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# TOOL 0.1

## EQUITY AND INCLUSION SELF-ASSESSMENT



### USERS

National education officials;  
Local education officials;  
Educators and administrators;  
Implementers



### PURPOSE

To ensure that return to learning policies and practices are equitable and inclusive, prioritizing access to safe, quality education opportunities (both in person and at a distance) for all learners during a crisis



### ENGAGE

Learners (children and youth), families, and communities; Teachers' unions; Child protection actors and social workers; Representatives of organizations for and led by marginalized populations

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## INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Having completed the tools for Return to Learning priorities 1 through 5, and the Action Plan ([Tool 0.2](#)), with an equity and inclusion (E&I) lens, use this tool to assess your plan, identify gaps, and improve your plan to be more equitable and inclusive of marginalized groups.** (See definitions on page 3).
  - a. For example, if you developed a strong back-to-school campaign delivered via Internet, TV, and radio, this tool may help you realize it will not reach those without access to technology and connectivity. You can then update your plan to include social mobilizers.
  - b. During roll-out of your plan, continuously review your plan using this tool. Especially consider: What has been effective? What isn't working? Who is my intervention reaching? Who is being left out and why?
  - c. Building on the example above, you might later discover that social mobilizers are not effective at re-engaging all learners because they have limited understanding of issues affecting marginalized communities. Therefore, you may use additional strategies to specifically reach marginalized populations.

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**INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)**

2. **Gather and review your notes and decisions made in the Action Plan, debrief pages of all tools, and especially [Tool 1.1, Identifying Barriers and Strategies to \(Re\)engage the Most Marginalized Learners](#). Bring together relevant stakeholders, including:**
  - a. Key decision-makers involved in return to learning policies and practices (e.g., MOEs/MOHEs, Ministry of Health officials, implementing partners, donors, multilateral agencies).
  - b. Specialists working in the area of equity and inclusion, including organizations led by and for different marginalized populations (e.g., organizations of persons with disabilities, representative organizations of Indigenous Peoples, etc.).
  - c. Other partners, such as teachers’ unions, social service providers and community leaders.
3. **Be open, honest, and willing to reflect on both your plan’s strengths and areas for improvement.**
4. **Go one-by-one through each priority area. Circle the score you assign your plan for each priority area, according to the following scoring system.**

E&I Transformative	E&I Responsive	E&I Unresponsive	E&I Absent/Exploitative
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
Plans recognize inequities and exclusion and take action to address root causes, challenging norms and unequal power relations	Plans recognize inequities and exclusion and address practical aspects but not underlying causes	Plans recognize inequities and exclusion but do not address them	Plans do not recognize inequities and exclusion, or they reinforce or take advantage of them

Write notes that explain the score you have given your plan. If you score your plan 0, 1, or 2 on the priority, document proposed adaptations that you can make.

5. **Once complete, seek constructive feedback from a “critical friend” or moderator who is familiar with the context, the return to learning plans, and related issues of equity and inclusion of marginalized populations in your area.**
6. **Update your Action Plan and carry out adaptations.**
7. **Set dates or time periods to reassess your plan regularly (e.g., two times per year and whenever you make changes in your plans).**

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### DEFINITION

#### EQUITY AND INCLUSION

[USAID's Education Policy](#) (p. 29), notes that "Marginalized children and youth are more likely to not enter or complete education opportunities. These populations vary by context, and frequently include girls, rural populations, individuals marginalized because of their sexual orientation, individuals with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and children and youth from poor households." Therefore, an explicit focus on equity and inclusion in the return to learning is essential. For the purposes of this toolkit, equity refers to fair opportunity for all individuals according to their respective needs to achieve their full education potential, regardless of demographic, social, economic, geographic, or other status. Inclusion refers to ensuring that all individuals, including marginalized populations, are fully included in, can actively and directly participate in, and benefit from education activities.

