



Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education

Recommendations on COVID-19 response on education to contribute with the work of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Ms. Koumbou Boly Barry

I. During quarantines

1. If education is a right - and it is - an emergency situation should not destroy it, especially for children and families in different situations of vulnerability. This situation is increasing the social inequalities that we already had. It is therefore necessary to think of everyone.
2. In this situation of emergency and confinement, we believe that the measures taken must be flexible. Thus, it is necessary to make the school calendar more flexible, to propose complementary activities that ally the involvement of families and the school community. If it is not possible, on an equal basis, to offer distance education to all students, it is preferable to suspend classes and not count the complementary activities as official school days, which will only keep and leave behind thousands of children and adolescents without access to ICTs or that go hungry, have homes in precarious situations and/or lack of family support to learn.
3. To encourage the development of public system-led public responses is also a practice that we encourage. Moments like the one we are experiencing show the need and strength of public services even more, the only ones that can respond in a systemic and equitable way to the structural challenges faced in the current crisis. For this, adequate financing is required, which involves greater investments in social areas and the suspension of policies and regulations that impose austerity and cuts to social areas, in addition to investing in the public, without making room for the privatization of education.
4. In addition to the complex pedagogical, infrastructure and socioeconomic issues involved in these remote education initiatives, it is necessary to consider the serious problem of security and privacy of teachers and students when accessing the internet and using digital technologies and online services. In this sense, if measures are taken to use digital or remote tools, it is necessary to ensure the inclusion of all, ensuring the provision of appropriate platforms, internet provision, training for education professionals, as well as adaptation of workloads and other teaching structures to a different format. It is also important to pay attention to all aspects that guarantee fair quality for all. The use of digital platforms must also follow data security standards, as well as free software and other types of mechanisms that guarantee an adequate, free, public and safe use for all students and school communities.



5. Many systems are obsessed with grades and results, not education for a decent life. But now it is time for pedagogy. The experience of the crisis invites us to rethink the times, spaces and resources that we have. Another lesson is that it is necessary to slow down, also at school, giving time and respecting the teaching-learning processes of each person. It is also necessary to reframe the educational processes, which are the appropriation of culture, the result of the relationship between the subjects of education. It is also an opportunity to energize dialogue, conversation, critical thinking as basic pedagogical tools for the formation of autonomous people, subjects in a permanent process of producing their own lives. It is time to improve the relational dimension of education by experimenting with democracy, where deliberative dialogue and agreement are central. Thus, it is imperative to strengthen the community and the democratic sense of the school, giving families and students their space of collective responsibility in the common goods of education, making the current channels of participation more effective and creating others.

6. In the foreground, it is necessary to place the now hidden and socially devalued pillar of teaching, with our teachers as subjects, so that they can have a solid cultural and pedagogical formation and to be the central engine of socialization, the creation of shared educational environments and cooperatives. In this sense, it is mandatory to guarantee job stability, salaries and security for these professionals.

7. It is also necessary to develop actions to combat discrimination and inequalities inside and outside the school, with anti-discrimination and protection policies, especially in relation to the poorest families, victims of violence and inequality, as is the case of black and indigenous families and also of women.

8. We know that one of the major problems we have been facing since the closure of schools is the fact that countless children depend on school feeding as a basic source of food. The education and social assistance authorities must create flexibility in the distribution of food, implementing as a preferred execution strategy during this period the preparation of food kits to be distributed directly at the students' homes or collected at school units by one of the family members, on days and times to be defined in advance to avoid agglomerations and risks of contagion, ensuring universal service to all students enrolled in education. These kits should preferably be composed of fresh and minimally processed foods, seeking to maintain the weekly supply of portions of fruits, vegetables, tubers and roots, with preference to those of greater durability. The acquisition of foodstuffs from family farming should be prioritized and maintained, prioritizing local purchase and existing contracts with food suppliers, including those from family farming, which can be adapted to make the individualized distribution of food kits viable. It is also mandatory to follow recommendations of the Milan Pact.

9. Similarly, the guarantee of the right to life and health of girls and boys deprived of their liberty (in the socio-educational system) cannot be neglected. Due to the high transmissibility index of COVID-19, it will certainly lead to a significant increase in the risk of contagion in socio-educational units (prisons), taking into account factors such as not allow overcrowding, guarantee the salubrity of these units, ensuring compliance with minimum hygiene and



sanitation procedures, rapid isolation of symptomatic individuals and sufficient health teams. It is also recommended the preferential application of socio-educational measures in an open environment (Assisted Freedom and Community Service) and review of the decisions that determined confinement.

