

GUIDANCE FOR COVID-19 PREVENTION AND CONTROL IN SCHOOLS

Supplemental Content

F: Accelerated Education as COVID-19 Response

COVID-19 has disrupted education systems and learning at an unprecedented level. When children and youth go back to school there will be an urgent need to recover lost learning. Accelerated Education is an important strategy to support children to make up for learning lost due to the pandemic and help integrate previously out-of-school children.

Accelerated Education (AE) is “a flexible, age-appropriate programme, run in an accelerated timeframe, which aims to provide access to education for disadvantaged, over-age, out-of-school children and youth. This may include those who missed out on or had their education interrupted due to poverty, marginalisation, conflict and crisis. The goal of Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs) is to provide learners with equivalent, certified competencies for basic education using effective teaching and learning approaches that match their level of cognitive maturity.”

AE is an important strategy for connecting humanitarian, early-recovery and development programming. It contributes to the goals of (1) increasing equitable access to learning opportunities for hard-to-reach learners, both in humanitarian contexts and other settings, and providing them with validated and accredited non-formal learning pathways; and (2) increasing engagement with adolescents and providing pathways to secondary education, particularly for girls and young women.

The AEWG’s **10 Principles for Effective Practice** set a foundation to improve AE programme quality, design, implementation and assessment of results. If the principles are considered and applied, then AEPs will support learners to attain recognized qualifications in basic education. This will then enable learners to transition into formal education, other education or vocational training, or employment. While the long-term goal should be that AEPs meet all these Principles, it will not happen immediately and will require the involvement and coordination of different actors. The principles are as follows:

1. AEP is flexible and for over-age learners
2. Curriculum, materials and pedagogy are genuinely accelerated, AE-suitable and use relevant language of instruction
3. AE learning environment is inclusive, safe and learning-ready
4. Teachers are recruited, supervised and remunerated
5. Teachers participate in continuous professional development
6. Goals, monitoring and funding align
7. AE centre is effectively managed
8. Community is engaged and accountable
9. AEP is a legitimate, credible education option that results in learner certification in primary education
10. AEP is aligned with the national education system and relevant humanitarian architecture

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AE Evidence Base

A review of recent evidence based on evaluations, reviews and other studies on AEPs globally was conducted in the first quarter of 2020. The review considers how AE is recognized at national levels (through policies, EMIS systems etc.) as an approach for supporting learning opportunities for out-of-school children and AE's impact on learning outcomes and girls' education. The following are some of the key findings:

- AEPs are an important lever for providing access to out-of-school children and youth (OOSCY) who would otherwise lack any other form of recognised learning. While in some contexts the numbers of OOSCY remain sizeable, AEPs, when delivered at scale and supported through and by government initiatives, can increase access.
 - Individual AEPs which manage to support large numbers of OOSCY often accomplish this using e-learning or distance-based platforms or through large-scale government supported initiatives using several implementing partners which target specific districts or groups of learners
- AEPs can act as a critical tool for increasing participation rates of out of school girls. In many contexts there are still significant gender-based barriers. Most programmes, even if not managing to achieve full gender equity, are able to make strides in a positive direction.
- AEPs with higher completion rates tend to be shorter-term programmes (typically one year) which then transition learners back into formal schooling at various intermediary points in the basic education cycle.
 - These programmes tend to have strong mechanisms for community mobilization, provide free and high-standard educational facilities and learning materials, use child-centred and participatory teaching methodologies, and monitor and follow up on learners' data, such as absenteeism, regularly.
- A strong body of evidence indicates that AEPs have significant impacts on students' literacy and numeracy skills. Several evaluations found that such improvements are significant in comparison to other groups of OOSCY or government school students in the same grade.

Tools from the Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG)

All are available on the AEWG page at INEE unless otherwise indicated

<https://inee.org/collections/accelerated-education>

- AE Decision tree
- Accelerated Education 10 Principles for Effective Practice
- Programming Checklist
- Case studies
- Literature Review
- Mapping of global AE programs <https://data.humdata.org/organization/aewg>
- AE Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Toolkit
- AE Review of Evidence (forthcoming in May 2020)

The AEWG is collecting AE curriculum from around the world to serve as global good for local adaptation and expedited development of context specific AE programs. In addition, they are

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collecting AE program tools such as registration and assessment tools. For more information about this effort or general inquiries related to the AEWG, contact Martha Hewison hewison@unhcr.org