

SITUATION ANALYSIS STUDY FOR ACCESS OF CHILDREN UNDER INTERNATIONAL AND TEMPORARY PROTECTION TO DISTANCE LEARNING DURING COVID-19

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON COVID-19 AND DISTANCE LEARNING

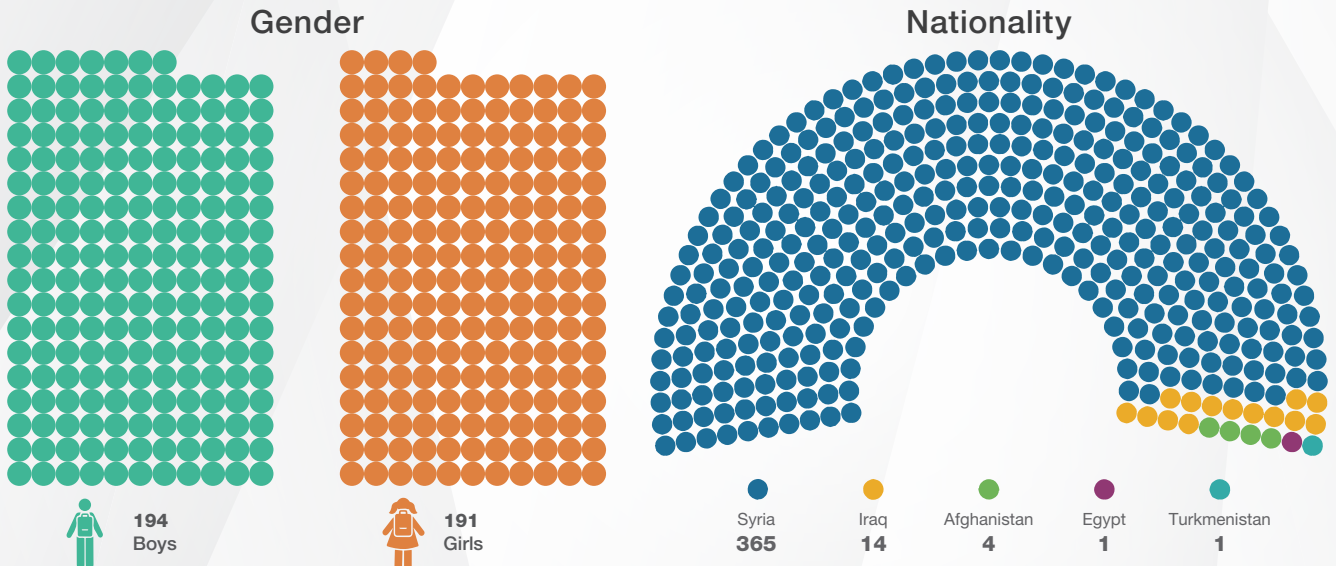
COVID-19 outbreak, which appeared in Wuhan, the capital of the Hubei region of China, in December, quickly spread to the whole world, and World Health Organization (WHO) declared the virus a pandemic on 11 March. In Turkey, the first case was identified on 11th of March, the same day as the pandemic declaration of WHO, as of 16th March, primary schools, secondary schools, and high schools had been closed for one week while universities had been closed for three weeks within the scope of precautionary measures. Then, it was declared that distance learning would continue through the application of Education Information Network (EBA) and the TRT channel for the students of primary schools, secondary schools, and high schools on 23th of March.

