

WHAT IS THE EARLY YEARS FELLOWSHIP?

- Launched in 2016 to build capacity within countries and develop the **next generation of leadership** to scale-up investments in Early Childhood Development (ECD).
- Fellows work with the World Bank and Government **for two years** (20% extensive professional development).
- First cohort (2017-2019): **20 Fellows in Africa.**
- Second cohort (2019-2021): **25 Fellows in 34 countries** across the globe.

Agenda

Presentation of Policy Overview Findings

Rana Yacoub, Early Years Fellow, Egypt

Rashida Ibrahim, Early Years Fellow, Ghana/Liberia/Sierra Leone

Zeineb Ben Yahmed, Early Years Fellow, Tunisia

Short Q&A

Reflection on Fellows' Experiences

Alisa Currimjee, Early Years Fellow, Mozambique/Madagascar/Comoros/Mauritius

Chuyu Song, Early Years Fellow, China and Mongolia

Barbara Barbosa, Early Years Fellow, Brazil

Soukaina Tazi, Early Years Fellow, Morocco

Q&A and Discussion



COVID-19 AND THE EARLY YEARS

**A Cross-Country Overview of Impact and Responses in
Early Childhood Development**



WORLD BANK GROUP

A report prepared by the World Bank
Early Years Fellows

HOW THE IDEA CAME TO BE



What can we as Fellows do to better understand the situation of young children and their families in the context of COVID-19?

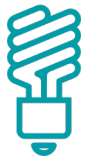
In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we identified the need to systematically document and provide insight into how the consequences and institutional responses to COVID-19 have affected young children's lives during the first year of the pandemic in 2020.



OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY OVERVIEW



To do a deep dive into the impact of COVID-19 on young children.



Shed light on country level responses to the pandemic.



Do it in a way that is globally relevant.



Collect compelling evidence base for decision makers.



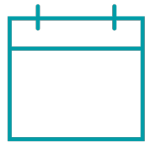
Dual relevance for Fellows (learning & impact/contribution).

FRAMING OF THE POLICY OVERVIEW



Children age 0 to 8

The report covers **three sectors** hugely affected by the pandemic:



- (1) **Education and Learning;**
- (2) **Health and Nutrition;**
- (3) **Social Protection;**

+ Cross-thematic section on children in vulnerable households



Emphasis in each sector on:

- **Consequences** of COVID-19 on young children
- **Country responses** to COVID-19
- **World Bank responses** to COVID-19
- **Best practices** and **key takeaways**



GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE OF THE REPORT: 26 LMI COUNTRIES / 4 CONTINENTS

- LAC** Brazil
- LAC** El Salvador
- ECA** North Macedonia
- MENA** Egypt
- MENA** Jordan
- MENA** Morocco
- MENA** Tunisia
- Afr-W** Burkina Faso
- Afr-W** Burundi
- Afr-W** Central African Republic
- Afr-W** Chad
- Afr-W** Gambia
- Afr-W** Mali
- Afr-W** Democratic Republic of Congo
- Afr-W** Republic of Congo
- Afr-SC** Angola
- Afr-SC** Cameroon
- Afr-SC** Ghana
- Afr-E** Ethiopia
- Afr-E** Madagascar
- Afr-E** Mozambique
- Afr-E** Rwanda
- Afr-E** Uganda
- SAR** Pakistan
- EAP** China
- EAP** Philippines



METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION



Survey questionnaire was designed: **13** open-ended and **34** close ended questions.



Data collected in October 2020, in reference to the starting period, March 2020, when the WHO declared the COVID-19 pandemic.



Sources of data used to complete the survey: **primary** and **secondary**.



Data collected **in consultation** with government officials, World Bank country teams, and various stakeholders at country level.



LIMITATIONS

- **Imperfect information** available given the rapidly evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Limited time** for data-collection (one month).
- Findings should therefore be viewed as **preliminary**.



