

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND CHILD CARE
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P.O. BOX CY 2132, CAUSEWAY
ZIMBABWE

Joint Operational Plan for the Coordinated Prevention and Management of the COVID-19 pandemic at all learning institutions in Zimbabwe



Ministry of Primary and
Secondary Education



Ministry of Higher and Tertiary
Education, Innovation, Science and
Technology Development

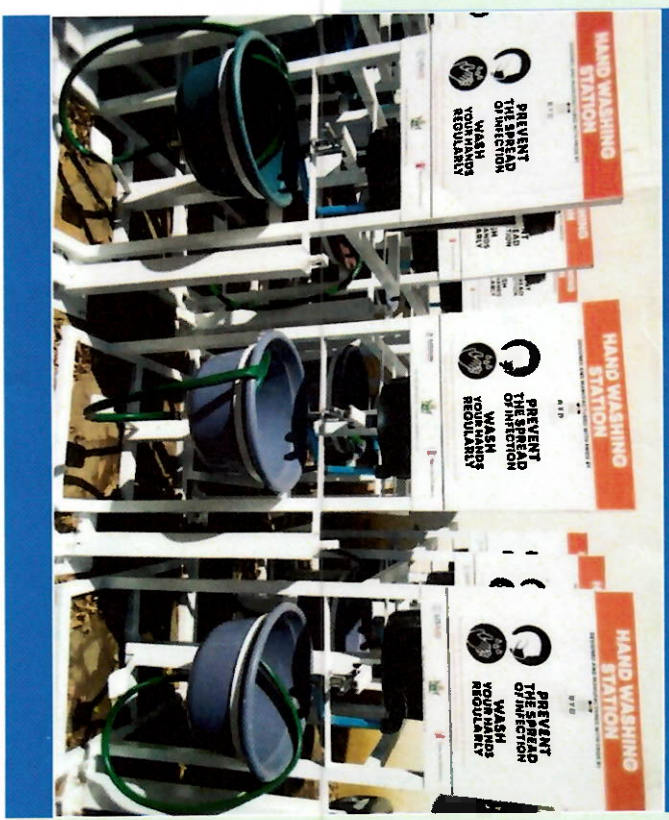


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Foreword

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak was declared a pandemic on 11th March 2020. Since this declaration, the epidemic has brought unprecedented social and economic disruptions globally. The pandemic has also had far-reaching effects on the right to education and social well-being of children, especially vulnerable children. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the extended closure of all schools induced by the pandemic has given rise to learning losses. There is a greater risk that the pandemic will widen inequalities and reverse the hard-won gains in numeracy, literacy, and skills development, with negative implications for Zimbabwe's development trajectory.


The Government of Zimbabwe adopted a "Whole-of-Government" approach and the education sector is part of the National COVID-19 Operational Plan in which all sectors have incorporated specific Standard Operating Procedures(SOPs) for the prevention and management of the global pandemic. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) developed a comprehensive preparedness and response strategy with a raft of measures to limit the exposure to the disease and reduce the probability of its transmission amongst learners, teachers, staff, and school communities. The MoPSE's preparedness and response strategy is also intended to promote the continuity of learning even during school closures, while also facilitating the safe return to quality teaching and learning as well ensuring that measures are in place for building back a better and resilient system.

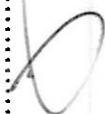
Despite consented efforts to limit the exposure and reduce transmission amongst learners, teachers and school communities, Zimbabwe has experienced outbreaks of COVID-19 cases in learning institutions. After the experience of COVID-19 outbreaks in 51 schools, mostly at boarding establishments, the MoPSE and the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC) jointly convened a workshop in December 2020, to share lessons learned from the outbreak, and develop plans and measures, including strengthening of school health community linkages, to improve performance thereafter. The meeting was attended by Provincial Heads of both Ministries and also supported by representatives from the Ministries of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare, Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises, Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, and Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development (MHTeISTD) as well as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

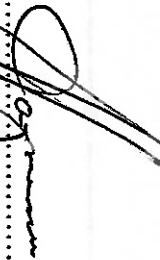
The meeting culminated in the collaborative development of Standard Guidelines for the Coordinated Prevention and Management of the COVID-19 Pandemic at all the Learning Institutions in Zimbabwe. The guidelines were revised, endorsed and jointly signed by three Permanent Secretaries of the MoPSE, MoHCC, and MHTeISTD, following a consultative process that included multiple education partners such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF, and WHO. With this common coordination focus, provincial teams from the MoPSE and MoHCC jointly developed operational plans with support from UNICEF and WHO. These provincial operational plans were consolidated into a Joint Operational Plan for the Coordinated Prevention and

Management of the COVID-19 pandemic at all learning institutions in Zimbabwe, with indicative budgets for the effective preventions and management of COVID-19 incidences at any of the learning institutions.

