TOOL 5.2
ADAPTING THE LEARNING SPACE

USERS
Educators and administrators;
Implementers

PURPOSE
To plan for infrastructure, resource, personnel, and school policy modifications to reinforce health and safety standards during the return to learning

ENGAGE
National education officials; Local education officials; Teachers' unions, Learners (children and youth), families, and communities

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Review the health and safety guidelines** in the Adapting Learning Spaces Matrix below, as well as those released by your national governing body. You can also refer to Operational Considerations for Schools released by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

2. **Answer each question in the four sections (physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection)** to identify what infrastructure, resources, and personnel are in place at your school or educational institution.

3. **As you move through the matrix, take notes expanding on your responses.** Record what steps your school/educational institution has taken in planning for the learning spaces, any challenges that have arisen, and adjustments you have made. For example, if the number of classrooms and educator-pupil ratio does not allow for physical distancing, describe why, e.g., "There are too many children in each class so they cannot maintain distance, and we do not have enough classrooms to split into smaller class sizes."

4. **At the end of each section, answer the planning questions** to identify concrete steps for adapting the learning space for the return to learning.

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT.)

5. **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.

6. **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.

ADAPTING LEARNING SPACES MATRIX

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Learners, educators, and staff should maintain the recommended distance between individuals who do not live in the same household as specified by your country's operating procedures (e.g., 2 meters recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).
- Groups should avoid mixing whenever possible (e.g. learners should remain with the same group throughout the day).
- Limit crowding by restricting access to the school/educational institution and setting norms and standard procedures for physical distancing.

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	EXPLAIN YOUR RESPONSE
1. Does the number of classrooms/learning spaces and the educator-pupil ratio allow learners and educators to maintain physical distancing (e.g. 2 meters apart)?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
If no, answer a – c		
a. Are there extra communal areas that can be used as temporary learning spaces (e.g. cafeteria, library, or outdoor space)?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
b. Can blended learning, distance learning, or double-shifting be used to reduce class size? Refer to **Tool 3.2** and **Tool 3.3**.	☐ Yes ☐ No	
c. Can volunteers and teaching assistants be used to help reduce class sizes? Refer to **Tool 5.1**.	☐ Yes ☐ No	
2. Have protocols been developed and shared with staff to limit the mixing of learner/educator groups in the learning environment? What additional resources are needed to implement protocols at the school/educational institution level?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
3. Are there visual cues to reinforce physical distancing throughout the school/educational institution (e.g. tape or chalk on the floor, signs on walls)? Are these cues accessible to and understood by all learners, including those with disabilities (e.g., uses pictures for learners who cannot read, braille formats, taught to learners in spoken and signed languages)? • Useful Resource: Print Resources by the CDC	☐ Yes ☐ No	

4. Are there visual cues and a physical barrier to indicate where caregivers can drop off learners and limit visitor access to the learning environments?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
5. Are plans in place to ensure that learners with disabilities continue to receive support services required at the school (e.g. physical rehabilitation, speech therapy) in a safe manner?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
6. Have ALL learners, caregivers, and community members been informed of new physical distancing requirements?	☐ Yes ☐ No	

Planning Questions

1. Considering your answers above, what are your school/educational institution's next steps in implementing physical distancing?

2. What resources (financial, personnel, time) are required to move forward with physical distancing?
   a. Financial:

   b. Personnel:

   c. Time:

3. What further information needs to be communicated with learners, caregivers, and community members?

4. How will protocols be enforced?

5. Who will lead physical distancing efforts at your school/educational institution? Who will be able to answer questions for fellow staff, learners, families, and community members?

HAND HYGIENE

- Learners, educators, and staff should wash hands regularly, including when they enter and exit the school/educational institution; after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing; before and after eating; and after using the bathroom.
- Hands should be washed for 20 seconds with soap and clean water OR alcohol-based hand rub (≥60 percent alcohol). If soap and alcohol-based hand rub are unavailable, a 0.05 percent chlorine handwashing solution may be used as a short-term substitute. Due to skin and eye irritation with prolonged use, this solution should be used only temporarily, and learners should be closely monitored when using.

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	EXPLAIN YOUR RESPONSE
1. Does the school/educational institution reliably and consistently have access to clean water?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
2. Does the school/educational institution have sufficient hand-washing stations around the school (refer to your local WASH guidance)? Are these hand-washing stations physically accessible to all learners and staff, including those with disabilities?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
3. Does the school/education institution have access to sufficient soap to provide for learners, educators, and staff?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
4. Does the education institution have access to sufficient alcohol-based hand rub (≥60 percent alcohol)?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
5. Does the school have a safe, locked storage space to store all hygiene supplies (e.g., soap, alcohol-rub, hand-washing stations)?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
6. Have all educators and staff been trained to model appropriate hand hygiene?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
7. Are signs, posters, or other visual cues posted to remind learners and staff about healthy hygiene behaviors? Are these messages accessible and understood by all, including those with disabilities?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
8. Have all caregivers been informed of hand hygiene policies and provided with strategies to reinforce healthy hand hygiene in the home?	☐ Yes ☐ No	

Planning Questions

1. Considering your answers above, what are your school/educational institution's next steps in implementing appropriate hand hygiene standards and protocols?