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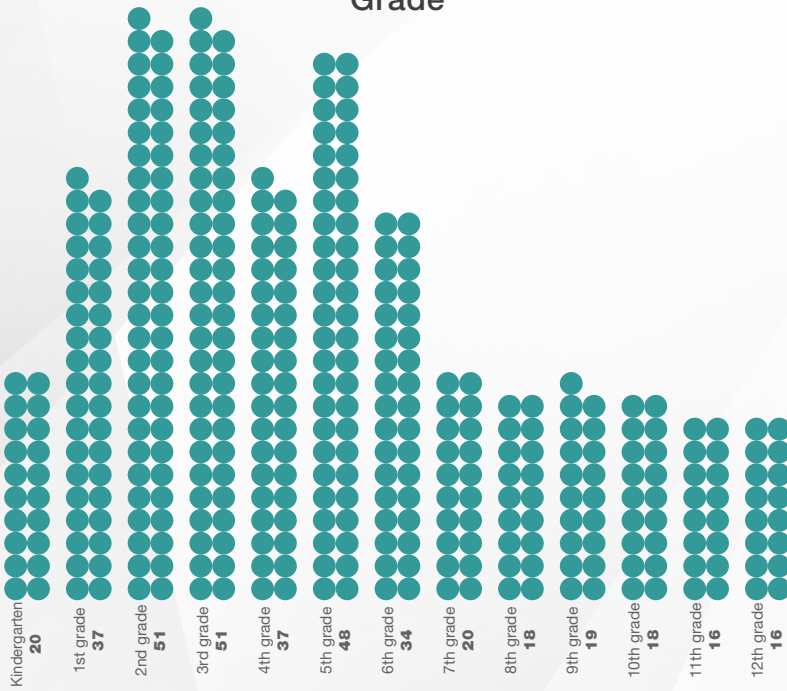
Children under temporary protection (TP) and international protection (IP) have encountered numerous problems with access to education. During COVID-19 outbreak, it is planned to carry out a situation analysis regarding the access of children under IP and TP to distance education, considering that the existing problems may be deepened, and the new obstacles may arise regarding the access to the distance learning system during COVID-19. The other aim of the situation analysis is to identify the barriers to access to distance learning, offering solutions when necessary, and directing existing resources for the solution of the identified problems.

Sampling:

In order to identify the barriers to access to distance learning more accurately, research is planned to be conducted on children attending school regularly before COVID-19, and the children are identified through the list of "Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) Programme for Syrians and Other Refugee Children." Within the scope of CCTE, cash support is provided to children who attend school regularly (not being absent more than four days within a month), which varies according to the gender and grade. For the research, children who are eligible for the CCTE payment in March 2020 were taken into consideration (March payments are made based on the school attendance in January and February). The study is conducted in 15 provinces where the majority of the people under TP and IP live in and where the community centers of Turkish Red Crescent are located. By conducting a statistical analysis based on their province and grade in order to constitute a representative sample, 385 children are identified through simple random sampling, which is one of the probability sampling methods, and children and parents are interviewed using the defined sampling list. The protection team, accompanied by an interpreter, conducted the interviews over the phone, and via the online form. Gender, nationality, province, and grade disaggregation of the sampling are presented in the figures below.



Grade



99% of the children in the study stated that they attend school regularly before the COVID-19 pandemic (continuing to attend school even if they were absent occasionally in the last 1 year).

These provinces constitute nearly 89% of the population living under TP and IP and about 83% of 462.467 children in total who received CCTE payment in March.

