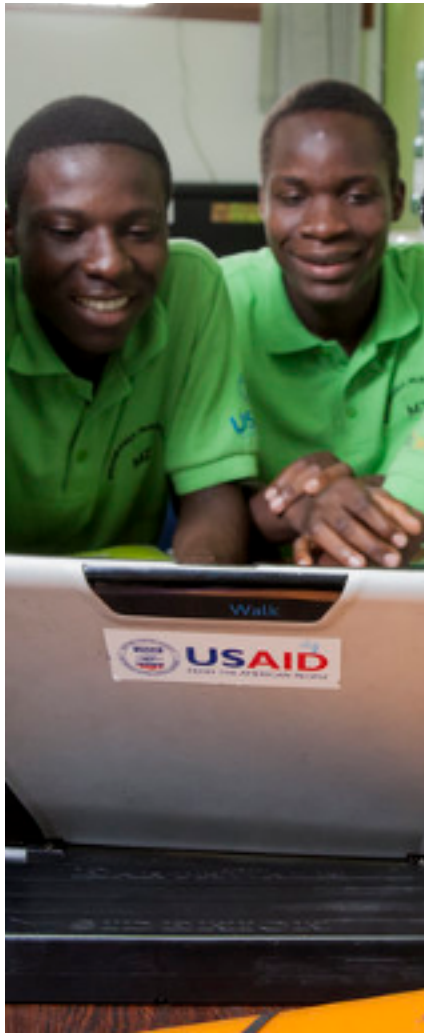




COVID-19 RESPONSE: PIVOT STORIES

Basic Education Coalition
Last Updated: April 23, 2020



About the Basic Education Coalition

The Basic Education Coalition (BEC) is a group of leading US-based organizations and academic institutions working together to promote global peace and prosperity through education. By leveraging our collective technical expertise and combining advocacy efforts, BEC members raise a unified voice to ensure US policy makers support and strengthen education for the developing world.

Background Information

Throughout the world, societies transmit not only knowledge and skills, but ethical and behavioral norms and traditions through their education systems, all of which help to reduce poverty and conflict. The importance of education increases in times of crisis, as schools are seen as the heart of the community, a symbol of a more hopeful future, and the source of education, meals, and refuge. The [Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies \(INEE\)](#) states that “funding for education response should be given equal priority with water, food, shelter and health responses to ensure education provision...[during emergencies].” Even before the COVID-19 crisis, the number of displaced persons in the world had reached [historic highs](#), making access to education a frequent challenge. According to UNESCO, over [1.5 billion](#) children (nearly 90% of enrolled learners), are currently out of school because of COVID-19 — a figure the United Nations expects to continue to increase. While these nationwide school closures in 188 countries (and rising) are necessary to contain the virus, they are projected to disrupt learning, nutrition, child safety, and the economy—to name only a few impacted areas. USAID is mobilizing agency-wide on a multi-sector COVID-19 response, and BEC member organizations are adapting international education programs to meet learners’ new and evolving needs during this crisis.



Purpose:

The Basic Education Coalition (BEC) developed this document to highlight how international education programs are adapting to meet new learner needs that have emerged due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Specifically, the purpose of this document is to:



Share the innovative ways implementing organizations are continuing to provide learning opportunities during COVID-19.



Using this evidence, advocate for the importance of continued education during times of crisis.



Provide resources, strategic approaches, and information for organizations adapting to the new operating environment.

THE CONTEXT



Pivot Stories

The below "pivot stories" are listed in alphabetical order by implementer name. This is intended to be a living document, which will be updated as program adjustments are carried out.

Education Development Center

The ongoing pandemic has caused EDC to pivot back to an old and reliable ally in the distance education space: interactive audio instruction (IAI). EDC has an extensive catalog of legacy IAI programs, comprising thousands of hours of instruction, in a variety of languages (English, Spanish, French, Malagasy, Chichewa, Bamanankan, Songhai, Kinyarwanda, Kiswahili, and Somali) and across a variety of subjects (literacy, math, social studies, science, foreign and second language instruction, and life skills). All program content is aligned to standards and best practices and was validated by ministries of education at the time the programs were developed.

