



ETHICAL CHALLENGES DURING COVID-19 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Q1. How can we build horizontal relationships and work in partnership with children recognizing their innate spirituality and agency? How do we convince and engage our wider communities in these efforts?



Children are not the face of this pandemic. But they risk being among its biggest victims, as children's lives are nonetheless being changed in profound ways. All children, of all ages, and in all countries, are being affected, in particular by the socio-economic impacts and, in some cases, by mitigation measures that may inadvertently do more harm than good.

This is a universal crisis and, for some children, the impact will be lifelong.

Moreover, the harmful effects of this pandemic will not be distributed equally. They are expected to be most damaging for children in the poorest countries, and in the poorest neighbourhoods, and for those in already disadvantaged or vulnerable situations.

UNICEF



MAKING SENSE OF THE BIG PICTURE :

29,700,313 people have tested COVID-19 positive in India

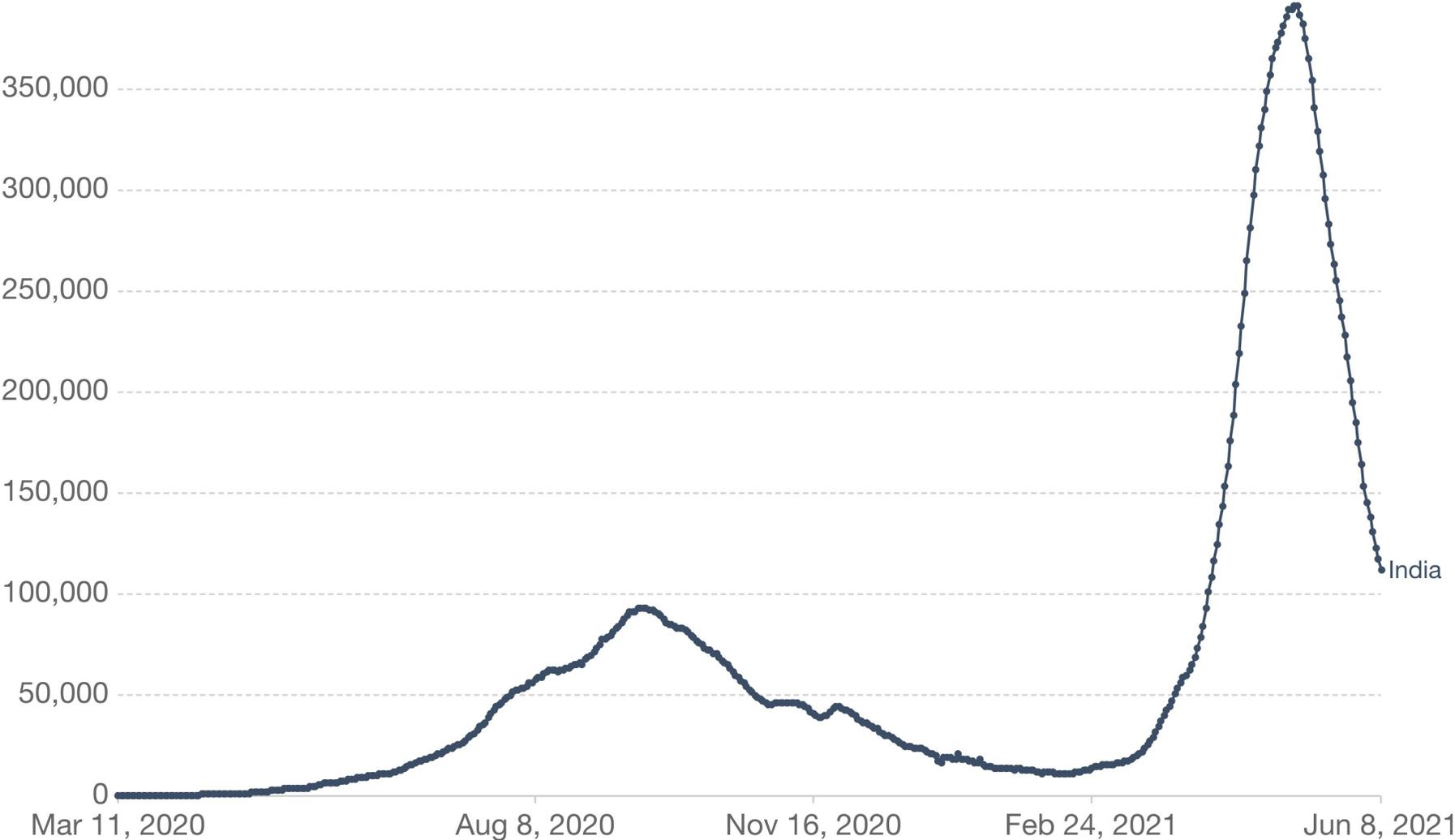
177,048,031 people have tested COVID-19 positive worldwide