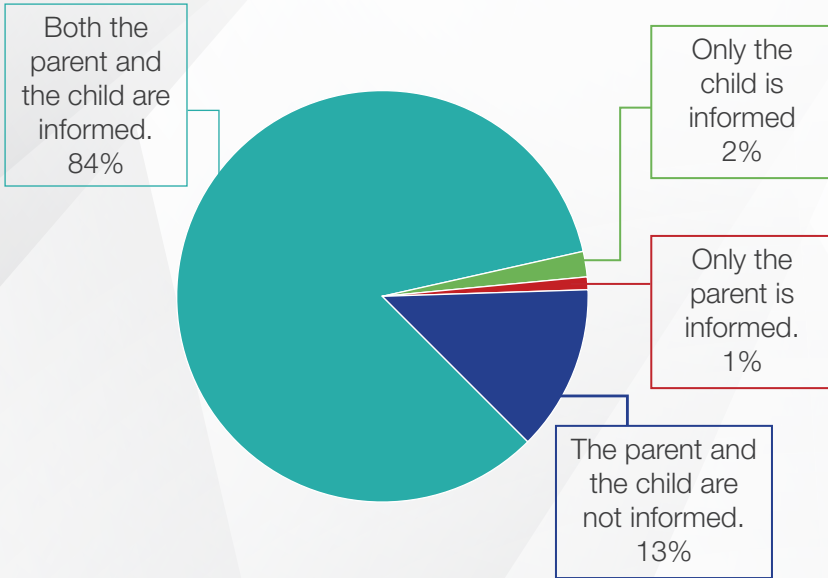
Provinces



RESEARCH FINDINGS

Being Informed about and Involved in Distance Learning During COVID-19

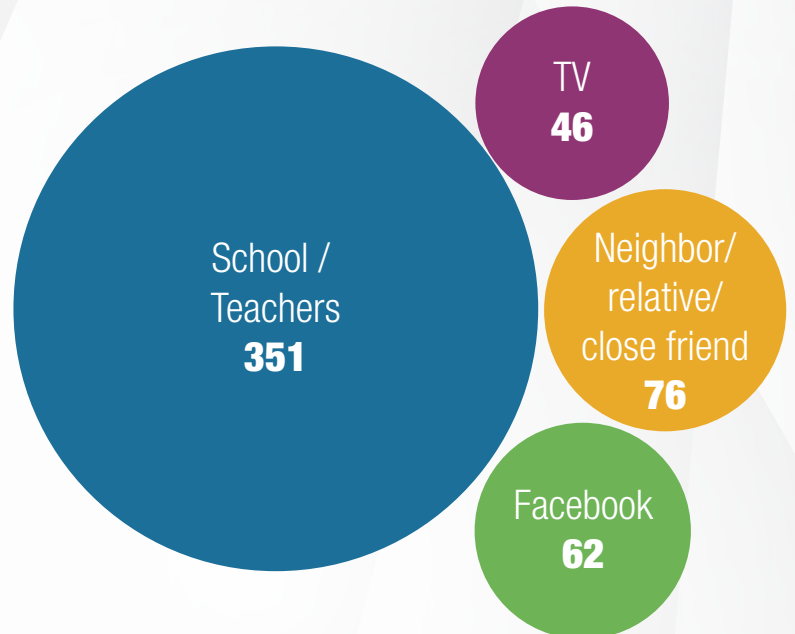
Being informed about distance learning



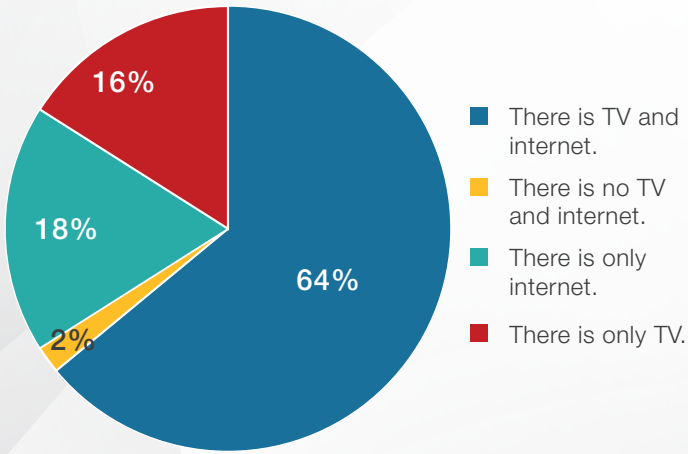
Both children and their parents are asked if they have any information about distance learning during COVID-19, and 84% of them state that they are aware of the distance learning. It is seen that schools/teachers are the widespread information sources of the children and their parents.

When the parents and children who are informed about distance learning (334 families) are asked about their information sources, it is observed that there are participants who are informed about distance learning through a single source as well as those who are informed through multiple sources concurrently. It is stated that most of the people who have that information through their school teachers access this information mostly from class groups on WhatsApp.