**TOOL 0.1 EQUITY AND INCLUSION SELF-ASSESSMENT**

**PRIORITY I: (RE)ENGAGE ALL LEARNERS, ESPECIALLY THE MOST MARGINALIZED**

	<b>E&amp;I Transformative</b>	<b>E&amp;I Responsive</b>	<b>E&amp;I Unresponsive</b>	<b>E&amp;I Absent/Exploitative</b>
	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Conduct rapid assessments (either through existing data or primary data collection) to identify marginalized groups.</li> <li>✓ Collaborate with communities to (re)engage all learners.</li> <li>✓ Ensure education information and monitoring systems are functioning and capable of tracking (re)enrollment of all learners, especially marginalized populations, in real time.</li> <li>✓ Promote alternative pathways back to education.</li> <li>✓ Address policy barriers that exclude some learners from returning to education.</li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Equity indicators tracked and used to inform approaches that transform education systems to be more equitable and inclusive</i></li> <li>• <i>Exclusive policies revised (e.g., those excluding pregnant/parenting teens, refugees)</i></li> <li>• <i>Opportunities leveraged for equitable participation of women and men, girls and boys, individuals with and without disabilities in return-to-learning decision-making</i></li> <li>• <i>Resource allocations include funding for specific initiatives to make the return to learning more equitable and inclusive</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Data disaggregated by sex, disability, or other groupings and used to inform inclusive approaches</i></li> <li>• <i>Back-to-school campaigns rolled out in a variety of media that can reach all learners, including those without access to technology and connectivity and those with disabilities</i></li> <li>• <i>School fees are waived and/or financial/material support is provided</i></li> <li>• <i>Alternative education options developed for those who are not able to attend formal education</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Data disaggregated by sex, disability, or other groupings but not used to inform inclusive approaches</i></li> <li>• <i>Back-to-school campaigns rolled out primarily online, TV, or radio despite evidence and recognition of unequal access to technologies</i></li> <li>• <i>School fees maintained regardless of known economic hardships of families</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Data not disaggregated by sex, disability, or other groupings</i></li> <li>• <i>(Re)engaging learners relies primarily or entirely on teachers, teachers' assistants, and community groups, taking advantage of unpaid labor, particularly of women who may be more likely to volunteer their time</i></li> <li>• <i>Policies exclude girls/young women who became pregnant from attending school, furthering gender inequity in secondary school</i></li> </ul>

Your Plan's Score:  _____	Why did you assign your plan the score you did?
Proposed Changes to Plan:	

**TOOL 0.1 EQUITY AND INCLUSION SELF-ASSESSMENT**

**PRIORITY 2: DEVELOP EDUCATION REOPENING PLANS**

	E&I Transformative	E&I Responsive	E&I Unresponsive	E&I Absent/Exploitative
	3	2	1	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Involve learners, educators, parents, and communities in decision making.</li> <li>✓ Develop an education reopening plan, including safe operations guidance.</li> <li>✓ Develop an outbreak response plan at the school level.</li> <li>✓ Communicate clearly and consistently.</li> <li>✓ Monitor the situation regularly.</li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Marginalized communities actively involved in decision-making processes</i></li> <li>• <i>Long-term budget adaptations planned to increase resources (financial, human, time) to low-resource, marginalized districts and schools to ensure they can meet safe operations standards</i></li> <li>• <i>All new and rehabilitated equipment and infrastructure meets physical accessibility standards</i></li> <li>• <i>Access and safety continuously monitored for all learners and staff and improvements routinely made</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Consultations with organizations representing the needs and priorities of marginalized communities inform inclusive strategies</i></li> <li>• <i>Budget reallocations made in the short term to help poor districts and schools purchase needed equipment and rehabilitate infrastructure</i></li> <li>• <i>Plans made to accommodate learners who cannot return right away (e.g. those with underlying medical conditions, those who have to work)</i></li> <li>• <i>Communications understood by all and available in accessible formats</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Needs of marginalized communities considered in plan development but without their direct input</i></li> <li>• <i>Policies require schools to remain shut unless they meet strict safety protocols, but financing not provided despite known wealth gaps between schools</i></li> <li>• <i>Reopening and response plans only made available in the majority language or an official language and not in accessible formats, despite recognition of a variety of language and accessibility needs</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Return to learning plans do not consider the needs of marginalized learners</i></li> <li>• <i>Private or non-state schools that primarily serve wealthy, urban learners reopen first, causing disadvantaged and marginalized groups to fall further behind</i></li> <li>• <i>No plans exist for monitoring issues of equity and inclusion of marginalized learners in the return to learning</i></li> </ul>

Your Plan's Score:  _____	Why did you assign your plan the score you did?
Proposed Changes to Plan:	

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**PRIORITY 3: ADAPT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME, CURRICULA, AND LEARNING SUPPORTS**