A prioritised budget to support the operational requirements for subnational service delivery structures was formally adopted by the Ministries of Education and that of Health and Child Care in August 2021. It was agreed that this document should be used for coordinated resource mobilization, joint planning and implementation, reporting as well as monitoring and evaluation. Having experienced the negative effects of prolonged closures of learning institutions during the COVID-19 peak periods, it is hoped that sufficient technical support and resource availability will assist in sustaining meaningful learning activities at all schools, colleges and universities whilst promoting the health and safety of all. To promote and protect the right to education, and safeguard the hard-won development gains in education, we, the undersigned hereby pledge our commitment the full operationalization of this Joint Operational Plan for the Coordinated Prevention and Management of the COVID-19 pandemic at all learning institutions in Zimbabwe.


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Mrs Tumisang Thabela
Permanent Secretary for Ministry of
Primary and Secondary Education
(MoPSE)


.....
Air Commodore Dr. J. Chimedza
Permanent Secretary for Ministry of
Health and Child Care (MoHCC)


.....
Prof Daniel Tagwira
Permanent Secretary for Ministry of
Higher and Tertiary Education,
Innovation, Science and Technology
Development (MHTeISTD)

Summary of Key Milestones, Activities, and Indicators

Milestone	Performance Indicator	Target	Assigned to
I. Compliance Monitoring and Health Surveillance of Learning Institutions conducted			
Joint Monitoring visit to inform decision on readiness to reopen schools conducted	Monitoring Report shared & # of districts visited	36 Districts; 144 Schools	MoPSE
Surveys on readiness to reopen conducted (Heads of Schools)	Readiness Report (Dashboard) shared & # of schools surveyed	9,625 Schools	MoPSE
Survey on compliance and attendance conducted after reopening	Compliance Report (Dashboard) shared.	9,625 Schools	MoPSE
Compliance Monitoring and Health Surveillance of Learning Institutions conducted.	Compliance Report shared & # of institutions visited	100 Schools	MoPSE
II. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene supplies and essential commodities distributed			
Boreholes drilled and or rehabilitated in schools without safe water	# of schools with rehabilitated or new boreholes	678 boreholes	MoPSE, UNICEF & DDF
Disinfection and Cleaning Supplies procured and distributed	# of schools receiving Chlorine Solution	437 Schools (Boarding)	MoPSE
Handwashing Liquid Soap procured and distributed	# of schools receiving liters of handwashing soap	7,837 Schools (P3 and S3)	MoPSE
III. Personal Protective Equipment procured and distributed to learning institutions			
Face Masks (Re-usable Cloth) procured and distributed to schools	# of schools receiving Face masks	7,837 Schools (P3 and S3)	MoPSE
Handsanitizer with alcohol (70%) procured and distributed	# of schools receiving liters of handsanitizer	7,837 Schools (P3 and S3)	MoPSE
Infrared Thermometers procured and distributed to schools	# of schools receiving infrared thermometers	7,837 Schools (P3 and S3)	MoPSE

IV. School- Health Linkages Operationalised				
Learning Institutions/ School Health Coordination Committee (LIHCC) established.	Meeting minutes of LIHCC	9,670 learning institutions	MoPSE & MoHTESTD	
LIHCC linked to Local Health Facility, Rapid Response Teams, Community Health Cadres, Village Health Workers / Community Mobilizers and Environmental Health Technicians.	Details of nearest facility and contact details entered provided	9,670 learning institutions	MoPSE & MoHTESTD	
V. Outbreak Management and Care for children with COVID-19 Operationalised				
Guidelines on Outbreak Management in learning institutions developed and disseminated.	# of persons receiving Outbreak Management Guidelines	1000 (PEDs, PMDs, DMOs, DSIs, Cluster Leads, Heads of LIHCCs in Boarding and HTEs)	MoPSE & MoHCC	
Tents procured and prepositioned for outbreak management.	# of learning institutions receiving Tents	100 institutions (72 districts)	MoPSE & MoHCC	
Rapid Response Capacitation Grant disbursed to affected schools.	# of learning institutions receiving Emergency School Improvement Grant / Capacitation Grant to procure PPEs and essential commodities (Gloves, Surgical Masks, Goggles, Face Shields, Vitamin C Tablets, Washing Soap Bar, Water Purification Tablets, Disinfectants, Food and Non-Food Items)	100 institutions (72 districts)	MoPSE	
Rapid Response Teams deployed to affected schools.	# of Rapid Response Teams supported with DSA	100 teams	MoPSE & MoHCC	
Post Outbreak Management Case Studies in learning institutions	# of Case Study Report printed	1000	MoPSE & MoHCC	
Guidelines on the Care for children with COVID-19 developed and disseminated.	# of persons receiving printed Guidelines on the Care for children with COVID-19	1000 (PMDs, DMOs, Paediatricians)	MoPSE & MoHCC	