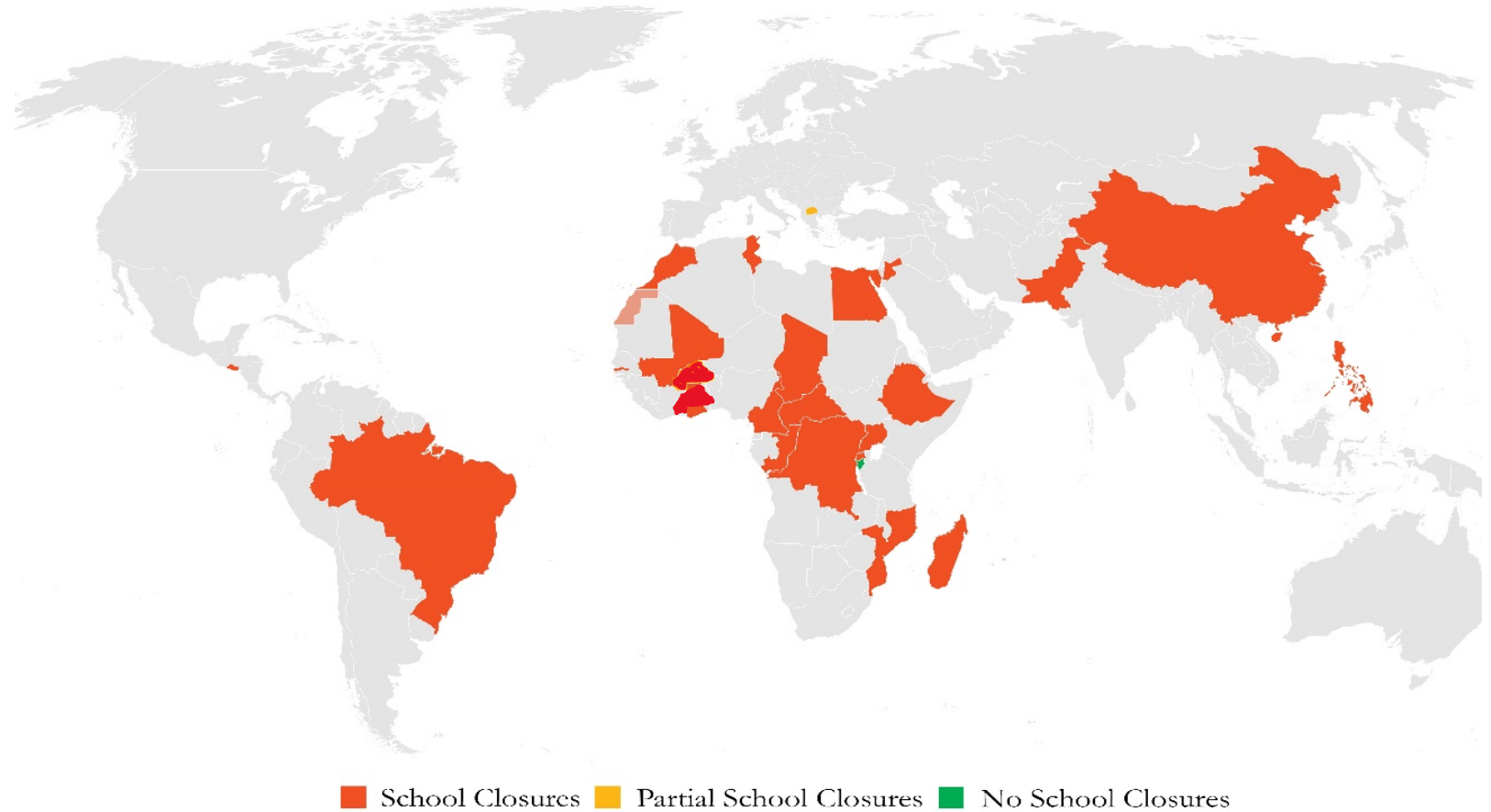
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS



EDUCATION AND LEARNING

IMPACT: School closures during COVID-19

Among the countries covered in the survey, the pandemic has led to full school closures for children under the age of eight almost everywhere.



Source: Early Years Fellows COVID-19 Survey, 2020

IMPACT: Consequences on other child-centered services delivered through schools

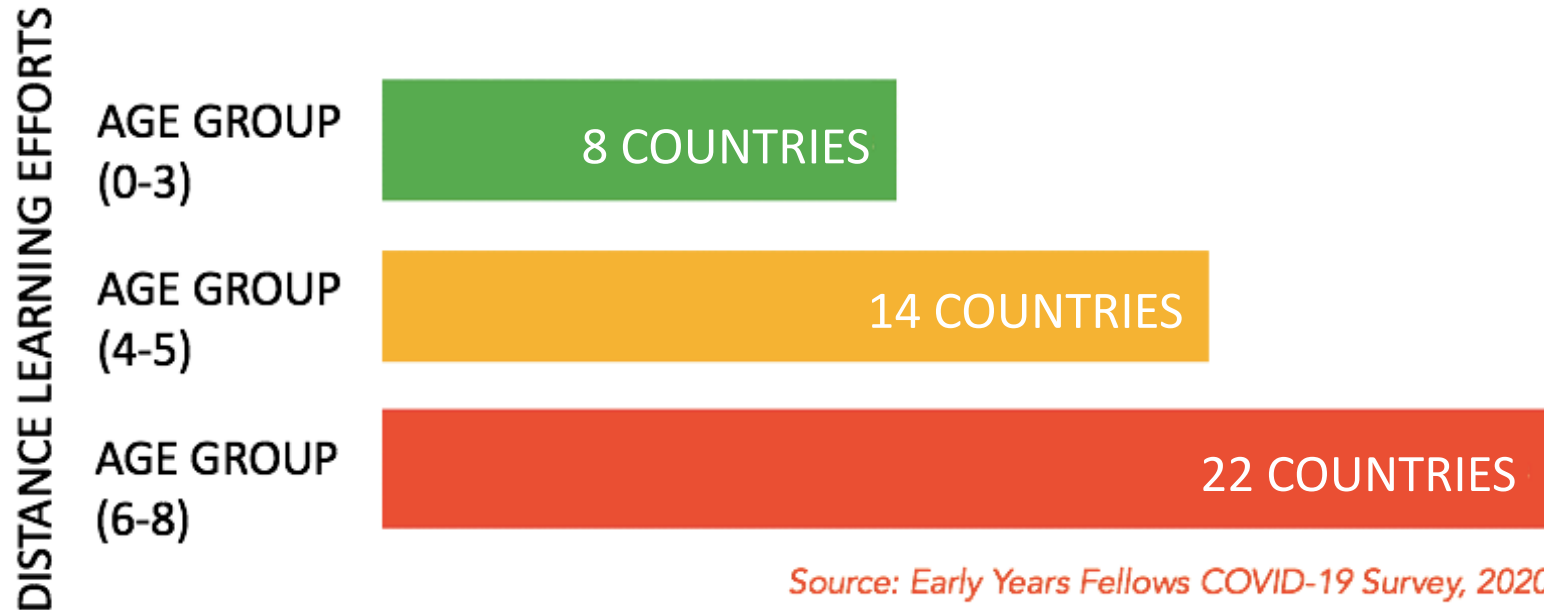
As schools closed, so did many of the accompanying services that children and families rely on.