	E&I Transformative	E&I Responsive	E&I Unresponsive	E&I Absent/Exploitative
	3	2	1	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Understand the range of options for helping learners catch up.</li> <li>✓ Revise the academic calendar and schedule.</li> <li>✓ Adapt (or condense) the curriculum and teaching and learning materials.</li> <li>✓ Identify learners’ social-emotional, protection, and academic needs.</li> <li>✓ Consider where distance learning should continue.</li> <li>✓ Mobilize financial and human resources for planning for catch-up programming.</li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Alternative education pathways that consider diverse needs of marginalized learners integrated into education system plans for long-term system transformation</i></li> <li>• <i>Structures for long-term engagement with marginalized communities built out of short-term processes</i></li> <li>• <i>Universal Design for Learning principles applied to adaptations to instructional time, curricula, and learning supports</i></li> <li>• <i>Social-emotional learning and child protection responses are gender transformative</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Alternative learning pathways offered as a short-term, stop-gap measure to allow marginalized learners to return to learning</i></li> <li>• <i>Marginalized communities consulted in decision-making about the adapted schedule and calendar</i></li> <li>• <i>Plans made for learners who struggle with (in)accessibility of distance learning and have diverse learning styles</i></li> <li>• <i>Adaptations (e.g., take-home packets, Internet hubs) made for those without access to technologies</i></li> <li>• <i>Social-emotional learning and child protection responses are gender responsive</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>No education option built in to meet the needs of working learners, teen mothers, and others who cannot attend formal school hours</i></li> <li>• <i>Marginalized communities not consulted regarding schedule and calendar adaptations</i></li> <li>• <i>Social-emotional learning and child protection plans lack gender-responsive strategies</i></li> <li>• <i>Distance learning opportunities established but not accessible to learners with disabilities or those who lack access to technology or connectivity</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Strict attendance policies exist that punish those who do not return right away</i></li> <li>• <i>A “lost year” or “dead year” is declared, which will likely increase learning loss and dropout for the most marginalized</i></li> <li>• <i>Adapted class schedule requires attendance during key harvest periods, religious holidays, or other times marginalized groups cannot attend</i></li> <li>• <i>Curriculum is not adapted in a way that considers the learning needs of marginalized learners</i></li> </ul>

Your Plan’s Score: _____	Why did you assign your plan the score you did?
Proposed Changes to Plan:	

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**PRIORITY 4: MODIFY EXAMS AND LEARNER PROMOTION PRACTICES**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Identify how exams have been affected by the crisis.</li> <li>✓ Identify which exams are a priority.</li> <li>✓ Develop a learner promotion strategy.</li> <li>✓ Communicate with learners, families, and educators.</li> <li>✓ Ensure monitoring systems to track access to exams and pass rates are in place.</li> <li>✓ Mobilize resources needed to implement adapted exams.</li> </ul>	<b>E&amp;I Transformative</b>	<b>E&amp;I Responsive</b>	<b>E&amp;I Unresponsive</b>	<b>E&amp;I Absent/Exploitative</b>
	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Assessment and promotion policies and practices revised to allow for different ways of demonstrating achievement of competencies and readiness for the next grade/level, and financing reallocated so new strategy is sustainable</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exam fees waived for disadvantaged learners and childcare vouchers provided so teen mothers can sit exams</i></li> <li>• <i>Exams provided in accessible formats and reasonable accommodations are provided for learners with disabilities</i></li> <li>• <i>Auto-promotion of all learners implemented with remedial support for learners who are struggling</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exams only offered during hours that are hard for working learners to attend</i></li> <li>• <i>Exam modality (in-person, online) not accessible to all learners (e.g., those who cannot access online exams or come to test sites)</i></li> <li>• <i>Monitoring of pass rates and promotion disaggregated by sex, disability status, displacement status, and/or other subgroupings, but not used to develop inclusive strategies</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>One-size-fits-all exam and promotion strategies implemented without proper remediation, further marginalizing some learners</i></li> <li>• <i>Monitoring of pass rates and promotion does not disaggregate by sex, disability status, displacement status, or other subgroupings</i></li> </ul>

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**PRIORITY 5: RE-ENGAGE EDUCATORS AND PREPARE THE LEARNING SPACE**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Revisit workforce needs.</li> <li>✓ Address educator capacity development needs.</li> <li>✓ Develop or revise policy to meet education workforce needs.</li> <li>✓ Assess the need for repairs and creation of new learning spaces, additional furniture and materials, disinfection of learning spaces, and signage and floor markings.</li> <li>✓ Mobilize financial resources to fill gaps.</li> </ul>	E&I Transformative	E&I Responsive	E&I Unresponsive	E&I Absent/Exploitative
	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Educator policies revised to allow refugee educators to teach</i></li> <li>• <i>Community members engaged to monitor representativeness of education personnel</i></li> <li>• <i>Hardship pay policies developed to compensate educators in crisis-affected communities</i></li> <li>• <i>Universal Design for Learning principles integrated throughout the design and implementation of educator training and the learning space</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Childcare vouchers provided for female educators to improve the gender balance of educators</i></li> <li>• <i>Recruitment of new educators or teaching assistants includes equal and fair hiring requirements, e.g. at least 50 percent female; at least 15 percent with a disability; ethnically and linguistically representative of the student population</i></li> <li>• <i>Reasonable accommodations provided for people with disabilities</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Educators not trained and supported to meet the needs of marginalized learners</i></li> <li>• <i>Construction and renovation of new and existing learning spaces do not consider accessibility for persons with disabilities</i></li> </ul>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Plans rely on community women to volunteer to facilitate small learning groups, which exploits women's unpaid labor</i></li> <li>• <i>Plans rely on community members to educate or provide unpaid support to marginalized learners (e.g., learners with disabilities, language minority groups)</i></li> </ul>

Your Plan's Score:  _____	Why did you assign your plan the score you did?
Proposed Changes to Plan:	