Information sources

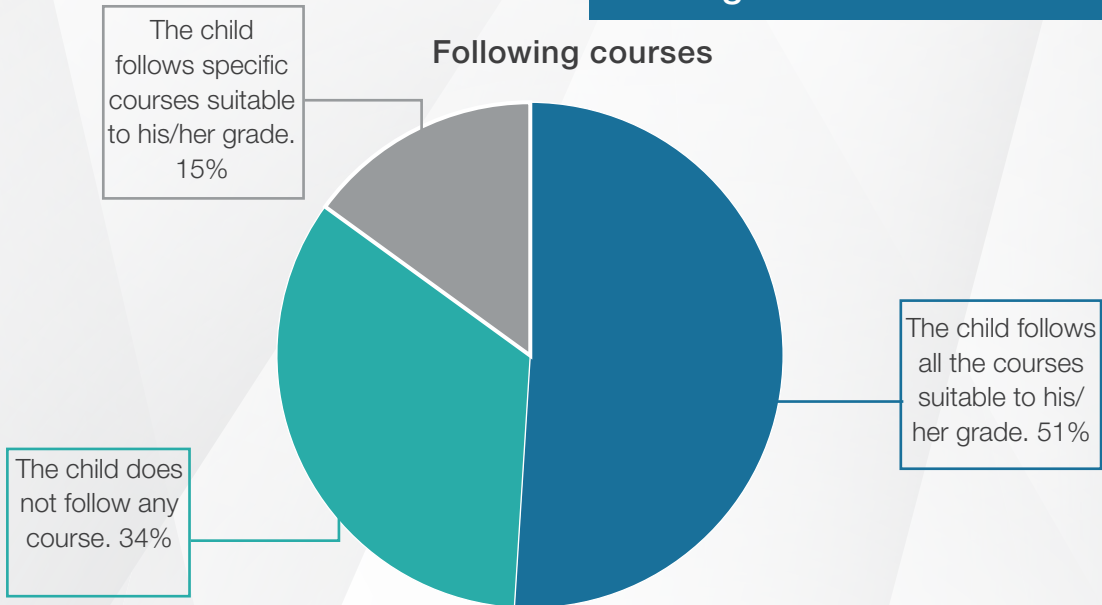


TV and internet

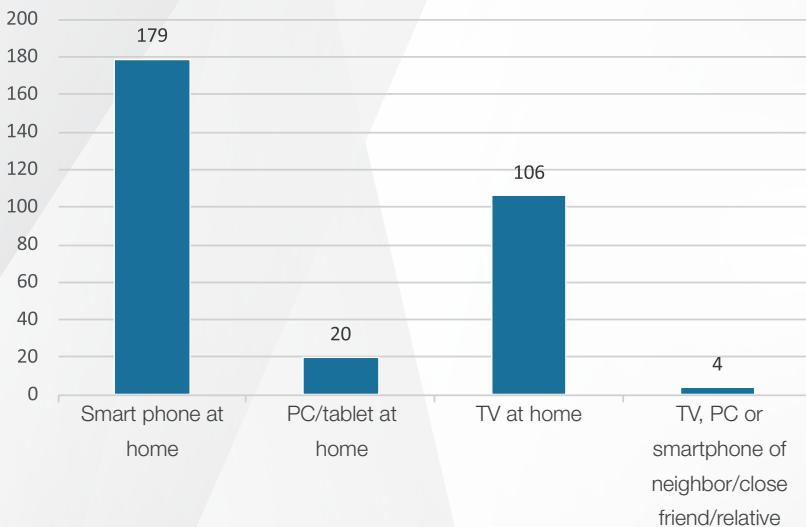


While 64% of the children in the study have TV and internet in their homes, only 2% of them do not have any of those. However, since technical details such as technical features of the existing TV and the internet speed also affect access to education, the methods for following the distance learning, as well as other details, are also investigated.