VI. Social Behaviour Change Communication and Community Engagement Operationalized					
Knowledge Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Survey conducted (teachers)	# of teachers participating in the survey & # of persons receiving Survey Report	9000	MoPSE & UNICEF		
Printed Information, Education and Communication Materials disseminated to schools and communities.	# of posters/ printed materials disseminated	10,000	MoPSE & UNICEF		
Information Campaign targeting learners, teachers, parents and communities implemented through Social Media Platforms and Mass Media (radio, television and newspapers) on key messages (back to school, prevention and safety measures, and vaccine update)	# of persons reached by platform and type of product	1,500,000	MoPSE & UNICEF		
VII. Capacity Building Trainings conducted					
Integrated National Outbreak Management and Infection Prevention and Control (including Waste Management and Environmental Cleaning) training for Learning Institutions/ School Health Coordination Committee (LIHCC) conducted.	# of persons in trained at Regional, District and Cluster level	10 Provincial trainers, 72 District trainers and 1, 211 clusters trainers.	MoPSE & MoHCC		
On-going training of Learners, teachers, parents, and communities implemented.	# of persons trained in schools	9,670 heads of Learning Institutions	MoPSE & MoHCC		
Management and Care for children with COVID-19 training conducted.	# of persons in clusters trained	1000 (PMDs, DMOs, Paediatricians)	MoPSE & MoHCC		
Food Handler training for boarding hostel staff conducted	# of persons in clusters trained	437 Boarding Schools Food Handlers	MoPSE & MoHCC		
VIII. Coordination Mechanisms (National, Provincial, District and Cluster levels) Operationalized					
Education, WASH and Health and WASH Cluster Webinars on status of COVID-19 in schools conducted	# of persons participating; Meeting Report	2 Webinars (Before, a month after reopening)	MoPSE & MoHCC		
Provincial, District and Cluster Health and Education Coordination Mechanism established.	# of persons participating; Meeting Report	4 Meetings	MoPSE & MoHCC		
Provincial and District Progress Review meetings conducted monthly.	# of persons participating; Meeting Report	5 Meetings	MoPSE & MoHCC		
Resource Status Update meeting conducted monthly (Government, UN, NGOs)	# of persons participating; Meeting Report	2 Meetings (Before, a month after reopening)	MoPSE & MoHCC		

Summary Budget Descriptions

Milestone	Description	Amount
		(US\$)
1. Compliance Monitoring and Health Surveillance of Learning Institutions conducted	Monitoring and Surveys and Field Visits	\$ 108,450.00
2. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene supplies and essential commodities distributed	Provision of WASH supplies and essential Commodities	\$3,223,591.68
3. Personal Protective Equipment procured and distributed to learning institutions	Procurement and Distribution of PPEs	\$5,659,712.35
4. School- Health Linkages Operationalised	Operationalizing Linkages between Learning Institutions and Health	\$241,750.00
5. Outbreak Management and Care for children with COVID-19 Operationalised	Prepositioning of Materials and Guidelines to Respond to Outbreaks	\$ 2,363,502.78
6. Social Behavior Change Communication and Community Engagement Operationalized	Provision of Information for Behavior Social Change	\$ 116,600.00
7. Capacity Building Trainings conducted	Capacity Building Trainings on IPC and Outbreak Management at National and Sub-National levels	\$ 20,184.00
8. Coordination Mechanisms (National, Provincial, District and Cluster levels) Operationalized	National and Sub-National Coordination Mechanisms	\$ 28,500.00
Total Budget		\$11,762,290.81