance access to formal education, life skills and social protection. In states with limited UNICEF presence, the Country Office collaborated with other partners to advocate for children.

Teachers were also trained to provide psychosocial support to respond to COVID-19-related trauma, stress and other challenges experienced by children, especially for girls in northwest Nigeria, where the female primary net attendance rate is 47.3 per cent. Teachers and community leaders were also trained on measures to prevent and respond to school-based attacks, especially in conflict-affected regions.

Question 2.6: In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives to recover learning lost during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Finding 2.6.1 The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office supported the recovery of learning lost during the COVID-19 pandemic by supporting the government's initiatives to build teacher capacity to improve learning outcomes, and implementation of Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) and the Reading and Numeracy Activity (RANA).

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office worked with the federal government to implement teacher capacity enhancement programmes, including foundational literacy and numeracy, digitalizing classroom instruction, supportive school supervision and leadership, school-based coaching and mentoring, and psychosocial support. The programmes aimed to improve learning outcomes in response to learning lost due to the school closures.

UNICEF Nigeria engaged the Pratham Education Foundation and JPAL Africa to train 9,591 teachers (50 per cent females) in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states on effective early-grade reading and numeracy pedagogies, using TaRL. In the TaRL approach, children are taught in groups based on their learning levels and placed in the next group to tackle the next set of learning objectives, as opposed to the current practice of using a child's age and height to determine an appropriate class. Thus, children who are ahead of others are not held back in their learning, and vice versa. The approach was piloted for six months in Borno State in 2018, with two hours a day dedicated to teaching basic reading and numeracy skills in the local language.

Findings suggest that the proportion of pupils who could not read the alphabet dropped from 68 per cent to 17 per cent, and the proportion of children in grades 4–6 who could read a paragraph of four lines in the local Hausa language increased from 14 per cent to 45 per cent. In numeracy, the proportion of children who were proficient in subtraction increased from 11 per cent to 59 per cent. UNICEF Nigeria provided funding to adapt TaRL into radio lessons and trained 7,714 teachers and mentors to deliver the programmes during school closures.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office funded and provided technical support to adapt RANA, an intervention designed to improve literacy and numeracy instruction for early-grade learners (grades 1–3), for home-based and radio learning. The initiative benefited over 2.6 million children in north-west Nigeria during school closures. By 2021, the Country Office had expanded the reach

of the RANA initiative by rolling it out in more than 3,000 public primary schools and Integrated Qur'anic Schools.

As part of this initiative, 29,000 teachers received training on pedagogical approaches for early-grade numeracy and literacy. This capacity development opportunity was extended to headteachers. Capacity improvement was also offered to Qur'anic schools, to help them to focus on quality child-centred instructional support. RANA also included centre support visits and cluster meetings for monitoring and mentoring to ensure effective teaching and learning in the Integrated Qur'anic Schools.

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

Conclusion 5: The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office's existing EiE framework was adapted to support the FME's education response, including in conflict-affected states. It was also key to convening and securing the engagement of government institutions and high-level actors to strengthen frameworks and capacities. However, the work of mainstreaming the enhancements into the system to strengthen preparedness for future global public health emergencies is yet to be completed, having been delayed due to slow approval processes within both UNICEF and the Government of Nigeria.

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 Building on its existing EiE framework, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office, in collaboration with the EiEWG, adapted the framework to support conflict-affected states in northern Nigeria to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the full implementation of any plans and strategies was delayed because of internal UNICEF systems.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office is part of the EiEWG, led by the government's SUBEB and an adaptation of the Global Education Cluster mechanism, co-led by the Country Office and Save the Children. The EiEWG is responsible for facilitating the coordination of partners, information-sharing and mobilizing partners to ensure a coherent and effective EiE response. After the outbreak of COVID-19, the EiEWG developed an education COVID-19 response strategy for Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states.

This strategy was aligned with the strategic plans of the government and international NGO and NNGO partners to minimize duplication and to promote improved transitions to recovery-focused programming. The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office contributed to this strategy by providing basic structures to guide the response. However, its implementation was delayed due to bureaucratic bottlenecks within the Country Office's systems that stretched the approval and implementation of the plans formulated by the education partners.

In 2021, UNICEF Nigeria supported the federal government to develop the safe school minimum standards for EiE based on the EiEWG strategy. Due to delays from the government, these standards had not been finalized by the end of the evaluation period, but they were anticipated to be completed in 2022. Additionally, UNICEF and the EiEWG rolled out a Joint Needs Assessment during the second half of 2021, though the report had not been finalized at the time of the evaluation.

