Title: ……………………………..

1ts page – should have the key statistics on the overall impact

UNESCO estimates that about 140 million students in primary and 130 million in secondary have been affected by the lockdown in India (UNESCO,2020).

Very limited access to online schooling

Physical access to digital infrastructure -

As per NSSO – only 4% students in rural areas have access to essential digital infrastructure – more than 80 % students in urban areas do not have access to essential digital infrastructure

The digital divide also strongly intersects with economic and social divide in the country.

As per NSSO (2020), about 45 % of students belonging to the richest 10% income quintile reported having essential digital infrastructure as compared to only 2 % of students from the lowest income quintile reporting the same. This trend holds true for the socially marginalised sections of Scheduled Tribe (ST), Scheduled Castes (SC), Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Muslim students who reported having very limited access to computers with internet – with only 4 % of SC and STs, 8 % of Muslims and 7 % of OBC students reporting the same.

Women and learners from most marginalised sections are least likely to access online education

"About 51% population that remain unconnected

School closure going to exacerbate the inequality (rural-urban and gender)

Social access to online education

A recent survey conducted by the Centre for Budget and Policy Studies (Ghatak et al., 2020) to assess the impact of the pandemic on the lives and education of children where one child in the age group of 10-18 years and one adult was interviewed from 3176 households across four Indian states found that in more than 70 per cent of the households, the phone belonged to a male member. The gendered access to technology was also laid bare by the fact that only 26 % of the girls who responded to the survey said that they had unhindered access to phones at home in comparison to 37 % of the boys who reported similar unhindered access.

Time poverty is highest amongst girls – which hinder their access to education. Care work and chores – Most girls (71%) reported spending time on chores and care work vs. boys (38%), even within the same HH, girls did more care work.

Education – Girls (46%) spent lesser time on education as compared to boys (56%). Most boys (79%) spent time on leisure activities as compared to girls (60%)

Online Pedagogy is useful but has multiple challenges - Parents: 80% in govt schools (100% in Bihar) and 60 % in private schools felt that education was not delivered. Where education was "delivered", the predominant mode was WhatsApp messages or text messages. (20% in private schools some form of structured learning provided through Zoom, YouTube)

More than half of teachers surveyed perceive remote learning materials and methods to be less effective than classroom teaching

50% of urban teachers and 40% of rural teachers were in touch with students through WhatsApp and phone calls.

Most teachers felt that education provision was severely affected by this method. Estimate that 25-50% of students could connect to SMILE. Students often did not get prior information regarding the next day's lessons. Teachers were expected to follow up with phone calls to students, and submit two Google Forms, one of which was to record calls made to students.

A survey which captured the experiences of 212 teachers from rural and urban areas in India found that most teachers perceived high transactional distances in online teaching, where they found themselves to be untrained to handle situations in which they had to deal with students from varied learning capabilities (Singh et al., 2020)

High learning Loss - 70% of teachers were concerned that students will "lose touch with studies"

92% of children on an average have lost at least one specific language ability from the previous year across all classes

82% of children on an average have lost at least one specific mathematical ability from the previous year across all classes

.UNESCO has listed “interrupted learning” among the top adverse consequences of COVID-19 school closures worldwide. 2. It estimates that COVID- 19 led school closures caused worldwide learning losses estimated at two thirds of an academic year on average

Children are dependent on Mid Day Meals for Nutrition

The inability of children to access cooked meals during the lockdown is likely to have a detrimental effect on their nutrition and health. The impact may be worse for girls and other children from marginalised groups.

The pandemic put an estimated 115 million children at the risk of severe malnutrition. 3. A recent OXFAM India, report however demonstrated, that approximately 35 children did not receive their mid-day meals. Of the remaining 65%, only 8% received cooked meals while 53 received dry rations and 4% received money in lieu of the MDM.

High economic distress due to the pandemic

"Disproportionately affected marginalised lower caste groups by a factor of three as there is over-representation of them in vulnerable jobs.

84% said not enough employment opportunities, 93% in Bihar, 86% in UP, relatively low in Assam (64%), Telengana (54%)

Cash crunch: 84% (Yes), Bihar (88%), Telangana (53%)

Since lockdown started (47%), since May-June (15%), 16% always had a cash crunch

63% reported food shortages, 71% in Bihar

70% minorities said not enough food at home

Both food and cash shortage (58%),

Increased child labour and child marriages

NSS data indicates that among ever-enrolled males in rural areas, 35 per cent of school drop-outs occur due to involvement in economic activities and 26 per cent due to financial constraints.7 These factors are likely to be aggravated. 4. Increased likelihood of child labour arising from large-scale job loss for casual labourers

CHILDLINE 1098’ India in a recent report, announced that India saw a 50 % increase in the calls received on helpline for children, requesting protection from abuse and violence, since the lockdown began. 2. India has over 10 million children (5-14 years) and 23 million adolescents working across industries (2011 Census), and there are fears that school closures are beginning to push these numbers up

 Need data on child marriage

*The risk of re-opening schools leading to higher rates of infection is marginal compared to the learning loss and risk of losing the gains made in education over the past years.*

Evidence for safe school reopening suggests

Recent evidence from modelling studies indicate that school closures alone would avoid only 2–4% of deaths, a percentage much smaller than other strategies of social distancing. 2. Data from countries which reopened schools or did not shut them in the first place, indicates low community transmission rates of less than 1 new case per day per 100,000 people. 3. Evidence from documented cases in schools indicated poor trends in child-to-child transmission in schools indicating that relevant prevention strategies can potentially be effective in preventing transmission in the school setting. 4. Children 9 years or younger have demonstrated lower seroprevalence and susceptibility as compared to children aged 10-14 years. 5. Studies also indicate much lower infections in children under the age of 10, under the same conditions of exposure to infected household members, as compared to adults and adolescents.

Measures for school reopening

Alternate day attendance

Limited numbers in one classroom with pre-planned seating arrangements

Testing of teachers

(Can use infographics to show these)