School related services	Countries where the program was suspended	Countries where the program was adjusted
School meals	North Macedonia, Tunisia, Cameroon, Ghana, Ethiopia, Mozambique, China, Mali, Central African Republic	Brazil, El Salvador, Burkina Faso, Gambia, São Tomé and Príncipe, Philippines
Health Services (Immunizations, Supplementation, Growth Monitoring, Deworming, Vision Screening)	Burkina Faso, Gambia, Cameroon, China	Madagascar, Uganda, Ghana
Social net assistance – school attendance and health monitoring conditionalities	El Salvador (transfers for school attendance)	Egypt, North Macedonia, El Salvador (school supplies and uniforms in-kind transfer), Philippines
ECCE services and other Services	Cameroon	Philippines, Uganda

Source: Early Years Fellows COVID-19 Survey, 2020

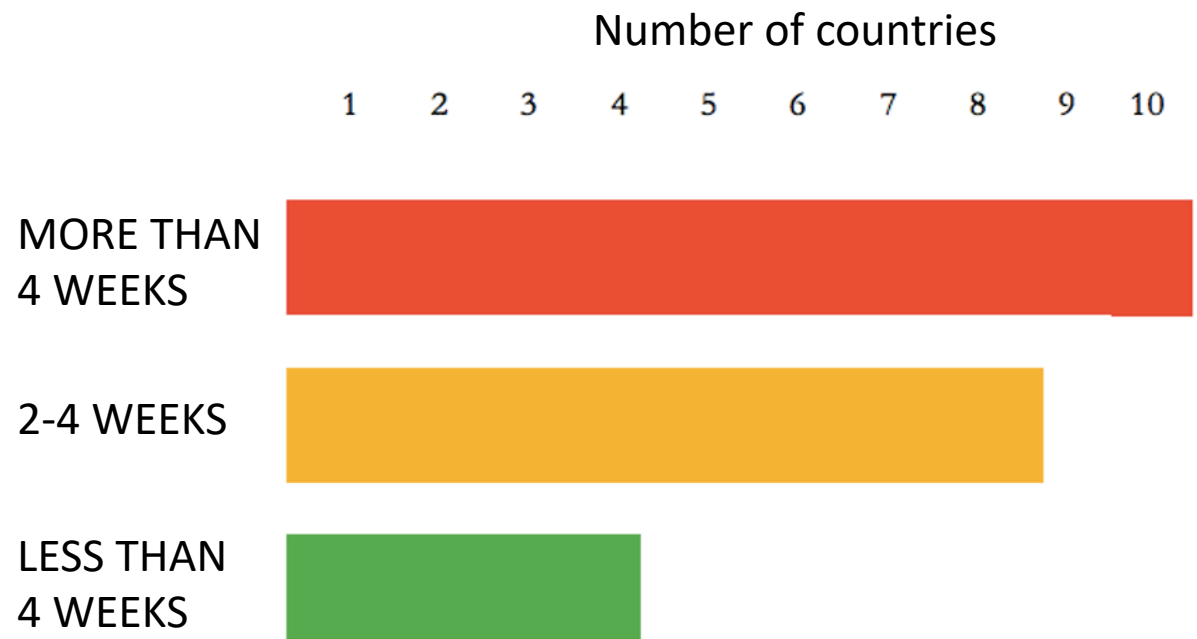
RESPONSE: Distance learning coverage for children ages 0 to 8

22 out of 26 countries did introduce some form of distance learning for young children. But only a third of them for the youngest age cohort (0-3).



RESPONSE: Implementation time of distance learning efforts after school closures

In almost half of the countries (10) it took more than 4 weeks to introduce distance learning for young children.

