COVID-19 RESPONSE:
PIVOT STORIES

Basic Education Coalition

Last Updated: August 11, 2021

THE CONTEXT

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 85% of enrolled learners), were (or still are) out of school because of COVID-19. While these nationwide school closures in nearly 200 countries were necessary to contain the virus, they have disrupted learning, nutrition, child safety, and the economy—to name only a few impacted areas. USAID mobilized agency-wide on a multi-sector COVID-19 response, and BEC member organizations adapted international education programs to meet learners' evolving needs during this crisis.

Purpose:

The Basic Education Coalition (BEC) developed this document to highlight how international education programs are adapting to meet evolving 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.

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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.

American Institutes for Research (AIR)

In collaboration with the LAC Reads Capacity Program, the Central American and Caribbean Early Literacy Network (RedLEI) conducted a survey to determine teachers' biggest challenges during the pandemic. As a result of this survey, and learning that most teachers had little to no experience with distance education, the team developed and implemented a series of six online Spanish-language webinars on Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) for higher education institutions in the LAC region between May and July of 2020. These sessions were intended to help teachers transition from an in-person to a remote curriculum and ensure that learning continued during COVID-19. Each session was an hour and a half and contained a mix of theory followed by

real practical applications that teachers could use to enhance their teaching and transition to a remote environment. Over 500 teachers from the region attended the sessions and the course has since been retaught with other institutions in the region. The series covered the following topics:

- Introduction to Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT)
- Curriculum selection and appropriate tools during ERT
- Communication and relationships during ERT
- Assessment and assessment tools for ERT
- Inclusivity during ERT
- ERT in practice

To access the webinar recordings and other resources (in Spanish), please visit RedLEI's website.

To view the webinar series on which these were based, in English, visit the Open Education Resources Africa website.

For more information, contact rstone@air.org.

Cambridge Education

Ongoing analysis and research have allowed Cambridge Education to adapt to meet shifting needs and to realize that there is a unique opportunity for new solutions to

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mend a broken status quo. Findings indicate the need to support contextually-driven, local solutions, to redefine roles, especially for teachers, and to develop a more appropriate coalition around communities and learning (similar to what the Education Commission workforce has been advocating).

Cambridge Education's UK aid-funded Strengthening Education Systems for Improved Learning (SESIL) program quickly moved to support the Government of Uganda's COVID Response Task Force to establish an effective, blended out-of-school approach to help the most marginalized children to continue to learn during school closures.

SESIL helped local governments to provide radio lessons to more than half a million children through 18 radio stations in 11 local languages. Early primary school learners were targeted with radio broadcasts on numeracy and literacy, guided by the curriculum and taught by local volunteers.

Providing distance learning was the vital first step in providing remote learning

opportunities, but radio failed to reach the most marginalized children. To bridge this gap, the Community Led Learning (CLL) initiative was launched as a pilot in February 2021 to provide learning opportunities for early primary school children during, and after, COVID-19 school closures. CLL focuses on pre-existing gaps, targeting the learners with the lowest literacy and numeracy indicators with content that both complements and reinforces the radio lesson material. Volunteer teachers will receive training on best practice through audio-visual clips made available on SD cards that can be input into basic mobile phones.

Community-Led Learning is an opportunity for committed communities to take the lead in increasing their children's chances to learn. Parents are recognized as the front line in support for education and complementary radio talk-shows and call-ins offer advice on how to support their children's learning at home. Community meetings reinforce these messages and target remote communities who may not have access to radio.

Taking forward learnings from

the pilot, CLL is now preparing to rapidly go to scale, targeting 150,000 learners by March 2022, with a focus on quality as well as coverage. Cambridge anticipates that this blended approach to learning, alongside strong local ownership from communities and local government, will improve the sustainability of the initiative, as well as the resilience of the education system in general, through the development of quality and inclusive education for the most marginalized children, both during and after the pandemic.

For more information, contact Kevin.Hardy@camb-ed.com.