Governments, donors, and other stakeholders have

reached out to EDC to explore how existing audio programs could be used during the COVID-19 crisis. These IAI programs can be repurposed for broadcast, with minimal investment, to rapidly provide education to children in a number of countries while schools are closed. Therefore, EDC has developed a set of guidelines for repurposing the existing IAI programs and is assembling program packages, including audio files, related workbooks, teacher guides, scope and sequence documents, and even scripts (if still available). EDC has posted the guidelines on its [COVID-19 International Resource page](#), which also includes its program catalog with details and links to a variety of research documents, IAI tool kits, and other resources. The article "[The Case for Learning by Radio: Teacher Support, Wide Accessibility, and Hands-on Experience in the Classroom](#)" provides additional information on EDC's IAI and the advantages of using audio during this crisis.

For more information about adjustments to EDC's programming, please contact hboyle@edc.org.

IREX

As countries cancel classes, close school buildings, and adapt instruction for distance formats, teachers are a critical source of connection and continuity for their students. This is especially true in conflict-affected areas like the Ninevah and Anbar governorates of Iraq, where the impact of violence and trauma under Da'esh occupation is evidenced in serious mental health challenges for children and youth. With funding from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL), IREX is supporting educators in Anbar and Ninevah to effectively address their students' needs.

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, IREX trained a network of ethnically and religiously diverse educators in Ninevah and Anbar to promote safe and protective school-based learning environments. In response to school closures, IREX is now preparing teachers to pivot towards distance provision of emotional support and learning opportunities. Trainings address what teachers need most, beginning with resources to provide for their own self-care at a time of heightened stress and including strategies to work

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remotely with students and to identify warning signs of domestic violence, which often increases during a crisis.

While Internet access in Ninevah and Anbar is limited, IREX has found over two years of programming that teachers are able use WhatsApp to participate in training, as well as to share remote teaching and student support strategies. IREX recently published an [Online Collaboration Guide for Facilitators](#) that can help teacher trainers and educational leaders to assess digital readiness and conduct effective virtual meetings, workshops, learning sessions, and trainings.

For more information contact rbell@irex.org.

Room to Read

Room to Read is in the process of pivoting to address the current state of education with most schools in the world closed. In the meantime, Room to Read has several resources at the ready, such as digital books in multiple languages available for download [here](#), which are free and accessible to anyone. Room to Read has hundreds of titles as well as

read aloud videos available on literacycloud.org, also free and open to all.

Room to Read is conducting individual mentoring via telephone with secondary school students in their girls' education program. The team is identifying existing and emerging distribution channels to distribute hard copy reading and learning materials to students. Room to Read is also looking to adapt life skills curriculum, literacy and reading activities for distance learning via radio, mobile, computers, or other methods.

For more information contact heather.simpson@roomtoread.org.

RTI International

RTI is using evidence-based solutions to help clients and partners mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Within their education portfolio, RTI is working with clients to adapt activities to can continue to support learning goals during school closures. In Liberia, the USAID/Read Liberia team has been working with the Ministry of Education to retool early grade reading teachers guides

for use in radio instruction. The first episodes of "Learning to Read via Radio Instruction" have already aired. In Jordan, the USAID-funded RAMP activity put worksheets and lessons online for parents to use at home with their children. They are also developing brief TV spots showing parents how to support their children when they are out of school. In Tanzania, RTI has developed a Remote Support Plan for teachers that uses WhatsApp groups to offer a series of weekly prompts to teachers around a learning theme. RTI's team in Malawi is developing a similar remote training for teachers using a combination of SMS and WhatsApp. All Children Reading in Cambodia posts simple story books on Facebook as albums with a variety of activities for students. The stories are also provided in video, including Cambodian Sign Language, which has been particularly helpful for Sign Language learners and for parents who are not strong readers.

Lastly, RTI has created tools and resources to support the wider education community and contribute to our collective learning during

Pivot Stories

these periods. “[Think before you Link](#)” is a blog post that presents considerations (around identifying the purpose, access, and content) when sharing links to online books, ideas for offline literacy activities and recommended online book sources. Another blog post, “[Going Virtual: Reflections and Key Considerations](#)” summarizes best practices in distance learning to help guide the transition from in-person to virtual delivery of educational content.

For more information, contact jbulat@rti.org.