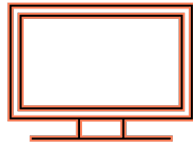


Source: Early Years Fellows COVID-19 Survey, 2020

RESPONSE: Types of distance learning efforts

The three most predominant ways are:

- TV



18 countries

- Radio



15 countries

- Online learning



15 countries

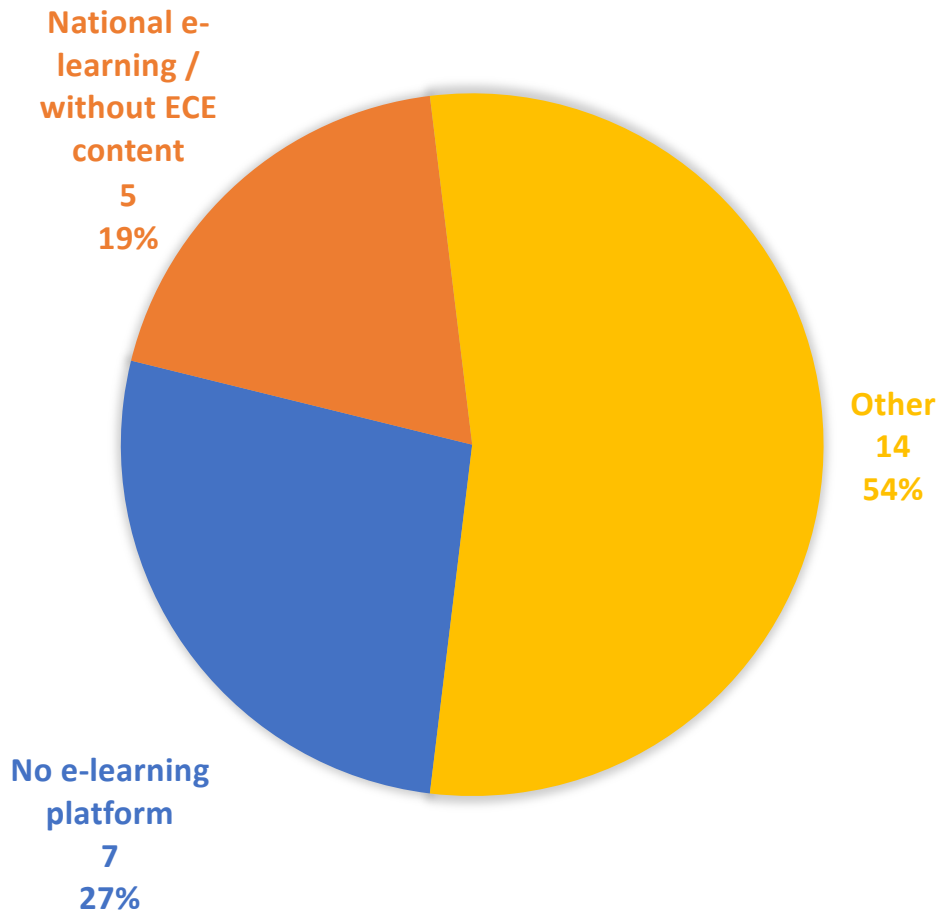
More than 90 percent of all surveyed countries using at least one of them, and one-third using all three simultaneously.

