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Global Education Monitoring Report 2020: UNESCO

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Why in News

Recently, the **Global Education Monitoring Report, 2020** was released by the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization** (UNESCO).

It highlighted that **Covid-19** had worsened the inequalities in education systems worldwide.

Key Points

- **Global Findings:**

- During the height of school closures in April 2020, almost 91% of students around the world were out of school.
- About 40% of low and lower middle income countries have not supported learners at risk of exclusion during this crisis, such as the poor, linguistic minorities and learners with disabilities.
- Education systems responded with distance learning solutions, all of which offered less or more imperfect substitutes for classroom instruction.
- Poorer countries opted for radio and television (TV) lessons, 55% of low-income, 73% of lower-middle-income and 93% of upper-middle-income countries adopted for online learning platforms for primary and secondary education.
- 17% of low and middle-income countries are planning to recruit more teachers, 22% to increase class time and 68% to introduce remedial classes when schools reopen to combat the situation.

- **India Specific Findings:**

India has used a mix of all three systems (radio, TV and online platforms) for educational continuity.

- **Challenges:**
 - **Governments increasingly rely on technology** but the **digital divide limits** the approach because not all students and teachers have access to an adequate internet connection, equipment, skills and working conditions to take advantage of available platforms.
 - **School closures interrupt support mechanisms for various disadvantaged students.**
 - Resources for **blind and deaf students** may not be available outside schools.
 - **Children with learning disabilities** or those who are on the **autism** spectrum may struggle with independent work in front of a computer or the disruption of daily school routines.
 - **Poor students** who depend on school for free meals or even free sanitary napkins have suffered.
 - **Cancellation of examinations** in many countries, including India, may result in **scoring dependent on teachers' judgements** of students instead, which could be **affected by stereotypes** of certain types of students.
 - **Higher drop-out rates** are also a concern because, during an earlier **Ebola epidemic in Africa**, many older girls never returned to school once the crisis was over.

Way Forward

- Teachers who are intimidated by technology now have to take the bull by its horns. For many who are proficient at planning and teaching in the traditional classroom, planning for an online setting requires some re-learning.
- Online classrooms have brought up issues of classroom management and it is needed to learn methods of managing remote classes and students online. Schools also have to give serious thought to planning and conducting online assessments and evaluations.
- School readiness for online teaching is critical and schools are at varying levels in this journey. While parents are worried about having the right hardware and set-up at home, school management and teachers are sorting out more significant and vital issues.

Source: TH