Following courses



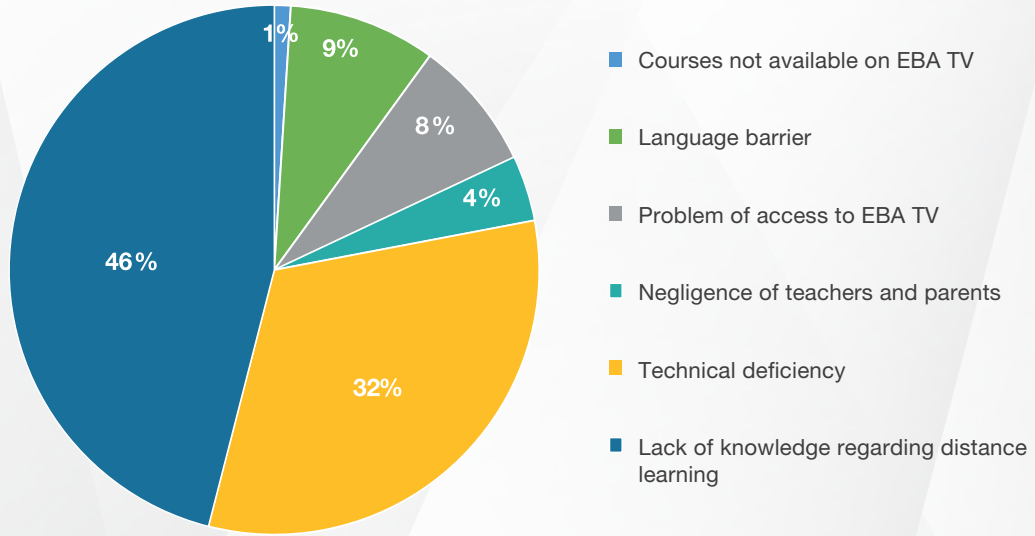
Sources for following courses



When 254 children who follow all the courses or some specific courses suitable for their grade are asked about how they follow courses, it is learned that they mostly use TV and smartphone, also following courses by more than one tool.

Reasons for Being Unable to Follow Courses

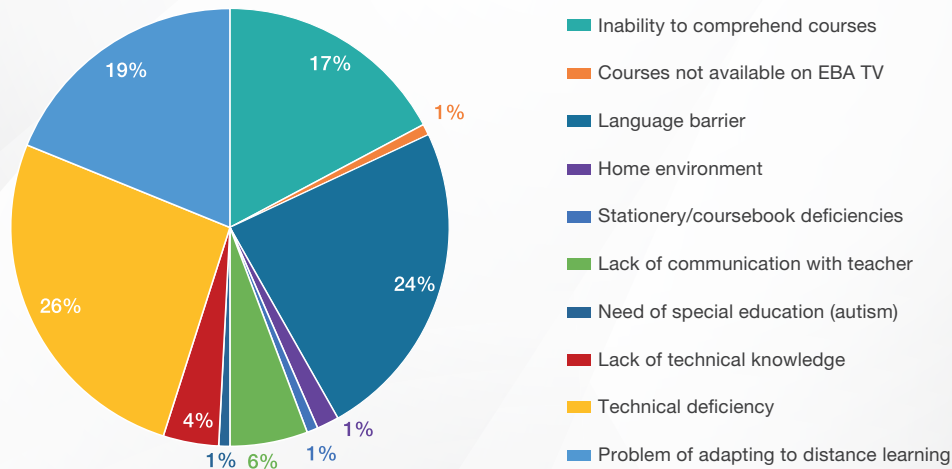
When the children are asked if they follow courses during the distance learning process, it is learned that 34% of them do not follow. It is seen that the reason for the fact that 46% of the children do not follow courses is that they and their parents do not have information about distance learning. In addition, it is seen that 32% of the children who do not follow courses are unable to do that because of technical deficiencies, such as TV, internet, and smartphone, while 9% of them encounter the language barrier. It is stated by the parents of 8% of the children who do not follow courses that they lack technical information about access to EBA TV, having problems such as obtaining a password and curriculum. It is also seen that children do not follow courses when their teachers and parents do not communicate with them about distance learning and monitor their access to education. The percentage of the children who do not follow courses due to the negligence of teachers and parents is 4%. The 1% of the participants who are İmam Hatip highschool students state that their courses are not available on EBA TV.