RESPONSE: Types of distance learning efforts

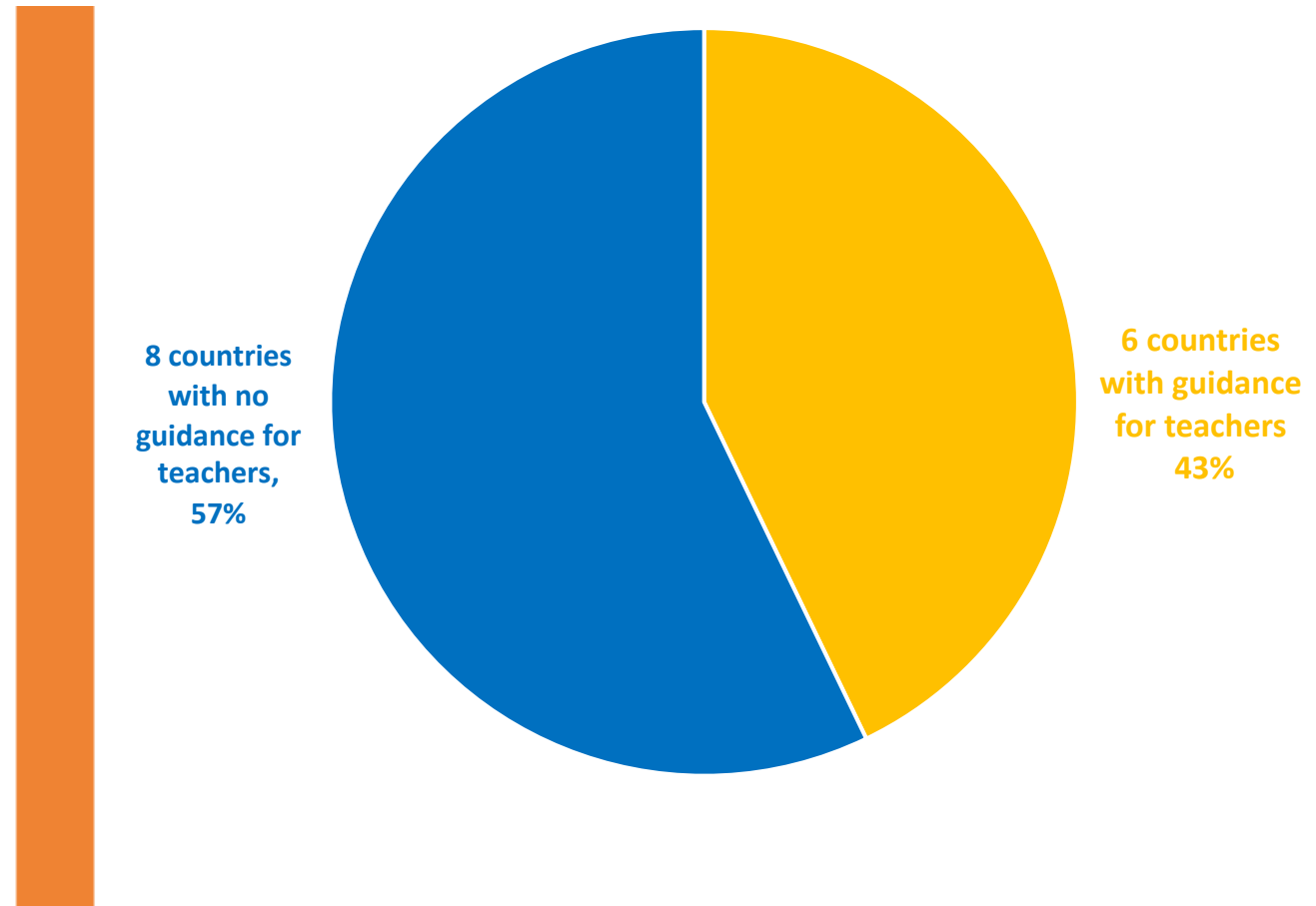
One quarter of all distance learning initiatives came as a joint effort between Governments and Non-Governmental actors.



RESPONSE: E-learning platforms



Source: Early Years Fellows COVID-19 Survey, 2020



Source: Early Years Fellows COVID-19 Survey, 2020

RESPONSE: The reopening phase

At the time of data collection, October 2020, almost all countries had developed protocols for school reopening:

Type of protocol	Number of countries
Hygiene / soap	25
Social distancing	24
Disinfecting and cleaning	25
Procedures for cases	23
Training for prevention	15
Training for mental health	12
Action plan	17

WORLD BANK EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The World Bank's Early Learning Partnership Trust Fund launched an emergency funding round to help teams support ECD within the COVID-19 response.

- In total, 29 high-quality proposals worth US\$1.1 million were approved.
- Grants expected to reach 19 million parents and 19.3 million young children as direct beneficiaries.
- 15 grants focusing on early learning and education, including 8 countries in this report.

READ@HOME INITIATIVE

Aims to deliver reading and learning materials to hard-to-reach homes along with support for parents and other caregivers to engage with children's learning.

Implemented in 10 countries, including 3 in this report.

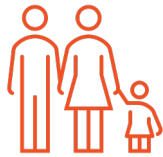
Partnering and building on efforts with UNICEF, GPE, UNESCO, USAID, ECE/Education-focused networks and NGOs



OPPORTUNITIES AND KEY TAKEAWAYS



Countries need to continue ensuring that distance learning efforts are diverse and flexible enough to target even the most marginalized and deprived children.



Parenting support is crucial to ensure the success of distance learning efforts and should continue to be part of resilient ECE systems beyond COVID-19.



Countries have the responsibility to protect a certain level and quality of public financing in ECE during COVID-19, and over time, to increase investing in the early years of schooling.



Planning and moving towards a safe reopening of schools is urgently needed .