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ChildFund International

In response to the psycho-social needs of children and families during the COVID 19 pandemic, ChildFund adapted educational activities for primary school aged children during the pandemic by integrating Psychological First Aid (PFA) into programs, developing home-based activity kits with social-emotional learning (SEL) activities, and contextualizing and digitalizing of SEL activities and self-protection lessons. At a global level, ChildFund conducted virtual training of trainers on PFA, psycho-social support and SEL activities in 14 countries in three regions. Sierra Leone cascaded the training to local partners and teachers for the return to school. In the Philippines and India, ChildFund developed home-based activity kits to provide daily play-based activity guides for caregivers to conduct with children, complementary to learning modules from the Ministry of Education (MoE); the activity kits were distributed in person, via text blasts and social

media cards. The program also trained teachers on how to use the kits and provided PFA to support caregiver well-being. To ensure equity and cultural sensitivity, ChildFund worked with the MoE and local partners to develop content in multiple languages. In the Philippines, 19,977 children from 20 provinces engaged in activities, with 99% of children surveyed reporting that the kits helped as a coping mechanism. In India, 100,000 families in 15,000 villages across 15 states participated in program activities with caregivers reporting that the program improved family coping, parent self-efficacy, and their child's well-being. In Sri Lanka, ChildFund is working with the MoE to integrate SEL activities and self-protection lessons into the official curriculum and distance learning platform.

As virtually all in-person gatherings were interrupted worldwide, in person activities that engage parents and caregivers also came to a halt across ChildFund parenting programs. The organization's response to the pandemic in Guatemala is an example of the different strategies

adopted since March 2020. There ChildFund adapted playful parenting content to be shared virtually among rural communities in the country's highlands. When much of the educational response to the pandemic focused on the use of smart phones and online platforms, the digital divide in Guatemala required strategies that would address the very low access to technologies among rural communities. With the support of local implementing organizations, ChildFund developed a series of radio sketches [also available on YouTube] on play strategies to help young children and their caregivers stay connected to playful learning – and to each other – during the pandemic. The sketches were then aired in Spanish and five Mayan languages through community and national radios. The same messages were also shared during mobile fairs, with community agents driving through communities with cars equipped with megaphones. This last strategy has allowed ChildFund to safely reach those families that do not have radios, in addition to other technologies.

For more information, contact cscarpino@childfund.org.

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Creative Associates International

COVID-19 has pushed Creative Associates International (Creative) to be agile in its education programming – adjusting, learning, and adopting new ways to deliver services to learners worldwide during school closures and erratic re-openings.

Technology

The onset of the pandemic and the launch of USAID's first Digital Strategy, aimed at strengthening technology use for development outcomes, catalyzed Creative's ability to transition in-person activities to online and digital spaces. To reach students, teachers, and administrators with learning and support, their teams reworked project programming – from student instruction and teacher training/coaching to materials development and M&E – to fit the digital space, while simultaneously ensuring inclusion of and accessibility to beneficiaries and partners. Their teams learned to think with a "digital first" mindset and explore digital options for delivering education services.

In addition to delivering "emergency" early grade reading lessons and COVID-19 awareness messages through IVR, radio, TV, and social media, Creative pushed the potential of technology in the following pivots.

The Afghan Children Read (ACR) program linked coaches and its well-established Teacher Learning Circles (TLCs) through digital platforms and messaging applications, allowing coaches and teachers to be trained on home-based learning support and to quickly get in touch with each other for technical assistance. ACR trained coaches and teachers to hold their own virtual meetings, reaching over 1,233 TLCs, 855 schools, and 6,203 teachers.

The pandemic validated the Morocco Ministry of Education's plans for transitioning to remote teacher training. The National Program for Reading (NPR) accelerated its work on a series of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) for pre- and in-service teacher training to enable primary school teachers to access online training on the new Arabic-language curriculum and instructional methods. The MOOCs are designed as self-paced courses and will include downloadable modules for offline access.