When the parents of the children not following the courses are asked about *how their children spend their days*, they provide different answers, such as learning the Quran, learning Arabic, watching TV, and helping for housework, playing games, studying/reading by themselves, or doing nothing.

When the gender-based differences of the children who cannot follow the courses are elaborated, there are no such differences realize; however, looking at the answers about how they spend their times in a day, girls who help the housework are more than boys, and boys who watch TV or playing games are more than girls.

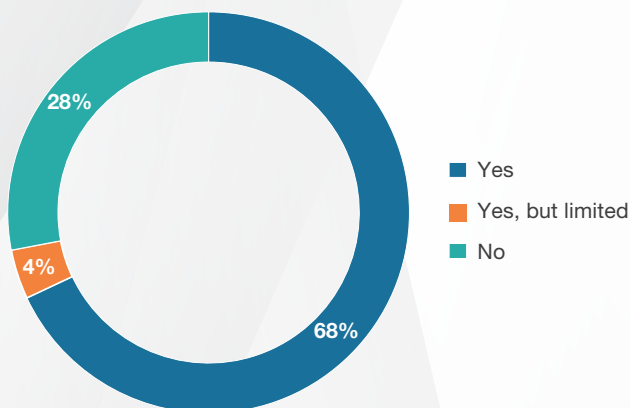
Problems Faced by Children Taking Specific Courses or All the Courses Suitable to Their Grades



Children who follow specific courses or all the courses suitable to their grades also face some challenges in the distance learning process. The biggest challenge encountered by the children taking courses is technical deficiencies (26%). They are sometimes unable to listen to the lectures because their TV is old/small, and their internet is disconnected or its speed is low. In addition, it is stated that they encounter problems regarding internet connection, depending on which floor they reside. It is seen that 24% of children have difficulties concerning the language barrier, while 19% of them find it difficult to adapt to distance learning. 17% of the children state that they cannot or have difficulties to comprehend the courses because they fail to understand abstract concepts due to the language barrier. 6% of the children who follow the courses have difficulties because they are unable to ask questions about their courses or to consult on the subjects they do not understand due to lack of communication or limited communication with their teachers. Children who participate in the distance learning occasionally encounter problems such as failing to create a password for EBA TV and not being able to find the curriculum or follow the programme, and the children who encounter technical deficiencies constitute 4% of the sample. Especially, kindergarten students are stated to have problems with taking some courses due to the lack of stationery, while children at upper grades also suffered from a lack of books and stationery. However, these children constitute only 1% of all children. It is stated that children with special needs, who are interviewed for the study, participate in distance learning but experience difficulties due to the lack of support for their special needs in the process of following courses.

Communication with Teachers during Distance Learning

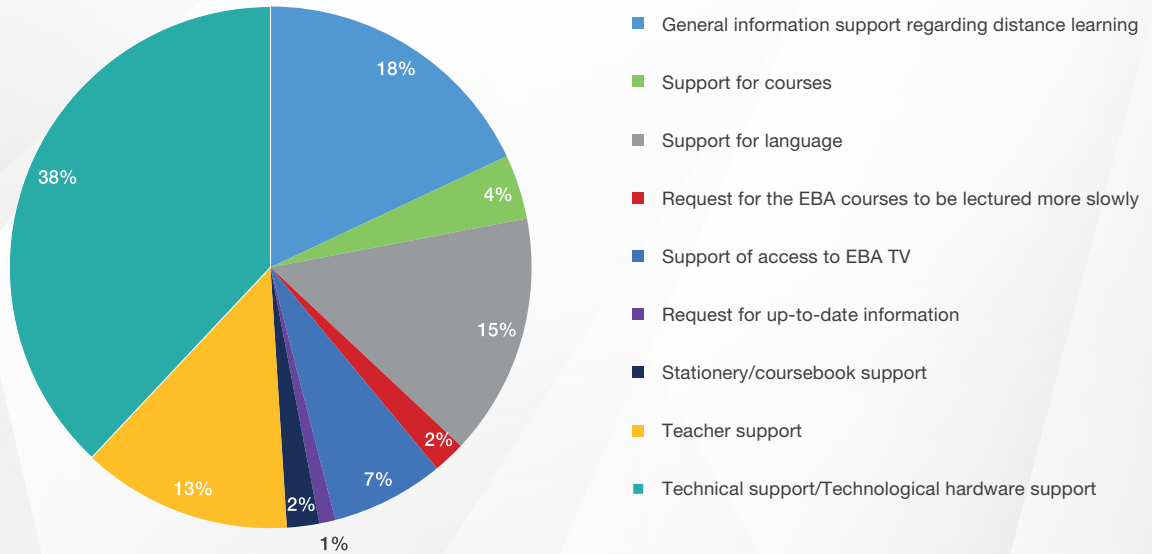
When the communication between children and teachers is asked during the distance learning process, it is seen that 68% of them communicate. The lack of technological devices, such as telephone, tablet, and PC, used for communication during COVID-19, and the unavailability of the internet also negatively affects the communication with the teacher.