17th June 2021

Johns Hopkins Global Dashboard

Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases

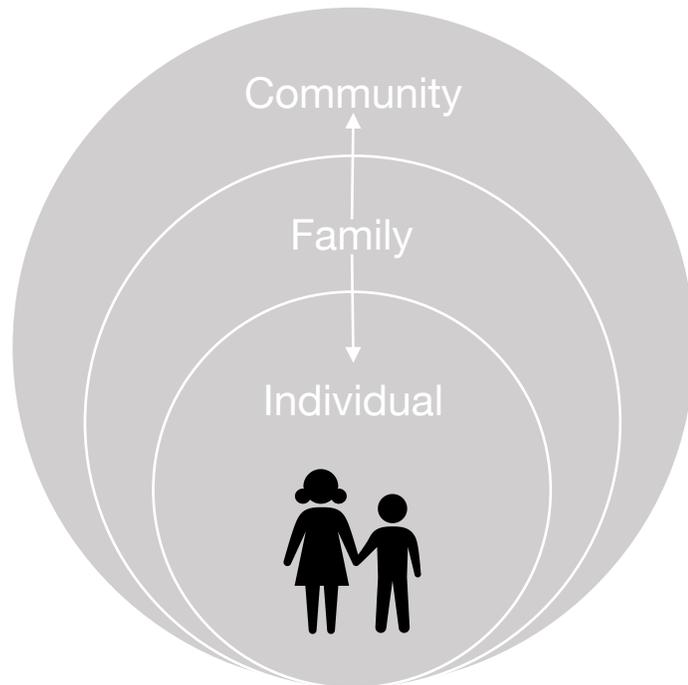
Shown is the rolling 7-day average. The number of confirmed cases is lower than the number of actual cases; the main reason for that is limited testing.



Source: Johns Hopkins University CSSE COVID-19 Data

THE COMPOUNDED BURDEN THAT CHILDREN ARE CARRYING

Implications for a generation of children



Children already living in poverty

Learning crisis

Child labour

Increased violence

Malnutrition

Developmental delay

Mental health crisis

School closures

between March 11, 2020 and February 2, 2021

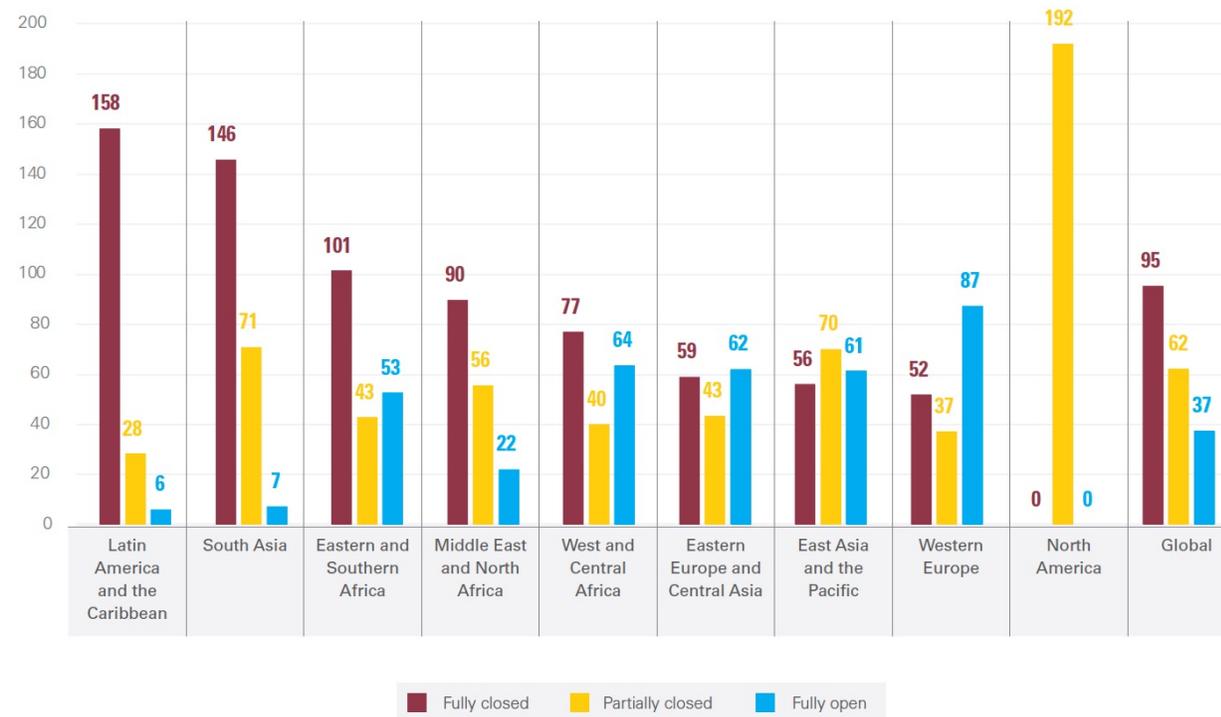
Global average

96 days

South Asia average

146 days

Number of students (in million) impacted in countries with fully closed schools as of February 2, 2021