Save the Children

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the USAID-funded “ENABLE BiH” project provided 3D printers and STEM training to 12 partnering public schools across the country and three state universities, as well as the “INTERA” Tech Park. These 3D printers have not only increased the STEM students’ capacity but, most recently, the ENABLE BiH team has been coordinating efforts with all stakeholders and experts across the region to optimize the 3D printers in the fight against the spread of COVID-19. Despite the

countrywide curfew and school shutdowns, teachers are working in empty classrooms to produce critical face shields used by medical staff treating virus patients, and there are plans to produce other life-saving equipment as well. This work has proven particularly essential during this crisis, given the public healthcare system’s lack of preparation in response to the pandemic. The ENABLE BiH team has been (remotely) closely collaborating with all project partners to prioritize meeting the most urgent needs during this crisis and to ramp up production quickly, anticipating the production of approximately 1500 shields, using biodegradable filament.

For more information contact ptibbetts@savechildren.org.

Teach for All

Across the Teach For All network, teachers and educators are working hard to ensure millions of children affected from school closure are able to continue learning in the context of COVID-19. At the global level, Teach for All’s [Virtual Learning Navigator](#) provides examples, templates, and tips for creating strong knowledge products and

virtual learning experiences for adults. These resources may help implementers as they adjust to virtual interactions with project staff.

Many of the same principles may be applied to virtual learning for children as well. Hundreds of teachers around the world have joined “Teaching Without Internet” WhatsApp groups in Spanish, French, Arabic, and English (developed by Teach For All) to share resources for reaching students in the most under-resourced contexts. Due to high demand, group members are now self-organizing to lead targeted virtual workshops on topics like using WhatsApp for learning and using SMS/voice for learning. If your organization is interested in learning more about these groups, please reach out to the email provided below.

Throughout the network, Teach for All participants and alumni are also taking various actions in response to COVID19. [Enseña Perú](#) participants created a COVID19 awareness campaign, making videos in indigenous languages to share them across communities. [Teach For Nigeria](#) fellows organized themselves to develop lesson plans for primary grades 1-6. They are recording lessons of

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up to 45 minutes and disseminating them on the government's radio station, thus reaching all students in public and private schools in their state. [Teach For Morocco](#) teachers supporting early education programs have been relying on WhatsApp and Facebook to coordinate with parents and using voice memos to reach illiterate caretakers.

For more stories and resources like those highlighted above, see this [blog](#) or check the [Teach for All website](#).

For specific questions, please contact Kim Baskin at kim.baskin@teachforall.org.



40,000 new users have used the application.

In addition, Worldreader is adding new titles to their free [Worldreader reading app](#) for older students and young adults, which is available on mobile phones everywhere. It features hundreds of books for learning and pleasure, in categories such as Life Skills, Farming, Health – even Love. Over 120,000 people already read from this app each month. For more information contact carold@worldreader.org.

World Vision

The [All Children Reading Grand Challenge](#) (a partnership of USAID, World Vision, and the

Australian Government) has funded dozens of innovations to improve literacy and learning outcomes for children who have limited to no access to books, quality education, or personalized learning. These solutions are intended to support children in low-resource contexts, but can be used to support the learning needs of children anywhere. These solutions are available in multiple languages for free and, once downloaded, do not require a continuous Internet connection. These innovations were spotlighted in a blog on All Children Reading's website [here](#).

For more information contact branderson@worldvision.org.

Worldreader

Worldreader has launched [Keep Children Reading](#). It features free access to their newest reading program, BookSmart, designed for use on basic cell phones everywhere in Africa, India, the Middle East and Latin America.

The [BookSmart app](#) contains more than 75 great local and global books in English, Spanish, Hindi, and Arabic. It's full of tips to get parents and children reading together while schools are closed. So far,

Resources


Click on the buttons below to access each resource.



COVID-19 guidance to implementing partners

COVID-19 AND EDUCATION:
INITIAL INSIGHTS FOR
PREPAREDNESS, PLANNING AND
RESPONSE

EDUCATIONLINKS
Education Resources in Response to Coronavirus



Inter-agency
Network for Education
in Emergencies
Coronavirus (COVID-19) resource collection



