Approaches of Georgia to Foster Digital Skills Development

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Lessons Learned from Pandemics: Challenges and Opportunities

➢ The global outbreak of COVID-19 is not an anomaly. In 1980-2013, the number of epidemics was over 1,000. Infectious diseases such as Zika, MERS-CoV, SARS, HIV/AIDS, and Ebola kill millions every year.

➢ We see a proactive public health measures. But political priorities change, as the crisis comes under control. The next pandemic is only a matter of time. *But the most lasting lesson may be what the coronavirus teaches us about the urgency of taking actions in education.*

➢ The pandemic has re-emphasized the **'digital divide'**, particularly for those in rural areas and from under-privileged backgrounds with less access to computers and other devices outside the schools.

➢ UNESCO estimates about 1.25 billion students are affected by lockdowns. Lack of access to computers and the internet at home means remote learning is out of reach of many.

➢ Equity in access to ICT-based learning is a major concern. Inclusion and equity must be the guiding principles to avoid a further deepening of inequalities in access to education.

➢ Support of education is crucial - digital skill gaps of teachers are perceived to be one of the most important barriers for effective on-line learning, parents may lack the requisite skills for facilitation.

➢ Determined, equity-focused interventions can help economies and societies mitigate the impacts of pandemic.

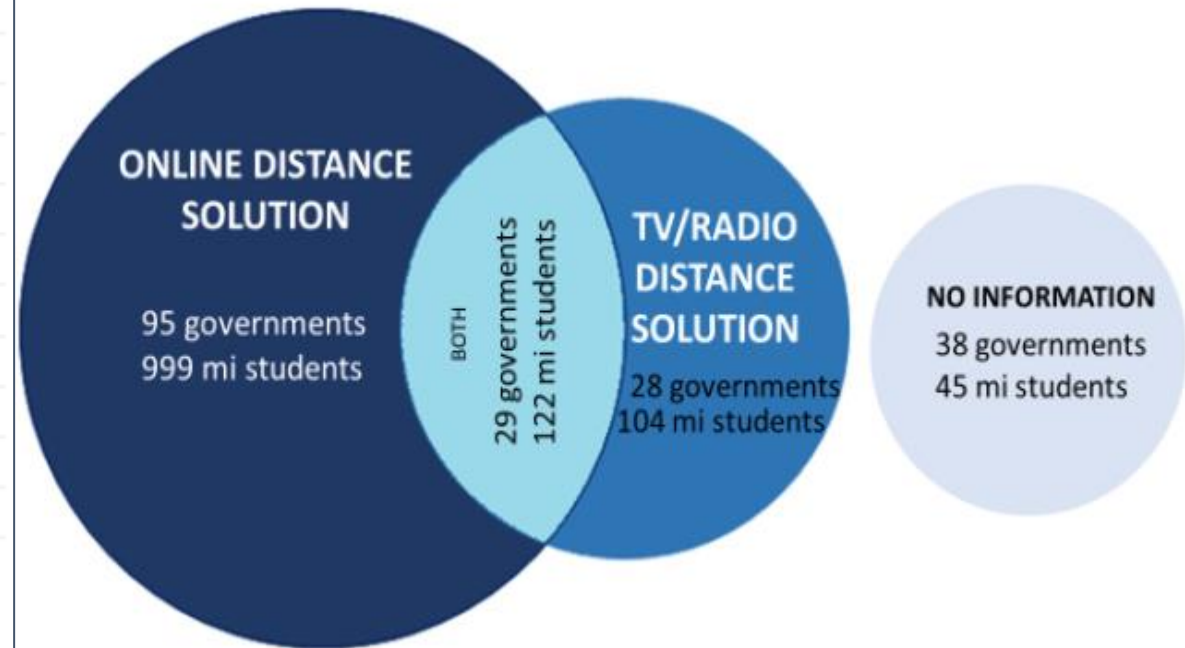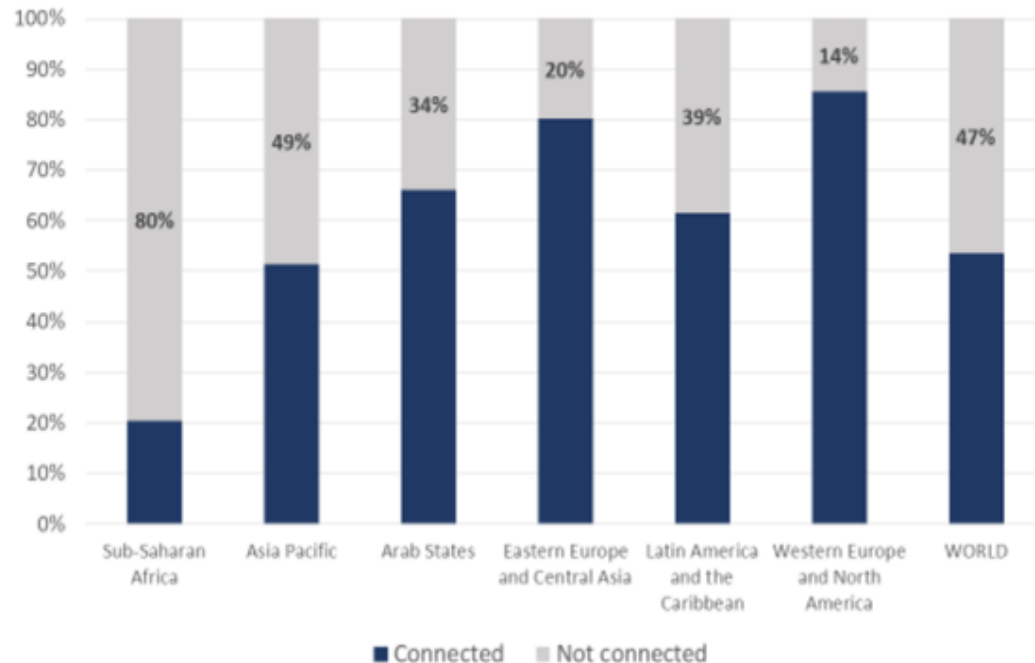# Lessons Learned from Pandemics: Challenges and Opportunities