Finding 3.1.2 The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office supported government initiatives to deliver continuity of learning and enhance children’s safety, well-being and protection in conflict-affected states while schools were closed (through community-based learning hubs) and during school reopening (by improving school infrastructure and safe school reopening plans and protocols).

In the early stages of the pandemic in 2020, the EiEWG identified three states with rampant insecurity and instability for targeted support, and set a target to support more than 970,000 of the most vulnerable children in the region. The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office made a commitment to support 66 per cent of the targeted children to gain access to education and learning opportunities, through formal and non-formal education and community-based learning hubs, during school closures and after schools reopened.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office also renovated classrooms and WASH facilities. To ensure learner safety during and after school reopening, it also trained teachers and school leaders on measures to prevent and respond to school-based attacks. Collectively, under the co-leadership of UNICEF, the EiEWG member organizations supported 800,000 children – 85 per cent of the 2020 target.

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 The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office adapted the EIE frameworks, infrastructure, capacities and tools to help both the government and states to prepare for future global public health emergencies.

In 2021, the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office convened a meeting with the federal government’s Ministry of Budget and Planning, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, UBEC, Ministry of Finance and National Assembly House Committee Members on Education to discuss the education sector crisis and emergency response. The meeting was critical for soliciting high-level buy-in on strengthening the education sector and for state commitment to backing up the plans with sufficient budgetary allocations and commitment to implementation. More specifically, the meeting led to 33 out of the 36 state ministries of education developing costed education sector plans for the COVID-19 emergency response. In addition, states also agreed to include risk-informed crisis and emergency planning as a stand-alone pillar and to integrate gender-responsiveness in the State Education Strategic Plan.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office also supported the digitalization of the EMIS, the strengthening of monitoring and validation mechanisms, and capacity development for EMIS coordinators in 21 states to ensure that the states had sufficient technical expertise to use and maintain the EMIS system.

5.0 Lessons learned and possible follow-up actions

Nigeria is a large country with several layers of government. At the FCT, UNICEF Nigeria worked as the co-lead and convener of the EiEWG and leveraged its extensive experience of responding to the ongoing school attacks and insurgencies in northern Nigeria, in close collaboration with the FME. UNICEF also mounted advocacy campaigns for the safe reopening of schools, coordinated various working groups and partnered with CSOs to implement COVID-19 mitigation activities in selected communities in 16 states. The key message from interviewees in this case study is that the UNICEF Nigeria Country Office played an invaluable role in the education response to the COVID-19 pandemic at federal, state and community levels, and that it delivered on its key mandate to expand children's rights at every opportunity. Lessons learned to position UNICEF Nigeria to be more impactful in future crises and possible activities for consideration by the country office are summarized below.

Lesson 1: There is a need to increase advocacy with the FME, education authorities at the state level and other relevant education stakeholders to support better integration of emergency preparedness and learning recovery, and to build government capacity to deal with future disruptions to education. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in significant learning losses in Nigeria, the size of which are yet to be determined. However, for some communities, the effects of the pandemic will linger much longer, unless there are deliberate efforts to counteract them. This requires supporting the work of education authorities to build coherent systems with a seamless transition from readiness to well-executed emergency response, and to articulate well-integrated learning recovery outcomes.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office should consider commissioning systematic and thorough documentation of the lessons from the Nigerian response in all 36 states, with a view to updating the current preparedness model to reflect the integration of learning recovery after an emergency, and update frameworks, tools, infrastructure and capacities to deliver it in each state.

Lesson 2: Delivery of education through digital tools is emerging as one of the key solutions to promote access to and participation in education, deliver education during crises and broaden the learning ecosystem and tools for all learners, in emergency and non-emergency contexts. The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office achieved limited coverage in the emergency response to COVID-19, presumably because the response only focused on the states targeted for UNICEF programmes before the pandemic. While this programming decision was reasonable, understandable and pragmatic in the Nigerian context, digital learning should be expanded to as many states as possible.

The UNICEF Nigeria Country Office should consider updating available resources for digital learning within the UNICEF global network to assess their application in the Nigerian context; advocate for expanding digital learning by adapting lessons and experience from other countries such as the Global Innovation Gateway for All (GIGA) initiative;⁸ and roll out existing initiatives such as the Nigerian Learning Passport (or similar platforms) to more communities. Simultaneously, a review should be undertaken, in collaboration with the government, of equity-related limitations of digital delivery of education.