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NPR also addressed Ministry concerns about the accessibility of its national remote learning program to deaf and hard of hearing students. NPR supported the translation of daily television and on-line lessons into Moroccan Sign Language (MSL), working with Ministry experts and MSL teachers on interpreting, recording, and producing lessons for all Grade 1-6 school subjects.

Northern Education Initiative Plus (NEI+) transitioned the entire development process for its Igbo and Yoruba materials online, conducting six weeks of virtual materials development with two remote EGR training events per language. Coordinating with TLM consultants, text writers, and government partners online, NEI Plus followed a structured process of planning and orientation sessions, facilitator's training, and workshop delivery, using a uniform virtual meeting and workshop policy. The process successfully produced the Igbo and Yoruba materials, approved by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council.

M&E and Research for Adaptive Learning

Not only did programming change, but also the focus and way in which Creative's projects monitor, evaluate, and learn (MEL) from their pivots. Data collected from context-aware MEL and research helped Creative to understand how beneficiaries have been affected, how they are coping, and what their current needs are. These insights informed the implementation of pivot and supplemental activities.

READ II in Ethiopia assessed the televised and radio broadcast of "Tsehai Loves Learning" distance learning series, which promotes EGR and mother tongue literacy in 7 languages. Viewer/listener access, use and satisfaction were measured via telephone surveys of parents, education officers and school personnel. The assessment revealed varying levels of accessibility, engagement, readiness and capacity to support distance learning and suggested ways to improve programming, student engagement, and parental support. NEI Plus conducted a study of the impact of COVID-19 on daily life and schooling among its project participants, providing information to help

government and stakeholders adjust strategy, especially towards holding in-person classes safely. NPR administered a learning and remediation study on learning loss, student wellbeing, and educator remediation priorities, finding little or no learning loss among students in EGR basic text-reading skills overall, but revealing the need for remediation in higher order skills and among at-risk students, particularly in rural areas and pre-COVID-19 weak performers, and for provision of social-emotional programming.

What's Next?

COVID-19 created a year of hardship and tragedy, but it also produced new opportunities for Creative to strengthen its programs, particularly in the application of blended learning strategies for students and educators. Delivering programs online, via mobile technology, radio, and television proved doable and effective, but ensuring equitable learning opportunities for all children, teachers, and schools remains a major area of inquiry and innovation. Creative continues to experiment with its low cost "cut-and-keep" supplementary reading materials in

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combination with higher "tech" social media, IVR, and SMS to support learning at home, reinforce skills and promote self-directed learning. Our commitment to equity also encompasses blended SEL and wellbeing programs for students, teachers, and parents, as part of our "whole student, whole teacher, whole school" approach to learning.

For more information contact karent@creativedc.com or AdrienneT@CreativeDC.com

Education Development Center

EDC continues to assist governments in integrating and adapting formats to best deliver education and training during the COVID-19 crisis. In Madagascar and Zambia, EDC is working with national ministries of education and UNICEF to develop Interactive Audio programs for a variety of grades and languages.

In Haiti, where civil strife had already shut-down many schools prior to COVID, formerly produced and broadcast interactive radio instruction programs in early grade math and reading were re-broadcast via radio and, in some cases, were the only educational programming reaching students. In DRC, with USAID support, early childhood audio education programs were rebroadcast for use in homes and accelerated education programs for youth were also broadcast for home use. EDC worked with UNESCO in Southern Sudan to support the Ministry of Education's broadcasting of live-radio instruction, and with UNESCO Zimbabwe to produce a handbook for planning and implementing IAI. In most cases, content development was completed in short timelines in response to urgent needs, as donors have asked EDC to explore ways to make "classical" radio education (as opposed to interactive audio/radio instruction) more effective, engaging, and appealing to learners. In addition to the use of IAI, EDC pivoted from more traditional face-to-face and IAI formats to distribute content through various complimentary channels including classic radio broadcasts, Interactive Voice Response, WhatsApp optimized video for social network distribution, SMS content for direct distribution to teachers and downloadable content for general online access and Telegram for the delivery of educational podcasts. The content created for these channels ranged from professional development tips for teacher, to guidance to parents on supporting education at home. For example, in Ethiopia, EDC delivered English language program podcasts teaching students in teacher training colleges via Telegram. A script-writing-for-audio workshop was delivered virtually to 70 educators, Ministry officials, and audio producers in Madagascar. EDC also adapted several of its

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training programs to offline remote learning, online virtual classroom, and e-learning formats, as well as training of trainers programs online.