2. What resources (financial, personnel, time) are required to move forward with the hand hygiene protocols?
   a. Financial:

   b. Personnel:

   c. Time:

3. What further information needs to be communicated with learners, caregivers, and community members?

4. How will protocols be enforced?

5. Who will lead hand hygiene efforts at your school/educational institution? Who will be able to answer questions for fellow staff, learners, families, and community members?

RESPIRATORY HYGIENE

- Learners, educators, and staff should wear face coverings while at school or in training, in accordance with your country's operating procedures. This is especially important when indoors and when physical distancing is not possible.
- Learners, educators, and staff should stay home when they are sick (e.g., have symptoms of fever, sore throat, severe cough, difficulty breathing, severe headaches, diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain) or after coming in close contact with someone who is sick, regardless of COVID-19 status.
- Learners, educators, and staff should cover coughs and sneezes with their elbow or a tissue.

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	EXPLAIN YOUR RESPONSE
1. Are all learners, educators, and staff able to provide their own masks?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
If no, answer a – c		
a. Is the school/educational institution able to provide masks for all learners, educators, and staff (or all of those who cannot provide their own)?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
b. Are there local community organizations, religious institutions, and parent groups that are able to provide masks?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
c. Can learners and educators make masks as a classroom activity, given appropriate materials, training, and adult supervision?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
2. Are age-appropriate signs, posters or other visual cues posted to show learners how to properly wear and remove masks and cover coughs and sneezes? Are these messages accessible and understood by all, including those with disabilities?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
3. Have staff been trained on how to model appropriate use of masks and covering coughs/sneezes?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
4. Have caregivers and staff been informed on how to screen for COVID-19 exposure and symptoms before coming to school each day?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
5. Does the school have an outbreak response plan (Refer to Priority 2)?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
6. Have all staff been trained on the protocol if a learner or staff member is identified with symptoms?	☐ Yes ☐ No	

Planning Questions

1. Considering your answers above, what are your school/educational institution's next steps in implementing appropriate hand hygiene standards and protocols?

2. What resources (financial, personnel, time) are required to move forward with the hand hygiene protocols?
   a. Financial:

   b. Personnel:

   c. Time:

3. What further information needs to be communicated with learners, caregivers, and community members?

4. How will protocols be enforced?

5. Who will lead hand hygiene efforts at your school/educational institution? Who will be able to answer questions for fellow staff, learners, families, and community members?

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

- Schools/educational institutions should ensure regular cleaning and disinfection,[1] especially for frequently touched surfaces such as desks and tables, railings, and learning materials.
- Cleaning and disinfection should include routine cleaning of assistive devices and technology for learners with disabilities.

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	EXPLAIN YOUR RESPONSE
1. Does the school/educational institution have sufficient designated and trained staff to maintain increased cleaning and disinfection efforts?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
If no, answer a – b		
a. Can educators and staff feasibly conduct cleaning and disinfection in addition to their daily responsibilities?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
b. Can adult community or family volunteers be trained to help in cleaning and disinfection, while still maintaining physical distancing standards?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
2. Have all designated staff or volunteers received verbal and written instructions for describing cleaning and disinfection processes and proper mixing of solutions? Are instructions accessible for all individuals, including those who cannot read and those with disabilities?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
3. Does the school/educational institution have access to sufficient cleaning materials (e.g. water, soap, disinfectant, bleach) and water?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes	

---

[1] According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (p. 7), "Cleaning refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. It does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their number and the risk of spreading infection. Removing dirt and impurities also helps disinfectant be more effective. Disinfecting refers to using chemicals, for example, diluted sodium hypochlorite (bleach), to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection."

4. Does the school/educational institution have personal protective equipment for cleaning staff (e.g. single-use gloves and washable aprons/protective clothing)?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
5. Does the school/educational institution have safe, locked storage for cleaning/sanitation supplies and materials?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
6. Is there an established, written, and posted cleaning schedule that meets health and safety guidelines?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
7. Have the cleaning and sanitation protocols and schedule been communicated to all learners, caregivers, and staff?	☐ Yes ☐ No	

Planning Questions

1. Considering your answers above, what are your school/educational institution's next steps in implementing strong cleaning and disinfection protocols?

2. What resources (financial, personnel, time) are required to move forward with the cleaning and disinfection plan?
   a. Financial:

   b. Personnel:

   c. Time:

3. What further information needs to be communicated with learners, caregivers, and community members?

4. How will protocols be enforced?

5. Who will lead cleaning and efforts at your school/educational institution? Who will be able to answer questions for fellow staff, learners, families, and community members?

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?