The children who are in contact with their teacher usually receive information about their homework through their parents' classroom groups on WhatsApp and, since they have the phone number of their teachers, they are able to reach them when they have any questions regarding the courses. While technical deficiencies have a huge impact on the ability to grasp the subjects, some children cannot reach to their teachers to ask for support due to the unavailability of a WhatsApp group or, if available, the language barrier. While only 36 of 254 children who follow courses have no communication with their teachers, 72 of 131 children who do not follow courses have no communication with their teachers. Therefore, it may be inferred that the communication with the teacher has a positive impact on following courses.

GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Needs / requests



The points needed for access to education are determined based on the demands and problems raised by the parents. Fundamentally, it is identified that there is a need for providing technical equipment such as TV, smartphones, PC and tablet as well as Turkish satellite for families using Arab satellites. In addition, it is crucial to inform families who do not have any information about distance learning by adopting different languages and communication channels. Although some of the children are able to follow courses, they need support with regard to the language and courses and/or require reaching to their teachers to be able to ask questions. Two children, who are students of İmam Hatip School, request their school courses to be added to EBA TV, while 6 children participating in distance learning requested the subjects to be covered more slowly. Families also specify that it might be useful for them to be informed regularly about logging in to EBA TV and up-to-date details. It is observed that the home environment is also an important factor in the distance learning process, as children with a crowded family have difficulties in finding a study area at home. In the situation analysis, there is only one child with special education needs, but the access of children with disabilities should be taken into account during the entire distance learning process.

The situation analysis performed about distance learning during COVID-19 shows that 34% of the children who attended school before COVID-19 are not able to receive education in this process. Interrupting of education is a negative factor in children's motivation to attend school. In the field visits before COVID-19, it was seen that many children under TP and IP could not go to school for some time due to reasons such as language barrier, lack of information etc., or that after arriving in Turkey, they had to work for a certain time because of economic needs and that they could not access to education since they did not go to school due to being away from it for a long time and as a result, suffering from a lack of motivation, even if conditions changed later.

You may find important indicators and solution suggestions for children out of school in the report titled "Situation of School Access and Attendance by Children under International and Temporary Protection in Turkey [2019]" by the Community-Based Migration Programmes of Turkish Red Crescent, prepared before the COVID-19 process. Considering that the problems related to access to education occurring before the COVID-19 process, mentioned in the report, are likely to increase after the COVID-19 pandemic as well, possible difficulties in accessing education after COVID-19 may also be evaluated along with the indicators in the report.

In light of this information, it becomes crucial to support the children who are unable to access distance learning during COVID-19 and to follow them after the distance learning process regularly. This report has been prepared in order to contribute to all stakeholders who work/will work in order to develop solutions for possible risks that children may encounter, in addition to providing a situation analysis of children under TP and IP, who do not have access to education during the COVID-19 period.

QUESTIONS FOR SITUATION ANALYSIS

Access of Refugee Children to Distance Learning During COVID-19

This form was created in order to analyze the situation of refugee children with regard to distance learning during COVID-19. Please give information about the subject and the protection against COVID-19 at the beginning of the interview. Then, tell them no personal information shall be used in this study and ask if they are willing to participate in the study. If you receive a positive answer, proceed with the questions. If there is something that the person wants to tell you, state that he/she may tell it after the survey is completed.