Finally, in response to COVID 19, EDC carried out a multi-country study of the effects of COVID-19 on EDC beneficiaries found that access to alternative learning during school closures was limited and varied considerably by location. In addition, the study surfaced health and safety concerns, food insecurity and job loss that could impact educational outcomes. Study results for specific populations informed EDC's programming approach during and after school closures.

For more information contact hboyle@edc.org.

FHI 360

The global education community responded very quickly to the COVID-19 crisis that is not only destabilizing school systems but also threatens to lose gains made in improving access to school and learning outcomes. In most countries affected by the virus, education service providers have turned to technology, working with radio and television stations, telecommunication companies and web-based learning platforms to mitigate the impact of loss on students. While data and information on these new education channels is becoming available, new strategies and outcomes are also emerging: embedding resilience and self-reliance.

In Guatemala, Jamaica, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic the USAID-funded Advance program quickly pivoted to help vulnerable youth who were enrolled in technical degree programs at universities to continue their studies remotely, finish their course of studies and/or internships, and to graduate. As an immediate response, Advance helped with connectivity, topped up the students' phone cards, and provided virtual follow-up sessions and support to ensure that students would not drop out. In some cases, Advance worked with university staff to keep providing career services and job preparation sessions virtually, so that students could still enter the job market as planned. As a result, the teaching, coaching and support by university and technical training staff continued despite the COVID-19 crisis and most students continued their course of studies. Also, in response to the pandemic, Advance worked with its local partners to pivot to virtual training formats. In Guatemala, Advance designed an asynchronous e-course with six virtual modules on socio-emotional learning (SEL) content for pre-service secondary education teachers. This e-course seeks to provide soon to be teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that they need to ensure learning spaces are safe, address the social-emotional needs of their soon-to-be students, as well as learn techniques to manage their own well-being and stress as they embark on their education careers. At the Ministry of Education's request, Advance is expanding the interactive e-course to in-service teachers and the primary education level. In Jamaica, Advance designed and facilitated virtual industry webinars using Zoom and including local private sector as instructors to increase teachers' understanding of their specific industries and their ability to deliver course

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content to their students. Advance is in the process of completing the conversion of 11 courses for the Council of Community Colleges of Jamaica (CCCJ) to a virtual format, which not only facilitates learning during the pandemic but has also allowed CCCJ to expand its associate degree programs to other member colleges. Across all countries, Advance provided virtual support and guidance to teachers and university staff as they adapted to distance learning, including training on incorporating a flipped classroom methodology to their virtual or blended instruction in Honduras and designing virtual employability skills modules for students so teachers and university staff in Guatemala can incorporate them into their practice as feasible. Using a variety of virtual modalities, courses, training, coaching, and job preparation activities continue to this day.

For more information contact YMiller-Grandvaux@fhi360.org.

Food for the Hungry

As the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect

communities, families, and children in multiple ways, Food for the Hungry (FH) has focused on providing extra support to meet their needs.

Teachers play a key role in supporting children and their families, and are often a strategic focal point in any emergency or conflict recovery project. With the unprecedented lockdowns and school closures, teachers themselves have been under significant pressure to pivot their classrooms to virtual or distance learning modalities, while continuing to help their students cope with the mental and emotional effects of the pandemic.