II. For schools reopening and to rebuild scholar calendar

1. We do not know what the future of education will be like, but we wish and would like it to be something other than what was being built, based on exclusion. The return to normality, which students in situations of vulnerability and poverty were never part of, will be impossible. We have a different normality to be built.
2. School reopenings must be safe and consistent with each country's overall COVID-19 health response, with all reasonable measures taken to protect students, staff, teachers and their families. One must consider epidemiological factors, public health and healthcare capacities, population density and adherence to social distancing in each region before opening schools. The school reopening may need to be progressive and staged, beginning in areas with the lowest rates of transmission and lowest localized risk. Those regions that do not comply with these adjustments need to invest in improvements before opening schools.
3. In order to ensure that this restructuring is carried out in a responsible manner that respects the quality of education and all basic rights, we also call for the involvement of the entire school community: families, students, education professionals, as well as regulatory bodies and education secretariats. Providing clear guidance on parameters for decision making on school openings (with what to do and also what not to do) is also mandatory and must be done with democratic participation.
4. At this time, it is necessary to guarantee a strong fight against discrimination, which may arise not only due to disparities in access to education that occurred during the pandemic process, but also due to social disparities and access to basic services.
5. It is important to elect standards in each education and school network of capacity of the school to maintain safe school operations to mitigate risks, such as social distancing (i.e. size of classroom compared to number of students); and water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and practices. For school networks that do not meet these standards, it is mandatory that authorities can provide conditions before opening schools.
6. It is also necessary to provide adequate investment of financial resources to educational policies and measures aimed at this readaptation and to raise the quality of schools, since a reopening that does not offer risks of contamination and guarantee the right to education for all also depends on funding. Thus, higher investments must follow and a policy of cuts and austerity in the medium term that affects the social areas cannot be allowed, as recovery of the economy also depends on investments in social areas.



7. At first, it is also necessary to keep higher-risk groups away, such as the elderly and those with underlying medical conditions.
8. Still, it is necessary to guarantee a greater amount of school transport for the children, in order to maintain the social distance between them and also in relation to the professionals who work in this essential service. For transport services that do not meet these standards, it is mandatory that authorities can provide conditions before opening schools.
9. It is also mandatory to resume school feeding policies, especially of fresh (*in natura*) and organic products, which may have been out of supply during the quarantine period, giving priority to the purchase of small producers of agroecological family farming.
10. We stress the possibility of organizing timetables that make it possible to compensate for school hours, as well as supervised activities that can be carried out outside school hours, as has already been done with students who are experiencing situations in which their health conditions do not allow them to attend school.
11. There is no "learning loss", considering that education is the appropriation of culture and each subject does it in its own way. Thus, the implementation of large-scale assessments is not an adequate way to level students back to school, as it does not guarantee reliable results, in addition to deepening discrimination. It is necessary to return to the classes from where it was left, deepening the contents and bringing a contextualized education, which strengthens the teacher-student relationship and which is welcoming and that addresses the experience that subjects involved in the educational process went through during the quarantine period.
12. It is also necessary to provide psychosocial, nutritional and medical care and reception services to students and also education professionals.
13. From the reopening of schools, it is necessary to suspend any remote education policies immediately (not only classes, but also teacher training), in order to stop the deepening of inequalities and return to education as it should be and stop processes of education privatization or partnerships with market interests in education.