Source: UNESCO Global monitoring of school closures caused by COVID-19

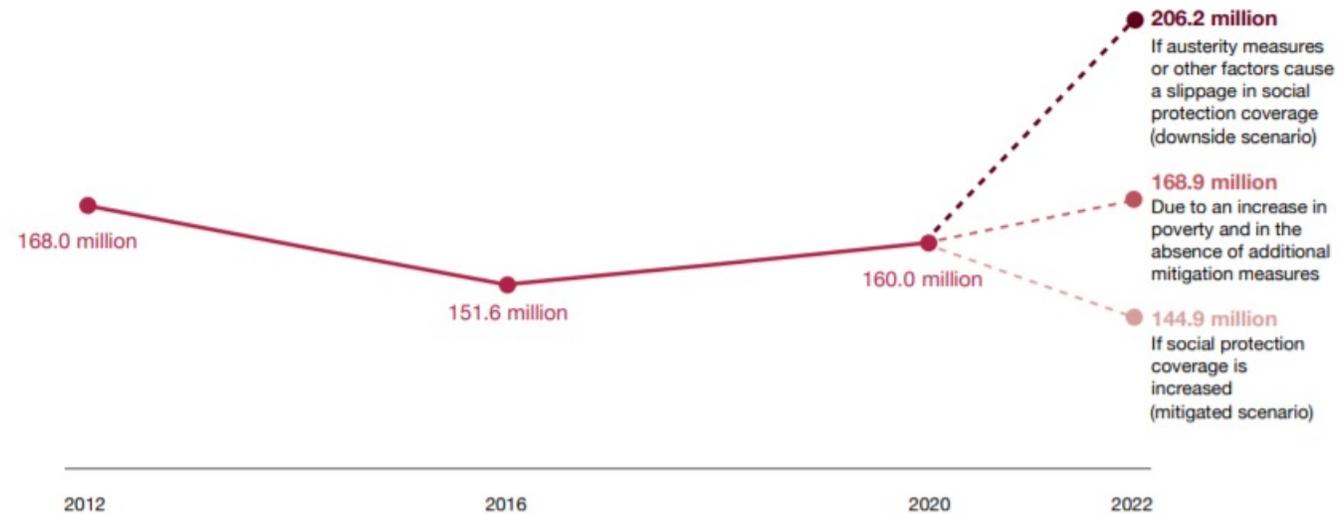
Note: Estimates are weighted by the number of students in pre-primary to upper secondary education in each country.

Child Labour

Increase in child labour from **28.2%** to **79.6%** out of the 818 children who were surveyed, mainly because of the COVID-19 pandemic and closure of schools, reveals a study conducted by Campaign Against Child Labour in India.

Without mitigation measures, 8.9 million more children will likely be engaged in child labour by the end of 2022

Fig 33. Number of children aged 5 to 17 years in child labour, observed and projected



VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES CARRY AN UNEQUAL BURDEN



In India, the abrupt lockdown meant that the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) came to an abrupt halt.

158 million children

were dependent on this critical government programme for nutritional supplements, cognitive stimulation, immunization, growth monitoring and early detection of diseases.

More than

115 million

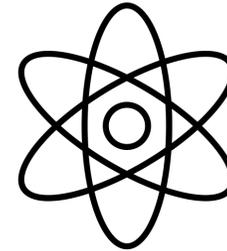
children already live in
extreme poverty
in India.

CAN WE ACTIVELY DISRUPT THIS?

Does **Ethics** have a role?



Does **Science** have a role?



Does **Partnership** that ensures the best interests of children have a role?



WHY ARE WE SPEAKING OF RELATIONSHIPS IN THE MIDST OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

Forced relationship building

Awareness of our interconnectedness



Markets with deep supply chain mechanisms around the world

Developing a response that draws on expertise from around the world

WHAT CAN BE THE ROLE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CO-DEVELOPING MORE CUSTOMIZED RESPONSES?



SHANTI ASHRAM RESPONSE



Q2. Why is ethics and ethics education an important framework for responding to these challenges and supporting children and young people?

FOSTERING ETHICS EDUCATION THAT SUPPORTS SOCIAL LEARNING AND AFFIRMS LIVING TOGETHER DURING THIS CHALLENGING TIME



Ethics



Faith



Interfaith dialogue



Intergenerational learning



Community cohesion

THE NEW FRONTIERS IN A POST COVID-19:

Will Sarvodaya emerge as a shared aspiration?



**“THE VERY FIRST STEP IN
NONVIOLENCE IS THAT WE
CULTIVATE IN OUR DAILY
LIFE, AS BETWEEN
OURSELVES, TRUTHFULNESS,
HUMILITY, TOLERANCE,
LOVING KINDNESS.”**

Mahatma Gandhi