Early Childhood Focused COVID-19 resources



Distance learning solutions



Save the Children.
Coronavirus and Kids resources



International Resources for the COVID-19 Crisis



COVID-19 ICT4E resources from members

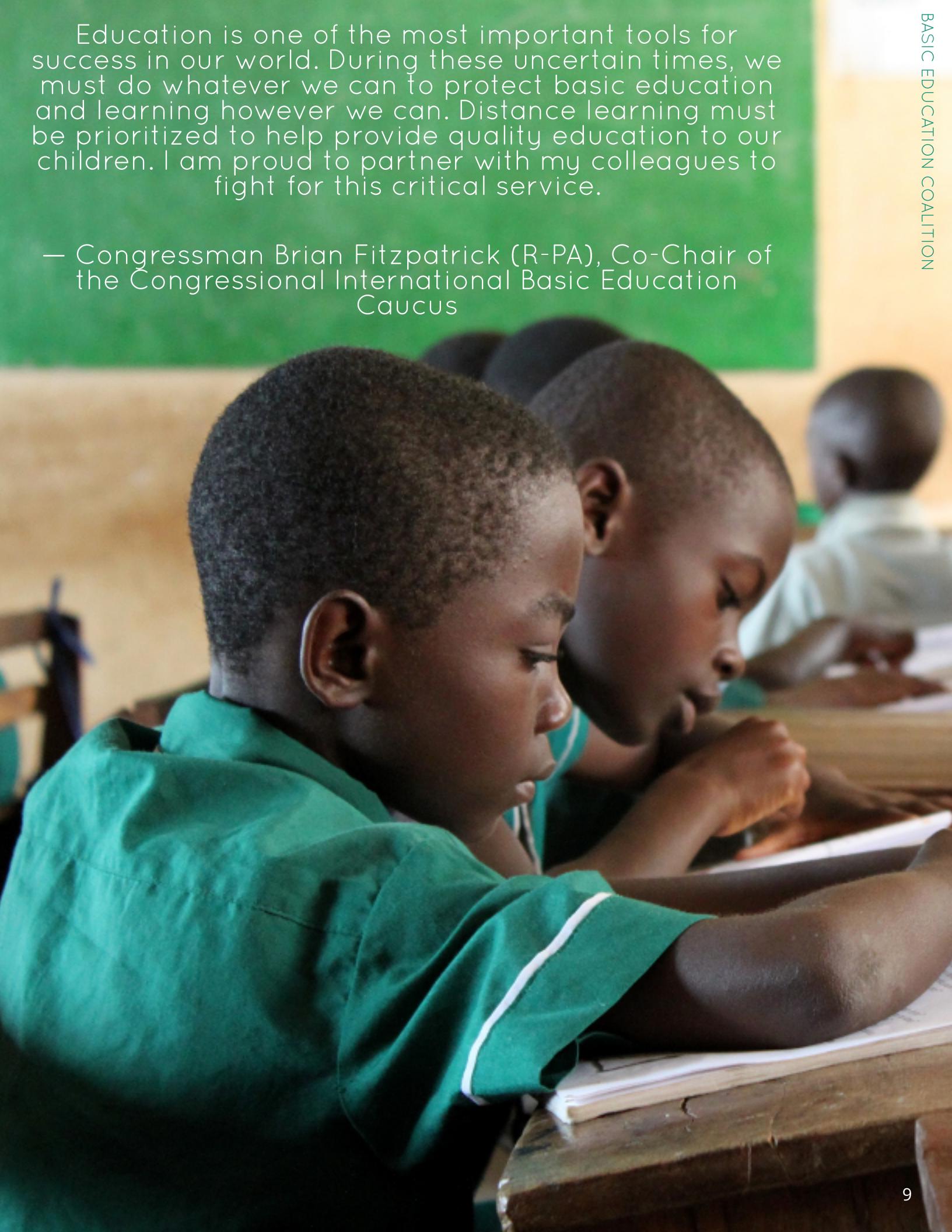


United Nations
Socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 report

To submit resources or examples of support to education during COVID-19, email pmorencynotario@basiced.org.

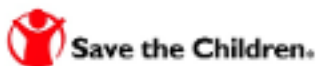
Education is one of the most important tools for success in our world. During these uncertain times, we must do whatever we can to protect basic education and learning however we can. Distance learning must be prioritized to help provide quality education to our children. I am proud to partner with my colleagues to fight for this critical service.

— Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Co-Chair of the Congressional International Basic Education Caucus





2020 BEC



A Global Network



Members









Photo credits

Front cover (clockwise from top): School to School International, FHI 360, Chemonics International, Research Triangle Institute (RTI), Erick Gibson for Creative Associates International.

Page 2: Robin Hammond for World Education

Page 3 (from left to right): Education Development Center (EDC), American Institutes for Research (AIR)

Page 4: Paige Morency-Notario for Basic Education Coalition

Page 5: Worldreader

Pages 6 and 7: Paige Morency-Notario for Basic Education Coalition

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Pages 10 and 11: Teach for All

