

RESEARCHERS BOOTCAMP

THEME 10 – LESSONS ON HOW COUNTRIES MANAGE SCHOOLING DURING AND AFTER DISASTERS: A STUDY OF FOUR CASES

PURPOSE: The paper looks at how countries that have experienced various disasters have worked through the challenges to their education systems in order to glean lessons for South Africa.

EDUCATION RESEARCHERS RESPOND TO LOCKDOWN



DATE

30 March – 16 April



NUMBER OF RESEARCHERS

11



APPROACH

Desktop research



AUDIENCE

Policy makers, Department of Basic Education, Funders, Civil Society



CASE STUDIES

Natural disasters: Tsunami and earthquakes in Indonesia and Haiti; **Conflict:** Civil war in Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Libya & Service delivery protests in Vuwani, Limpopo
Health disasters: Ebola outbreak in West Africa (Sierra Leone and Liberia);
The COVID-19 pandemic: Global and national responses.

FINDINGS

Although conflict is unpredictable, risk can be managed to reduce vulnerability and loss of lives and property.

The education sector was severely affected in all the disruptive events.

Schooling came to a halt and learners and teachers suffered trauma.

ICTs such as the internet, television and radio helped to keep some students learning and connected.

Opportunity for courageous leadership to “build back better” in education and exit the lockdown in a systematic and structured way with curriculum recovery and education continuity at the core.

Educational infrastructure was damaged during all disruptive events including COVID-19.

International organisations played an important role in recovery and rebuilding, although implementation was poor.

Education has an important role to play in post-disaster recovery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A Disaster Risk Reduction programme for the education sector should be in place and include:

- Legal and policy frameworks to allow for speedy responses and protection of infrastructure.
- Sound organisational plans for leadership and coordination at all levels of the system.
- Identifying and managing risks in order to mitigate them.

Social mobilisation and community engagement should be increased:

- Communities develop a strong sense of respect for and ownership of schools.
- Strategic partnerships with community, religious leaders, journalists, radio stations, and partner organisations formed for communicating strategies being put in place.

A phased approach can be effective for managing schools in a crisis:

- Phase 1: managing schooling during school closures;
- Phase 2: coordinating efforts to re-open schools after the pandemic;
- Phase 3: monitoring of compliance to protocols and the return of pupils back into the schooling system.

Plan for the continuity of schooling and education during the actual event and immediately thereafter through the use of digital platforms and social media:

- Digital/virtual learning and revised teaching and learning methodologies need to be ready to be adopted.
- Use the opportunity to change the situation for the better in vulnerable and marginalised communities by increasing their access to digital learning.



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