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# TOOL I.I

## IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES TO (RE)ENGAGE THE MOST MARGINALIZED LEARNERS



### USERS

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



### PURPOSE

To understand how the pandemic has  
affected learners, especially the most  
marginalized, and to identify strategies to  
re-engage them



### ENGAGE

Learners (children and youth);  
Families and communities; Child  
protection actors and social workers

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### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Complete the information checklist to identify useful sources of information and data to help you identify barriers to returning to learning for marginalized learners.** Check the box if you have or can obtain the information. For information you can obtain, be sure to gather it before continuing. Whenever possible, gather information directly from learners, family members, and communities and be sure to disaggregate by, at a minimum, gender, disability, and displacement status (if applicable).
- 2. In the Barriers and Strategies Matrix, in the left-hand column, review the list of all the groups of learners in your context who might need additional attention to (re)engage in education.** This should be based on your review of information and data you noted in the checklist. Additional needs assessment/situation analysis should be conducted where recent, relevant information is not available. Adapt the groups of learners by adding or deleting groups to fit your context.

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### INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

3. **For each group, list the specific barriers this group faces to (re)engage in education.** Barriers should be based on information or data, rather than on assumptions or stereotypes. Barriers for most groups will include lack of information about reopening dates/processes, fear of getting sick, or over-crowded classrooms that don't allow for physical distancing. Some groups may also face barriers related to restrictive policies (e.g., pregnant girls, refugees), stigma (e.g., learners who had/whose family members were sick), poverty and need to work, being over-age and behind grade level, or social-emotional issues. Consider supply-side barriers related to schools, institutions, or the education system, as well as demand-side barriers related to individual learners, families, and communities.
4. **In the second column, list what each group needs in order to overcome those barriers. Then, in the third column, list the strategies you can use to (re)engage those young people in education by providing for those needs.** Learners may need, for example, information, a supportive policy environment, financial and material support, additional space in classrooms or schools, etc. Therefore, strategies may include new or revised policies, additional funding, interventions and practices, training to educators, adaptations to infrastructure, etc. Review the [resilience capacities](#) for strategies. Strategies to (re)engage the most marginalized will benefit all learners.
5. It may be helpful to complete this tool for different geographic regions or age groups, since there are likely to be differences between these groups.
6. Ensure you track the return to learning by marginalized groups using [Tool I.2](#).
7. **When you complete this tool, answer the debrief questions** to identify what you have learned, what it means for the return to learning, and what must happen next.
8. **Finally, complete the Action Plan in [Tool 0.2](#)** to list strategies to enhance resilience of the education system and compile, in a single plan, the key actions for follow-up.

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EXAMPLE			
POPULATION GROUP	WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT THESE LEARNERS FROM RETURNING TO EDUCATION DURING COVID-19?	WHAT WILL THEY NEED TO OVERCOME THOSE BARRIERS AND RETURN TO EDUCATION?	WHAT STRATEGIES CAN BE IMPLEMENTED TO MEET THOSE NEEDS THAT ARE FEASIBLE?
Adolescent girls/young women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adolescent girls and young women are not prioritized for education, especially in poorer households.</li> <li>Data from recent needs assessment show an increase in girls'/women's time spent on household chores, as well as selling and trading in the market.</li> <li>Data show that many households have increased poverty levels.</li> <li>Data show an increase in pregnancy while schools were closed.</li> <li>Policy prevents visibly pregnant girls and young women from attending school, and stigma adds an additional burden.</li> <li>Data show young mothers struggle to find childcare and pay to support their children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls, families, and communities need to understand the value of ensuring girls and young women return to education, including human rights issues, child protection issues, income generation benefits in the long-run, etc.</li> <li>Girls from poor households may need financial/material support to return to school.</li> <li>Pregnant girls/young women may need alternative education in the short-term, and a supportive policy environment in the long term.</li> <li>Young mothers need childcare options and financial support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back-to-school campaign that emphasizes importance of returning to school for girls and young women, especially those who are pregnant or parenting.</li> <li>Social mobilizers in communities to visit homes of those most at risk of dropping out or those who were out-of-school prior to COVID-19.</li> <li>Waive school fees for all learners.</li> <li>Provide school feeding and school materials to families in need.</li> <li>Unconditional cash transfers to families who need the additional income.</li> <li>Childcare vouchers or flexible schedule options for young mothers.</li> <li>Alternative education options for pregnant girls/young women, and eventually, modifications to policy so it doesn't exclude pregnant girls/young women.</li> </ul>

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### INFORMATION CHECKLIST

1. Do you have recent, relevant information about enrollment and barriers to enrollment (e.g., conversations, interviews, focus groups) from:

- Girls and boys, children and youth with and without disabilities, host community and displaced learners**

[Notes:](#)

- Parents or caretakers**

[Notes:](#)

- Administrators and educators of pre-primary, primary, secondary, and higher education**

[Notes:](#)

- National and local government officials**

[Notes:](#)

- Child protection and social service providers, and other child- and youth-serving organizations**

[Notes:](#)

2. Do you have recent, relevant data on enrollment and barriers to enrollment from:

- Education management and information system (EMIS), school enrollment records, and other administrative data**

[Notes:](#)

- Household surveys, such as UNICEF MICS, USAID DHS, and World Bank HFS**

[Notes:](#)

- Program evaluations or needs assessments**

[Notes:](#)

- Context, situation, or risk analyses (e.g., RERA)**

[Notes:](#)

3. Do you have other recent, relevant information or data? (List all.)

[Notes:](#)

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BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES MATRIX			
POPULATION GROUP	WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT THESE LEARNERS FROM RETURNING TO EDUCATION?	WHAT WILL THEY NEED TO OVERCOME THOSE BARRIERS AND RETURN TO EDUCATION?	WHAT STRATEGIES CAN BE IMPLEMENTED TO MEET THOSE NEEDS THAT ARE FEASIBLE?
Girls/Young Women			
Boys/Young Men			
Learners with Disabilities			
Displaced Populations			

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POPULATION GROUP	WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT THESE LEARNERS FROM RETURNING TO EDUCATION?	WHAT WILL THEY NEED TO OVERCOME THOSE BARRIERS AND RETURN TO EDUCATION?	WHAT STRATEGIES CAN BE IMPLEMENTED TO MEET THOSE NEEDS THAT ARE FEASIBLE?
Host Community Populations			
Young Children			
Adolescents & Youth			
Out-of-School Children and Youth			
Most/All Learners			

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POPULATION GROUP	WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT THESE LEARNERS FROM RETURNING TO EDUCATION?	WHAT WILL THEY NEED TO OVERCOME THOSE BARRIERS AND RETURN TO EDUCATION?	WHAT STRATEGIES CAN BE IMPLEMENTED TO MEET THOSE NEEDS THAT ARE FEASIBLE?
Other:			
Other:			
Other:			

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### PLANNING DEBRIEF

#### WHAT?

**What have you learned from this tool? What decisions have you made? What is missing?**

#### SO WHAT?

**What implications does this have for planning the return to learning? Why is this important?**

#### NOW WHAT?

**What must you do next? What challenges must you address?**