Education as Critical Stimulus to the Recovery Package

Rene Raya
Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE)
12 May 2020
Financial Impact of Covid-19 Health Emergency

- Global economy to contract 3% in 2020 (IMF)
  - Most countries project deep recession

- Job/livelihood losses, salary cuts, reduced work hours,
  Returning migrants (Nepal 1.5M, Phils ~.5M); reduced remittances
  - Increase poverty, dropouts, child labor, reduced enrolment

- Large informal economy in Asia-Pacific
  - Hit hardest by lockdown and recession

- Commodity prices at historical lows

- Continuing social distancing → reduced economic activity

- Expected decline in ODA
Shrinking fiscal space threatens education budgets

- Huge spending to fight Covid 19
- Expected contraction of the economy
- Tax relief for affected businesses
- Reduced tax revenue due to income losses

→ Tremendous pressure on education budgets

Ex: Philippines
$100 M for Last Mile School budget realigned for Covid-19 emergency
10% of 2020 Budget to be reserved for Covid response

✓ Protect the Education budget
✓ Assert Education as critical stimulus for recovery
✓ Build back education systems that are equitable & inclusive
But Education not factored in most Recovery Packages

• Most Stimulus/Recovery Packages ignore education
  - See discussions organised by UN DESA, ESCAP, SDSN, etc.
• Most country stimulus packages do not mention education

• Only few countries mentioned education in recovery programme
  ✓ Algieria – cut spending by 30%, but keep wages intact; protect health & education
  ✓ Australia - free childcare and targeted support to education system
  ✓ Sweden - more funding to media, cultural and sports sectors, education and training
  ✓ Tonga - a third to health, while the rest - tourism, transport, agri, education, security

Source: IMF Policy Tracker
But Education not factored in the Recovery Packages

- Ex: *Proposed Recovery Framework, Philippines (UP School of Economics)*
  Schools & Educational institutions as **LOW** priority in recovery plan and **HIGH** Covid Spreader

Quotes - Sample Covid Responses ASEAN countries:
"Singapore... finally closed schools and all non-essential businesses on April 3..."
"As of April 1, Cambodia’s more than 157 casinos and schools have closed."
I nclusive & Equitable Education as Critical Stimulus in the Recovery

- Expand/Upgrade school feeding/community food distribution
  *With parents & community involvement to spur local economy*
- Accelerate/Upgrade CLC hubs, Community ICT Centers & Libraries, ALE programs
  *Generate local employment and skills upgrading*
- Upgrade & expand Alternative delivery mode, esp. mobile teaching where teacher better trained and more confident
- Mass hiring of teachers - fill-up vacancy; to maintain social distancing (lower PTR); more mobile teachers for home-/community-based learning
- Invest in teachers & parents training in education in emergencies, SHN, WASH, psychosocial support, distance learning, among others
- School & learning materials for marginalised areas, PWDs, displaced children
- Massive training and re-skilling to adapt to new normal
- Invest in research, data, communications, digital literacy

Prioritise investment in human capabilities & well-being, on community resiliency, solidarity and a green economy