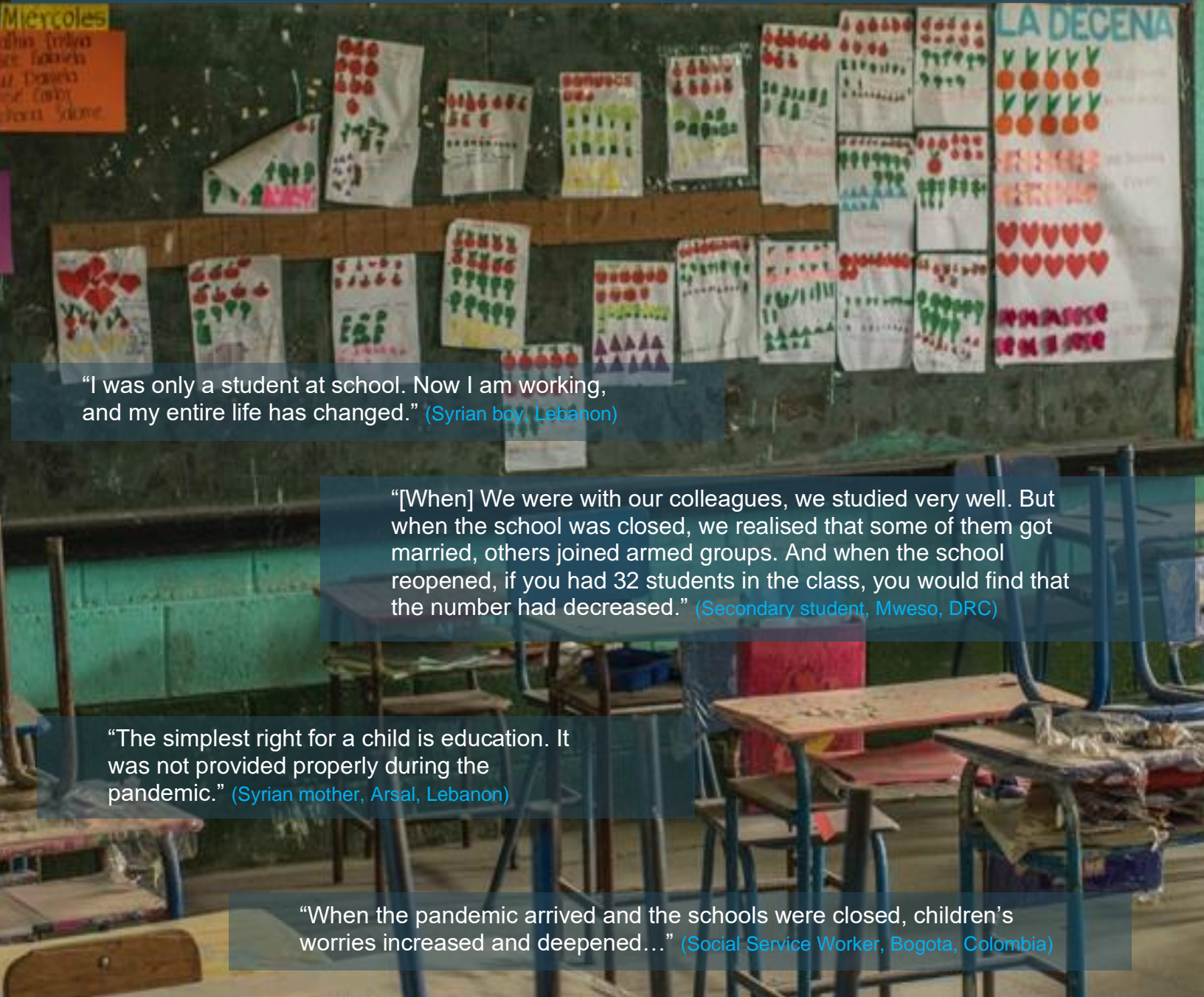




FROM EVIDENCE TO ACTION: Centering children's voices during IDO related school closures and reopenings

October 2022



“I was only a student at school. Now I am working, and my entire life has changed.” (Syrian boy, Lebanon)

“[When] We were with our colleagues, we studied very well. But when the school was closed, we realised that some of them got married, others joined armed groups. And when the school reopened, if you had 32 students in the class, you would find that the number had decreased.” (Secondary student, Mweso, DRC)

“The simplest right for a child is education. It was not provided properly during the pandemic.” (Syrian mother, Arsal, Lebanon)

“When the pandemic arrived and the schools were closed, children's worries increased and deepened...” (Social Service Worker, Bogota, Colombia)

During 2021 and 2022, the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies and the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, led by Proteknôn Foundation for Innovation and Learning, conducted participatory research across three diverse humanitarian settings – Lebanon, Democratic Republic of Congo and Colombia - to explore the [impact of COVID-19 school closures on child protection and educational inequalities](#). It was evidenced that **there is an urgent need to develop policies and guidance to support child-centred decision making related to school closures and holistic child wellbeing and protection during and after IDOs in humanitarian settings.**

The INEE and the Alliance are conducting a series of roundtables to better communicate the findings and recommendations of this participatory research with global decision makers. The Round Tables will bring together cross sectoral groups, providing them with evidence and key research recommendations. **The goal of this effort is to use evidence to explore how the Child Protection, Education and Health sectors can work together to ensure children’s wellbeing during infectious disease outbreaks and co-develop recommendations to support more child-centered and balanced decision making in future IDOs around school closures.**

| Round Tables | Description |
|---|---|
| <p><u>Round Table 1:</u> Children and young people</p> | <p>This Round Table will provide an opportunity for children and young people from humanitarian settings, including those engaged in the initial research, to discuss the findings and recommendations and develop a list of key messages to present to the participants in the subsequent Round Tables. Child friendly materials will be developed in collaboration with children and young people ahead of this meeting to support their preparation.</p> |
| <p><u>Round Table 2:</u> Global multi-sector humanitarian actors</p> | <p>This round table will facilitate a space for global humanitarian actors - technical experts and coordination structures from education, child protection, health, MHPSS and broader protection sectors - to work towards ensuring that lessons learned from children, families, and communities related to wellbeing, protection and education during COVID-19 and other IDOs are integrated into future IDO preparedness, response, investments, and public policies.</p> |
| <p><u>Round Table 3:</u> Global humanitarian donors</p> | <p>This round table will facilitate a space for humanitarian donors and high-level decision makers to reflect on the evidence and the urgency to engage children and strengthen the wellbeing of children in humanitarian settings impacted by COVID-19 school closures. Recommendations will address the need to strengthen the well-being and protection of children and families impacted by COVID-19 related school closures and the need to place children and their wellbeing at the centre of decision-making around school closures and reopening during future IDOs.</p> |