

>> DECEMBER 2020

# GPE AND COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS)

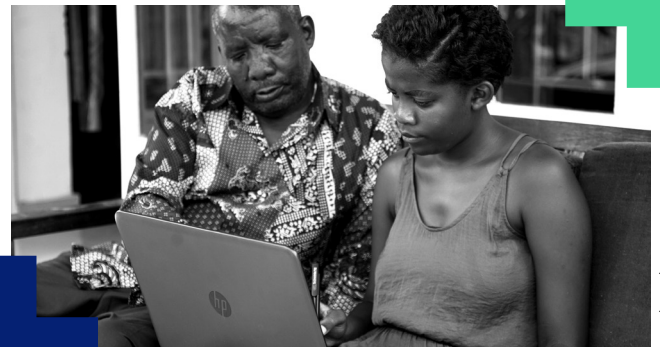
**In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, GPE quickly stepped up so that no child misses out on their education and the opportunity to reach their full potential.**

By acting at the right time and at scale, GPE provided dedicated funding of over half a billion U.S. dollars to partner countries, making GPE the single largest source of grants to education as part of the worldwide response.

COVID-19 is an unprecedented crisis for education. There is a real risk that millions of the most vulnerable children, especially girls, will never set foot in a classroom again.

In lower-income countries – many of which were already facing a learning crisis – 810 million children were cut off from education at the peak of the pandemic's first wave.

The combined impact of **school closures and economic hardship** could push millions of vulnerable children out of education forever and reverse decades of hard-won gains. The financing gap for education, currently US\$148 billion per year, could be increased by one third.



**Supporting education systems from the onset of the pandemic is the best way to protect the most vulnerable students and lay the foundations for a rapid recovery, while building resilient education systems for the future.**

For all sources see <https://www.globalpartnership.org/covid19>

## RESPONSE TIMELINE

# 2020

MARCH 11

COVID-19 is declared a **pandemic**.

MARCH 25

GPE provided **\$8.8 million** to **UNICEF** to kickstart education systems' response in 87 countries, supporting planning and coordination.

APRIL 1

**GPE unlocked \$250 million** to help partner countries mitigate both the immediate and long-term impacts of COVID-19 on education. The decision came just three weeks after the outbreak was declared a pandemic.

JUNE 1

After receiving more than 40 applications, a **further \$250 million were added to the COVID-19 funding window**, bringing the partnership's total response to \$509 million.

OCT 30

GPE has allocated **\$467 million in COVID-19 accelerated grants** to 66 countries and another \$25 million for a global grant to UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank.

## SUDAN DEVELOPS INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

The government of Sudan is investing its US\$11 million GPE emergency grant to develop innovative solutions for 5.4 million children through distance learning and to train 33,000 teachers in remote teaching. The program is creating TV and radio lessons, giving 287,000 children radios with solar-power chargers, printing homework assignments in newspapers, and buying cell phone data for teachers to communicate with students.

In a country where 1 in 6 educators is a community teacher—typically paid by the local community—school closures have severely affected teachers' livelihoods. GPE's grant incentivizes these teachers with small stipends to collect and grade students' homework.

Similarly, students are offered prizes to complete assignments and eventually return to school.

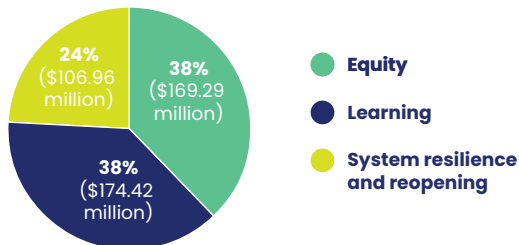
GPE is funding water storage tanks to promote handwashing, and messages to encourage parents to help their children learn remotely. GPE's support also promotes the resilience of the education system through alternative and innovative approaches so the country can better withstand future shocks.



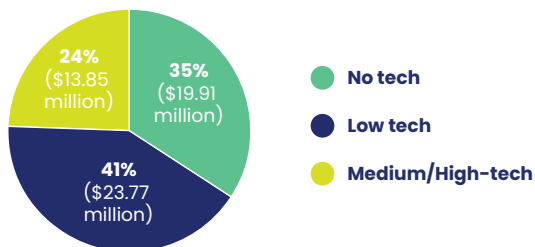
## FUNDING EDUCATION RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

As of October 30, 2020, GPE had allocated \$467 million in COVID-19 accelerated grants to 66 countries and another \$25 million for a global grant to UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank.

- Across all countries, three quarters of the GPE grants support equity and learning initiatives, with the remainder supporting reopening efforts and systems resilience. Over half of the grants specifically support girls.



- Of distance learning activities, 41% go to radio and TV, considered low-tech solutions, 24% to online solutions via mobile phone, tablets or web platforms, and the rest to printed materials.



- 60% support recovery efforts, with the rest funding mitigation efforts.
- GPE responded to the COVID-19 education crisis with unprecedented speed and scale. But there are still many challenges ahead, as countries re-open or close their schools again, depending on the spread of the virus.
- GPE will continue its efforts to build stronger and more resilient education systems so that all children can continue learning during this crisis and future ones.

## IN PAKISTAN, ORGANIZING DISTANCE EDUCATION BEYOND THE PANDEMIC

Pakistan's economic, political and security challenges have long affected access to quality education and learning. Large numbers of children, especially girls and those in rural areas, are out of school.

GPE's \$20 million grant to Pakistan is expected to benefit at least 11 million students and teachers. Pakistan is promoting equity through incentives for provinces to invest in the most disadvantaged regions and encourage distance learning. The program could become a catalyst to formalize distance education to reach out-of-school children after the pandemic.

Through the program, lessons are aired on TV and radio, or disseminated in print and via mobile phone and social media for children most at risk of dropping out. The program is reinforcing messages to girls about the importance of learning. The remote learning efforts can offer a pathway to learning for the 19 million children who were out of school before the pandemic.

