

NEQMAP Thematic Reviews 2020

Learning Assessments in Emergencies and Crises

Concept Note

Background and Rationale

In 2019, the Network on Education Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific (NEQMAP)¹ introduced and produced the first in a series of ‘thematic reviews’, which provide the opportunity for the network and its members to strengthen the knowledge base in specific thematic areas related to learning outcomes and learning assessments. The three thematic reviews in 2019 focused on **Inclusion and Equity** and explored how existing education policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific region, especially in the areas of learning assessments, address the issues of: [gender equity](#), [children with disabilities](#), and [students with diverse linguistic backgrounds](#).

For the 2020 thematic reviews, NEQMAP aims to address the specific issues, gaps and questions related to learning assessments in times of crises and what education systems can do to ensure the continuity of quality learning. It is important to explore how countries cope with education in emergencies to ensure accountability and transparency of learning results through diverse teaching and learning modalities outside of conventional school settings.

In a very short period of time, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on education systems worldwide. It is estimated that over 1.5 billion students in 191 countries² are out of school due to school closure. As countries take social distancing precautions and preventive measures such as school closures to control and mitigate risks of the virus spreading,³ this educational disruption will lead to significant learning losses for learners. And as a result, efforts in monitoring the quality of learning and ensuring inclusion and equity have also become more challenging than ever. For instance, many countries are postponing, rescheduling or altogether cancelling examinations and other standardized assessments. And with a change in education delivery and setting (e.g. the shift to remote/distance learning through TV, Radio, Satellite, online learning platforms, home-based learning, etc.) education systems need to be able to respond to changes in monitoring learning.

¹ NEQMAP is a network of education stakeholders in Asia-Pacific and a programme under UNESCO’s Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education mandated to monitor the quality of education and ensure alignment with the SDG 4-Education 2030.

² The Global Education Coalition (2020). <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/globalcoalition>

³ UNESCO’s working document (2020). [COVID-19: An overview of national coping strategies on high-stakes examinations and assessments](#)

Call for 2020 NEQMAP Thematic Reviews

NEQMAP would like to publish two (2) NEQMAP Thematic Reviews on “Learning Assessments in Emergencies and Crises” to explore how countries in Asia-Pacific ensure quality learning assessment systems in times of education disruption. Each review will cover one of the topics listed below:

1. High-stakes examinations, standardized tests and large scale learning assessments in times of emergencies and crises
2. Formative assessments and school based assessment (SBA) in times of emergencies and crises

Scope:

The reviews should have a regional focus, and include information from as many different countries in the region as possible. The reviews should draw on previous literature, case studies and analysis of secondary data. Primary data collection is not necessary.

The scope of the reviews should include past experiences during crises (including disasters and conflict), as well as current measures and mechanisms undertaken in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The reviews should include good practices, lessons learned, and coping strategies related to learning assessments during school/class interruptions. For instance:

- How can countries ensure the quality of learning during educational disruption?
- How do assessment systems function during emergencies and crises?
- What are the methods and tools used to assess and measure (both formative and summative), certify, evaluate and validate learning outcomes?
- What are certification strategies for students who are graduating and transitioning to higher levels of education?
- What are the challenges for teachers to assess and monitor student learning during school closures, including reporting, feedback, etc.?
- How are teachers trained/guided on alternative ways of assessing/monitoring learning during crisis period/disruption?

Length: 7,000 words (maximum)

Time line:

- Submit 1st draft thematic review – **31 July 2020** (to be reviewed by NEQMAP Secretariat)
- Submit final thematic review – **15 September 2020** (to be reviewed and edited by NEQMAP Secretariat)
- Publish thematic reviews – **November 2020** (and to be shared at NEQMAP Annual Meeting)

The thematic reviews will be published on [NEQMAP's Knowledge Portal](#).

Submit your Expression of Interest

We are looking for individuals and/or institutes to undertake these two (2) studies. We welcome collaborations across individuals or institutes. This call is open to all NEQMAP members (and non-NEQMAP members) who wish to contribute. The NEQMAP Secretariat at UNESCO Bangkok will select the authors for each topic of the thematic reviews following the review of the expression of interest and additional documents.

Please submit your expression of interest to neqmap@unesco.org, with the documents listed below, and clearly indicating which thematic review topic of interest.

- Short expression of interest (indicating which topic) (max 1 page)
- CV
- written work/sample of writing

Deadline for submissions – Friday, 8 May 2020