Recommendations based on 4-A Conceptual Framework

RIGHT TO EDUCATION	AVAILABILITY <i>Establishment/closure of schools</i> <i>Freedom to establish schools</i> <i>Funding for public schools</i> <i>Public funding for private schools</i> <i>Criteria for recruitment</i> <i>Fitness for teaching</i> <i>Labour rights</i> <i>Trade union freedoms</i> <i>Professional responsibilities</i> <i>Academic freedom</i>	I. During quarantines
		<p>To encourage the development of public system-led public responses is also a practice that we encourage. Moments like the one we are experiencing show the need and strength of public services even more, the only ones that can respond in a systemic and equitable way to the structural challenges faced in the current crisis. For this, adequate financing is required, which involves greater investments in social areas and the suspension of policies and regulations that impose austerity and cuts to social areas, in addition to investing in the public, without making room for the privatization of education.</p>
		<p>In addition to the complex pedagogical, infrastructure and socioeconomic issues involved in these remote education initiatives, it is necessary to consider the serious problem of security and privacy of teachers and students when accessing the internet and using digital technologies and online services. In this sense, if measures are taken to use digital or remote tools, it is necessary to ensure the inclusion of all, ensuring the provision of appropriate platforms, internet provision, training for education professionals, as well as adaptation of workloads and other teaching structures to a different format. It is also important to pay attention to all aspects that guarantee fair quality for all. The use of digital platforms must also follow data security standards, as well as free software and other types of mechanisms that guarantee an adequate, free, public and safe use for all students and school communities.</p>
		II. For schools reopening and to rebuild scholar calendar

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		<p>From the reopening of schools, it is necessary to suspend any remote education policies immediately (not only classes, but also teacher training), in order to stop the deepening of inequalities and return to education as it should be and stop processes of education privatization or partnerships with market interests in education.</p>
	<p>ACCESSIBILITY <i>All-encompassing</i> <i>Free-of-charge</i> <i>Assured attendance</i> <i>Parental freedom of choice</i> <i>Discriminatory denials of access</i> <i>Preferential access</i> <i>Criteria for admission</i> <i>Recognition of foreign diplomas</i></p>	<p>I. During quarantines</p> <p>If education is a right - and it is - an emergency situation should not destroy it, especially for children and families in different situations of vulnerability. This situation is increasing the social inequalities that we already had. It is therefore necessary to think of everyone.</p> <p>If it is not possible, on an equal basis, to offer distance education to all students, it is preferable to suspend classes and not count the complementary activities as official school days, which will only keep and leave behind thousands of children and adolescents without access to ICTs or that go hungry, have homes in precarious situations and/or lack of family support to learn.</p>

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		<p>It is also necessary to develop actions to combat discrimination and inequalities inside and outside the school, with anti-discrimination and protection policies, especially in relation to the poorest families, victims of violence and inequality, as is the case of black and indigenous families and also of women.</p>
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<p>RIGHTS IN EDUCATION</p>	<p>ACCEPTABILITY <i>Minimum standards</i> <i>Respect of diversity</i> <i>Language of instruction</i> <i>Orientation and contents</i> <i>School discipline</i> <i>Rights of learners</i></p>	<p>I. During quarantines</p>
		<p>In this situation of emergency and confinement, we believe that the measures taken must be flexible. Thus, it is necessary to make the school calendar more flexible, to propose complementary activities that ally the involvement of families and the school community.</p>
		<p>Many systems are obsessed with grades and results, not education for a decent life. But now it is time for pedagogy. The experience of the crisis invites us to rethink the times, spaces and resources that we have. Another lesson is that it is necessary to slow down, also at school, giving time and respecting the teaching-learning processes of each person. It is also necessary to reframe the educational processes, which are the appropriation of culture, the result of the relationship between the subjects of education. It is also an opportunity to energize dialogue, conversation, critical thinking as basic pedagogical tools for the formation of autonomous people, subjects in a permanent process of producing their own lives. It is time to improve the relational dimension of education by experimenting with democracy, where deliberative dialogue and agreement are central. Thus, it is imperative to strengthen the community and the democratic sense of the school, giving families and students their space of collective responsibility in the common goods of education, making the current channels of participation more effective and creating others.</p>

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	<p>ADAPTABILITY <i>Children with disabilities</i> <i>Working children</i> <i>Refugee children</i> <i>Children deprived of their liberty</i></p>	<p>I. During quarantines</p>
		<p>Similarly, the guarantee of the right to life and health of girls and boys deprived of their liberty (in the socio-educational system) cannot be neglected. Due to the high transmissibility index of COVID-19, it will certainly lead to a significant increase in the risk of contagion in socio-educational units (prisons), taking into account factors such as not allow overcrowding, guarantee the salubrity of these units, ensuring compliance with minimum hygiene and sanitation procedures, rapid isolation of symptomatic individuals and sufficient health teams. It is also recommended the preferential application of socio-educational measures in an</p>



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