⁸ Launched in September 2019, GIGA was conceived from a partnership between UNICEF and the International Telecommunication Union, "to connect every school to the Internet and every young person to information, opportunity and choice". GIGA uses real-time methods to develop mappings of school internet and infrastructure access, create models for innovative financing, and support governments to contract for internet connectivity. GIGA has 14 corporate and non-profit partners.

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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 	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) 	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) 	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 	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) 	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) 	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 8 and 11, 2022.

Table A3: List of key informants, Nigeria case study

Organisation / institution	Key Respondent Information	
	Position	Name
UNICEF CO	Education Specialist	Yetunde Oluwatosin
UNICEF CO	M&E Specialist	Saka Ibrahim
Federal Ministry of Education	Director ICT	Dr Abubakar Isah
National Teachers Institute	Director Academic Services Department	Prof Hafsat Lawal Kontagora
Slum2School Africa	Executive Director	Otto Oroondaam

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 Nigeria 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
<p>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</p> <p>Theme 1: Building the evidence and resource base for the education response to the COVID-19 pandemic</p> <p>OECD-DAC criteria: coherence and efficiency</p>				
<p>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?</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Statement of UNICEF role at global, regional, and country level</p> <p>#/type of evidence and tools developed by UNICEF or in collaboration with other organisations</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Partners at HQ, CO (including governments), RO: that UNICEF has worked with who can speak about UNICEF role and contribution</p> <p>Documents: produced documenting design, response, progress, lists of data/tools/evidence produced</p>	<p>Document review (programme and other documents from HQ, RO and CO)</p> <p>Interviews (UNICEF staff and partners at HQ, RO, CO). At CO also includes government personnel</p> <p>Online Survey (UNICEF staff and partners at HQ, RO, CO)</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>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</p> <p>Evidence of alignment with the wider policy</p>	<p>#/type of staff working on the response</p> <p># of staff reporting collaborating during response</p> <p>Difference in timing between planned and implementation of activities</p>	<p>UNICEF Staff: including education teams at HQ, RO, CO, and teams from other sectors with UNICEF to develop evidence-based solutions</p> <p>Documents: detailing evidence-based solutions developed, workplans, human and financial resources</p>	<p>Document review (programme and other documents, workplans, financial and staffing information)</p> <p>Interviews (UNICEF Staff at HQ, RO, CO including education and other sector teams)</p> <p>Online survey (UNICEF staff at HQ, RO, CO including education and other sector teams)</p>

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data/Information sources	Data collection methods
	<p>frameworks and with other interventions in the same operating 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>				

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data/Information sources	Data collection methods
2.1 In what ways, and how successfully, has UNICEF supported government initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic to promote home-based learning?	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-based learning initiatives in terms of quantity, reach or quality.	List /type of education strategies used to promote home-based learning # of countries, schools, children using home-based learning strategies Amount/type of support to households for home learning	Government staff: national, subnational government ministries/departments. UNICEF CO staff, partners at CO level: involved in working with government entities within countries 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 home based learning.	Document review (design and implementation documents, strategies, plans, resourcing, progress reports for home leaning 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	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	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)

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data/Information sources	Data collection methods
	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 PPE or handwashing facilities).	practices after reinstatement of in school learning # of countries reporting change in teaching, learning and assessment practices after reinstatement of in school learning		Online survey (UNICEF staff and partners at RO, CO) U- Report (young people and communities)
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	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,	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	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)

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data/Information sources	Data collection methods
programmes to their learning needs?	children with disabilities, refugees, minority ethnic/language groups Evidence of whether particular groups of children were omitted or not sufficiently targeted through UNICEF supported interventions.		and/or tailoring the approach and support provided to different groups of marginalized children.	and those reached/not reached)
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)
<p>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</p> <p>Theme 3: UNICEF preparedness frameworks, readiness to handle similar future crises</p> <p>OECD-DAC criteria: relevance and effectiveness</p>				
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	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	# 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)

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data/Information sources	Data collection methods
sector response to the COVID-19 pandemic?	2) used in all circumstances when their use was or would have been appropriate.			
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?	Evidence of adaptations to EIE frameworks, infrastructure, capacities, and tools informed by lessons learnt from experience of the 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.	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)

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?