Share of students with Internet at home relying exclusively on on-line learning platforms	Government-initiated distance learning solutions and intended reach

The diagram includes distance learning solutions initiated and endorsed by Ministries of Education and does not account for initiatives by private or other providers. It does not reference distance learning solutions reliant on print materials and which do not require information communication technologies.

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- Survey of teachers about challenges of online teaching in Georgia - 11 regions, 94 schools, 982 respondents of different subjects and levels where interviewed by phone

➤ 16% of teachers think students don't have enough ICT competences needed for distance learning. Youth can search for information and entertainment, play online games, go for online shopping, but they can't apply for educational applications. They need guidance to develop their ICT skills.

- *Parents and caregivers also lack ICT skills and tips to support digital learners. Students of those parents that are more skillful have better results and involvement in distance learning*

- *More online instructions are needed for teachers and parents. How to work with different applications, how to protect and behave in a digital polite way*

- *More open resources in Georgian language are requested*

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Communication skills	8	1%
Online classroom management	40	3%
ICT technical skills	355	27%
Methodology of online teaching	501	38%
Lack of knowledge of foreign language	408	31%

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- The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia with an involvements of stakeholders is working on the Strategy of Education 2021-2030 with more emphasize on equity and access to quality education.

- The Microsoft Office 365 user profile (up to 600,000 students and 55,000 teachers) has been created for Georgian public schools (administration, teachers, and students). Virtual classrooms for all classes and relevant subjects were created at Microsoft TEAMS.

- The Ministry considers electronic and television modes of distance learning as an alternative regardless of whether they have access to the Internet. "Teleskola" was launched is a project, jointly with public broadcasting.

- Video and text instruction has been developed, and are available at the www.el.ge.

- Furthermore, the EL.GE platform has created a space for teachers and students, with thematic resources based on the national curriculum.

- Virtual consulting spaces have been set up to answer questions raised while using Microsoft Office 365 products for distance learning purposes;

- An interactive **Georgian**-language Chat-Bot and an **e-journal** are being integrated into the **Georgian** version of Microsoft Teams

- 16000 teachers were trained in "Distance teaching using Microsoft Services;

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- Practical articles, tips and recommendations were prepared for online newspaper Mastsavlebeli.ge.

- Teachers Guide "Lessons for distance learning –" was published http://mastsavlebeli.ge/?p=25383

- More than 150 webinars were launched to support teachers in distance learning, sharing best practices, discussing and modeling different approaches.

- Pedagogy of parents is important component, a number of webinars for parents were held during the year. A "Parent's Guide to the Digital World" has been developed is uploaded on the TPDC website.

- The Ministry also launched an information campaign on cyber hygiene on the following topics:

  - Phishing;
  - Content filtering;
  - How parents can control children's devices;
  - How to protect a unified educational network;
  - How to make online projects secure;
  - How we use backup systems
  - How children are protected when using electronic services;

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Online Pedagogy (conditional title)

- Curriculum design for online teaching

- Various platforms, interactive programs and applications - their adaptation for learning purposes

- How to create online resources: posters, quizzes, infographics, animations and more

- Online resources for various learning purposes: virtual libraries, laboratories and audio-visual materials

- Developmental and defining forms of evaluation for onlinemode (digital badges or backpacks, etc.)

Overcoming language barriers in the virtual learning process (conditional title)

The training module addresses the needs of those who have lack of competences in foreign languages. Many teachers are reluctant to use online resources due to their lack of English.