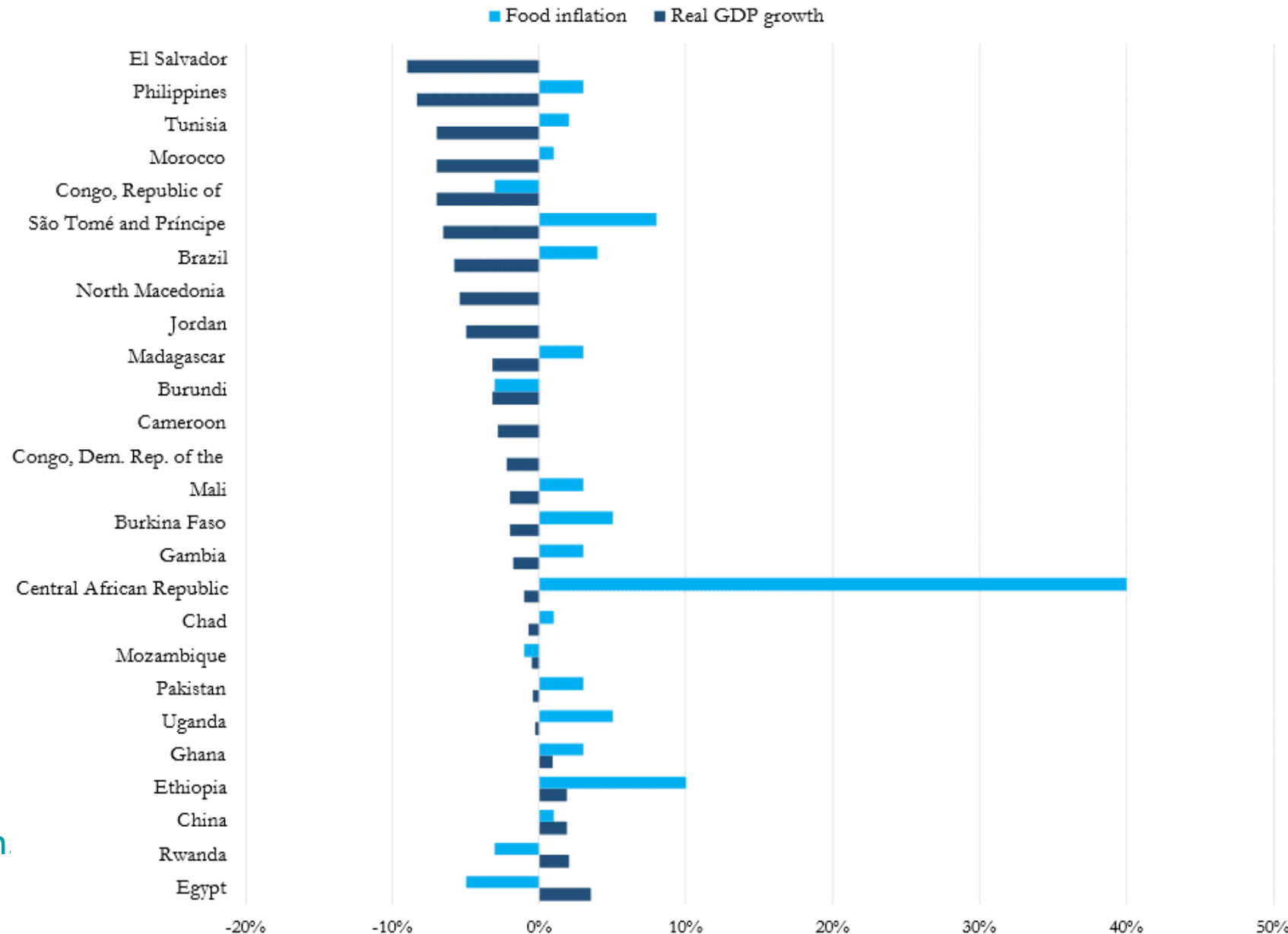
HEALTH AND NUTRITION

IMPACT: Provision of essential health and nutrition services during COVID-19








- Lockdowns and restrictions affected access to health care and nutrition services for women and children in 20 out of 26 countries
- All countries experienced a decline in utilization of health care services

IMPACT: Access to food

- Less than 20% of the countries surveyed experienced positive GDP growth and 1/3 experienced more than 5% reductions in real GDP growth.
- El Salvador experienced the largest reduction in real GDP, at 9%.
- 17 of the 26 countries surveyed experienced an increase in food prices (April to September 2020).
- Reduction in income and increase in food prices has impacted access to food, especially women and children.



RESPONSE: Types of technology strategies adapted for continued delivery of essential health and nutrition services

Innovative ways of delivering health and nutrition services				Provider		
						
Text Messages	Voice Messages	Home visits and deliveries	Facility walk-ins	Private	Public	Donor
11	7	8	6	6	13	6

Source: Early Years Fellows COVID-19 Survey, 2020

RESPONSE: Policies/strategies to increase food access by families

- Around 68% of countries surveyed initiated or modified food programs to provide adequate food supply and security.
- The most common form of support provided by countries include:
 - Food basket distribution (Rwanda, Uganda, Madagascar, Philippines)
 - Vouchers or cash to purchase food (Pakistan)
 - Establishment of emergency food processing and distribution (China)
 - Provision of agricultural inputs to support farmers (China, Egypt, Ethiopia)
 - Price stabilization and monitoring (China and Egypt)

WORLD BANK RESPONSE

Response focused on access to essential health and nutrition services, immunizations and strengthening of the health system for prevention, detection and responding to COVID-19.

- Additional Financing for increased access to health and nutrition services (**Mozambique** and **Pakistan**).
- New projects for detection, prevention and responding to COVID-19 (**Ghana**, **Tunisia** and **Uganda**).
- One ELP grant (**Madagascar**) for the development of Standard Operating Protocols aims to improve the quality of ECD services for infants and young children through the Scaling Lipid-based Nutrient Supplements (LNS) project.