CONSENT

Hello, my name is... I am calling from the Turkish Red Crescent. Turkish Red Crescent is a humanitarian aid organisation. I will ask you and your child some questions about the remote access of children to education during COVID-19. The information you share will remain confidential. Your voluntary participation in the interview is important. We can end the call at any time you desire. The interview will take around 25 minutes. Do you confirm to participate in this interview?

1. Write down the CCTE aid number of the child to be interviewed.
2. Gender of the child on the list
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
3. Write down the country origin of the child. (Only the country, e.g. Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq, etc.)
4. In which city do the listed child and his/her family live?
5. Please write ONLY the year of birth of the interviewed child (e.g. 2004).
6. Write down the grade of the interviewed child. (e.g. 1st grade, 12th grade, etc.)
7. [Ask the parent] Before COVID-19, did your child regularly attend school, even though he or she might have been absent from time to time, in the past year?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
8. [To be answered based on the conversation with both the parent and the child] Now the courses are provided through television and the website. Are you aware of this?
 - a. Both the parent and the child are informed.
 - b. Only the parent is informed.
 - c. Only the child is informed.
 - d. The parent and the child are not informed.
9. If you are informed, where did you get that information? [You can select multiple choices.] (After marking the news source, please write a short explanation about how they got this information in the field of "other". If this information was not obtained through any of the following options, you can write in the field of "other".)
 - a. Neighbor/relative/close friend
 - b. TV
 - c. Social media
 - d. WhatsApp groups
 - e. Newspaper
 - f. NGOs
 - g. Public institutions
 - h. School/teachers
 - i. Other

10. [To be asked to the parent] Do you have TV and the Internet at home?
 - a. There are TV and the Internet.
 - b. There is only TV.
 - c. There is only internet.
 - d. There is no TV and the Internet
11. [To be answered based on the conversation with both the parent and the child] Can you take courses regularly now?
 - a. The child takes all the courses suitable to his/her grade.
 - b. The child takes specific courses suitable to his/her grade.
 - c. The child does not take any course.
12. [To be answered based on the conversation with both the parent and the child] If you take courses, how do you have access to them? (After making a selection, please briefly explain the details in the field of "other".)
 - a. TV at home
 - b. Smartphone at home
 - c. PC/tablet at home
 - d. TV, PC or smartphone of neighbor/close friend/relative
 - e. Other
13. [To be answered based on the conversation with both the parent and the child] If the child cannot take the courses: Explain why the child is not able to take his/her courses (e.g. there is no Internet at home, the child does not understand the subjects, etc.) and how he/she spends his/her time (e.g. working, helping with household chores, having free time, etc.). *This field is obligatory to be provided. If the child regularly takes the courses, write down "N/A" for the following text and move on to the next question.*
14. [To be answered based on the conversation with both the parent and the child] If the child is able to take all the courses or some courses: Is there any aspect with which the child experiences difficulty in taking the courses? If there is, what is it? *This field is obligatory to be provided. If the child takes some courses, write down the reasons for his/her inability to take the other courses suitable for his/her grade. If the child does not take the courses regularly, write down "N/A" for the following text and move on to the next question.*
15. [To be answered based on the conversation with both the parent and the child] What support does the child need in order to take the courses regularly or more easily? *(Consider not only technical support, but also meeting with the family, who will facilitate the child's access to the courses, as well as problems such as having contact with teacher, etc.)*
16. Can the child contact his/her teacher when he/she needs support regarding the courses?/Is there any teacher/volunteering instructor who can provide support to the child if he/she wants to ask questions? (For example: Is there a class WhatsApp group? Is the parent present in the group? Can the parent understand the conversations in the group? Do they have the teacher's phone number?) *(Please explain the answer in a few sentences.)*
17. In this section, note your overall assessment of the interview in a few sentences.