- Use online resources through online translation

- Subtitling

- Create transcripts

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Online management for School administration and quality assurance and support group

· Use of virtual platforms in the training and administration process

· Remote monitoring of lessons

· Communicate with parents via electronic journal

· Bank of online resources, shares best practices, adapted materials

Raising Digital Awareness of Parents'

Research suggests that many parents / guardians find it difficult to assist in distance learning. Training program for parents, will be launched:

· Virtual learning environment

· Facilitate the virtual learning process

· Use of electronic journal

· Online communication with the school community
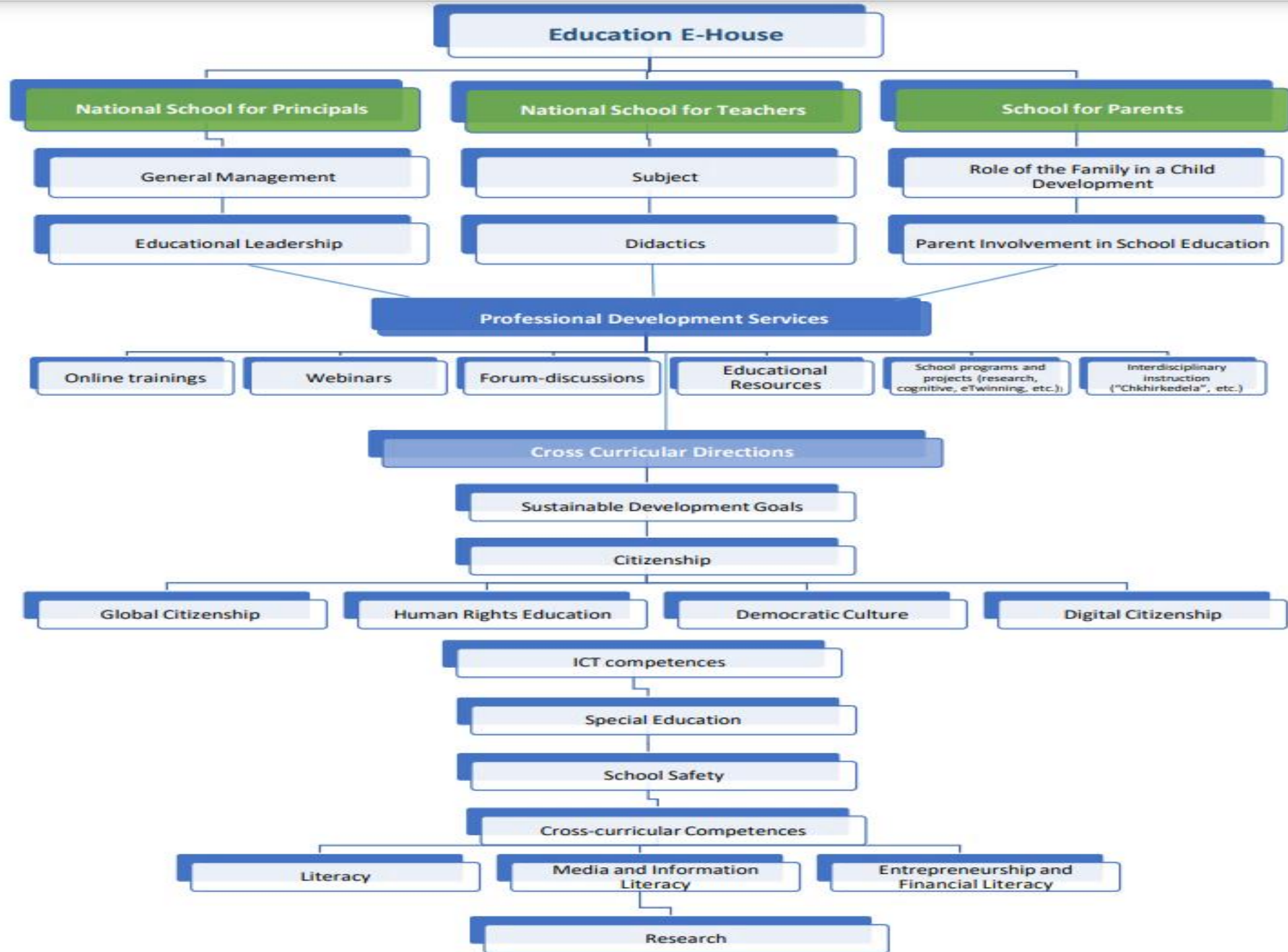
Education e-House
Project aims and objectives

- To provide high quality education through equal access to school based continuous professional development services;

- To provide targeted support of schools of all types and specificity in respect with both formal and non-formal education.

- To create a unified platform for "Education e-House"

- To provide varied services supporting continuous professional development and prepare/offer respective resources

- To encourage establishment of cooperation-based school culture and school/professional networks/ communities

- To identify and share best school practices

Questions,comments