OPPORTUNITIES AND KEY TAKEAWAYS



Prioritization of the delivery of essential health and nutrition services as countries continue to contain the pandemic



Continue to use remote methodologies for delivery of health services



Policies to ensure food access is very crucial as many countries struggle with rising food prices, reduction in income and movement restrictions

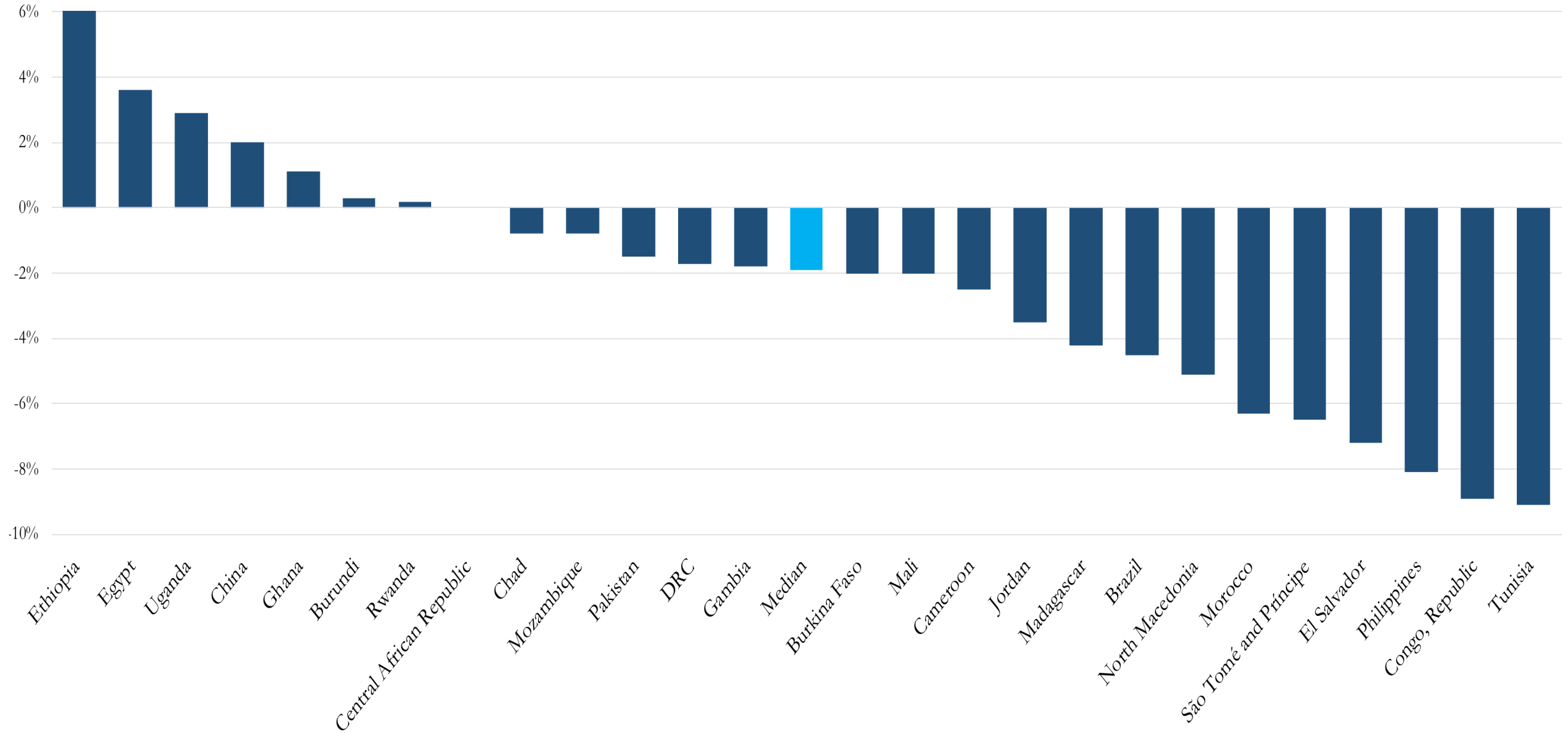


Integration of malnutrition prevention and management in ongoing COVID-19 response for better repositioning of nutrition in COVID-19 prevention and management



SOCIAL PROTECTION

IMPACT: Country Level Shocks



IMPACT: Household Level Impact

Monitoring of Under-5 with No Supervision and on Domestic Violence

Data Collection	Country
Children under five with no supervision	China
Monitoring on domestic violence	Brazil, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, North Macedonia, Philippines, Tunisia, Uganda

Source: Early Years Fellows COVID-19 Survey, 2020

IMPACT: Affected Preventive Measures

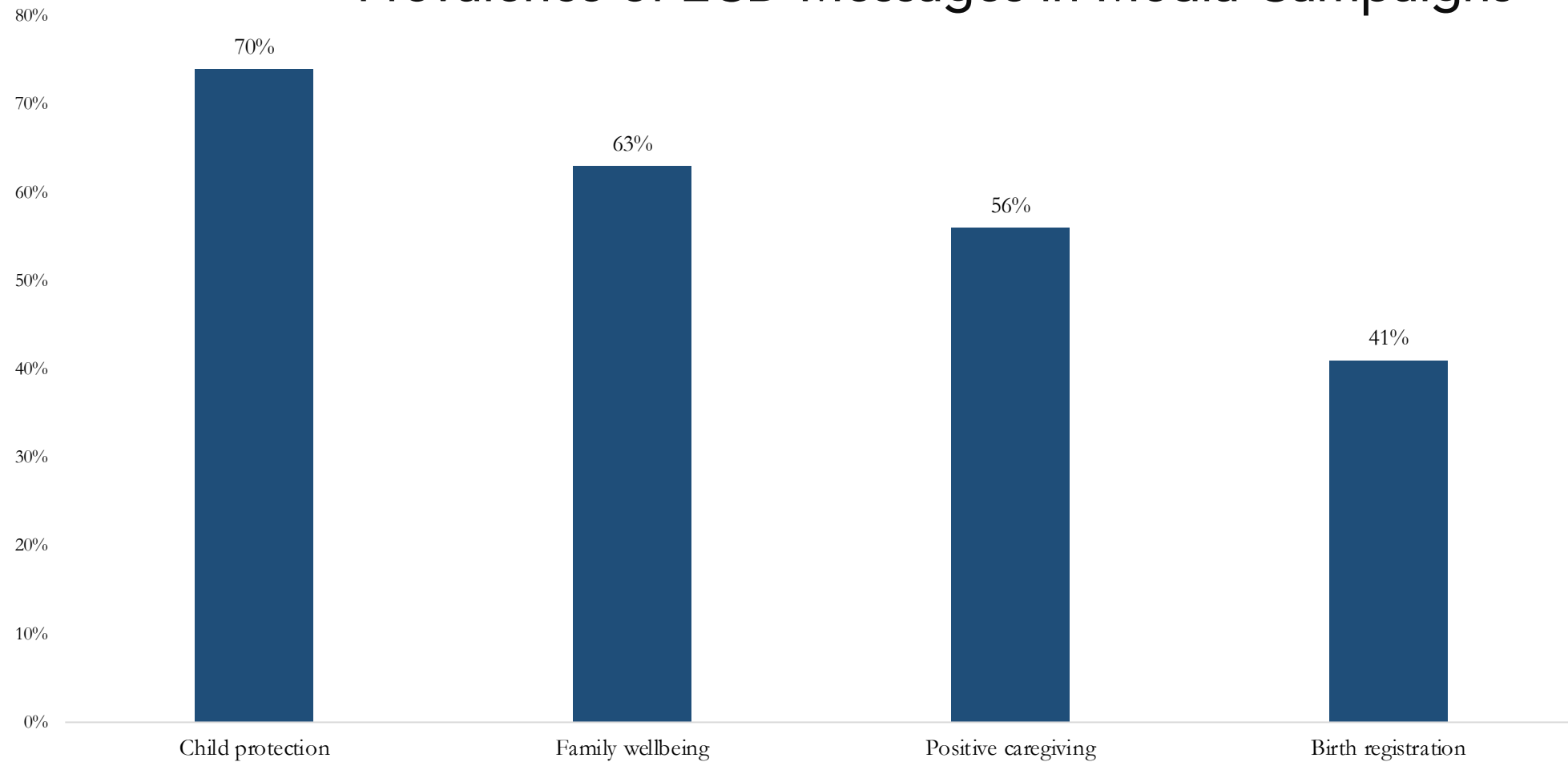
- Birth Registration
- Home Visiting Programs
- System To Report Child Abuse and Protection
- Social Safety

RESPONSE: Social Protection Programs Initiated or Adjusted to protect ECD

- Guaranteed minimum income for poor parents of children aged zero to ten years (North Macedonia)
- A grant for people with disabilities (Uganda)
- Food distribution program (Rwanda)
- Safe shelters for women (Tunisia)
- Adaptation of the home visiting program (Brazil)

RESPONSE: Social Protection in Media Campaigns

Prevalence of ECD Messages in Media Campaigns



Source: Early Years Fellows COVID-19 Survey, 2020

WORLD BANK EMERGENCY RESPONSE

ECD was integrated into wider social protection programs.

Main activities include:

- conditional and unconditional cash transfer programs,
- information campaigns,
- women empowerment
- birth registration

Tunisia COVID-19 Social Protection Emergency Response Support Project

Pakistan's Securing Human Investments to Foster Transformation Project

Gambia Social Safety Net Project

Ethiopia's Urban Productive Safety Net Project

OPPORTUNITIES AND KEY TAKEAWAYS



Data remain limited.



Despite evidence of increased reporting of domestic or gender-based violence, this phenomenon is not well addressed.



Cash transfers, which have helped alleviate the stresses that families have faced due to income shocks, may not be sufficient.

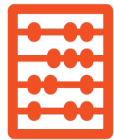


CONCLUSIONS

OPPORTUNITIES AND KEY TAKEAWAYS



Young children (0-8) are one of the most vulnerable groups impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.



More attention is needed to include the most marginalised groups when designing emergency responses.



The crisis may prove to be an opportunity to rebuild a stronger and more resilient education, health and social protection system.



To improve the effectiveness of responses, solutions may lie in the continuation of parenting programs across all sectors.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Time for questions and discussion