In response, FH, in partnership with the Viva Network, designed an online training workshop, "Psychosocial Support for Children and Teacher Wellbeing during COVID-19" in both English and Spanish. The two-day workshop was held virtually to train FH Master Trainers across Africa, Asia, and Latin America during January and February, 2021. These Master Trainers were provided with a workshop toolkit enabling them to train staff in their respective field offices to roll the training out to teachers in their communities. Currently, over 120 trained FH staff have supported 1,492 teachers and community
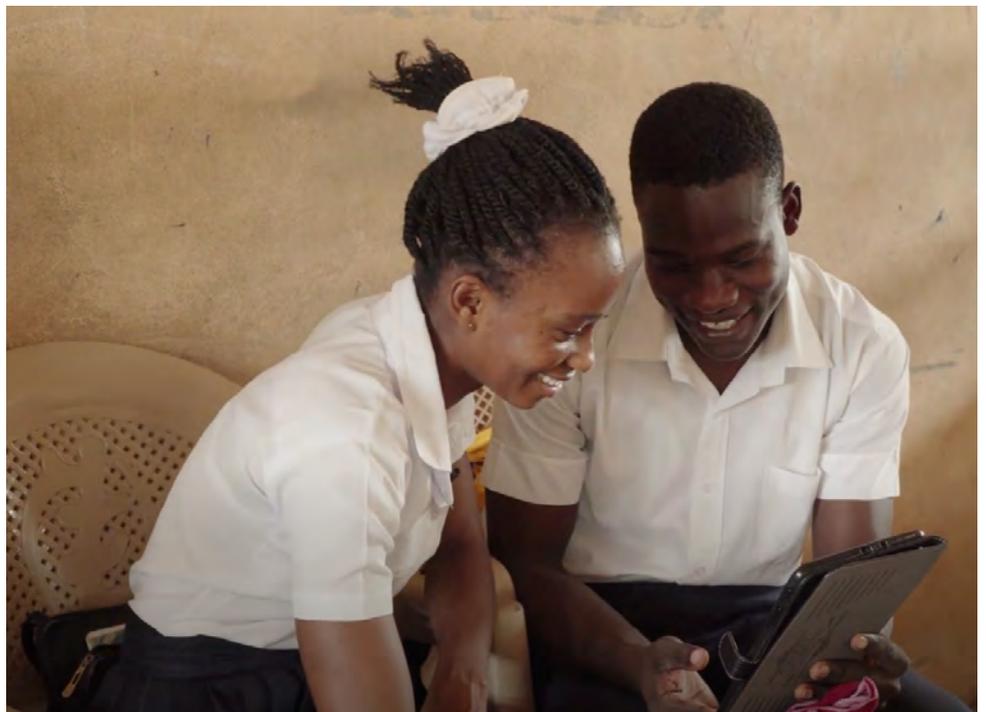
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stakeholders, with additional workshops planned in the coming months.

In one region of the Philippines, due to an alarming increase in suicide cases, FH trainers decided to not only invite teachers, but other important stakeholders as well (local authorities, church partners, volunteers, area leaders) to ensure the community was better-equipped to help children cope emotionally and mentally during this crisis. Participants appreciated the opportunity to share the effects they have seen on their community and students, and prepared an action plan to implement the new PSS strategies and activities.

For more information contact jtorrico@fh.org.

IREX

Just as the COVID-19 pandemic was gaining traction, IREX began working with the Government of Jordan to implement nation-wide reforms to grade 4 – 10 teacher preparation, through the USAID Pre-Service Teacher Education in Jordan activity. Building on growing consensus around need for

better teacher skills and competencies, the activity mobilized partners to adapt and introduce a pre-service teacher education diploma, developed by the Queen Rania Teacher Academy, at 4 universities. In-school practicum is at the heart of the diploma but with the continuing threat of school and university campus closures when the programs launch, IREX is pivoting to ensure partners can continue to offer the program in an online environment. IT capacity and infrastructure was a core component of the readiness assessments conducted with each university leading to targeted support on topics including online portfolios, online and blended learning pedagogy and use of virtual learning environments. Elsewhere, steps are being taken to define a "virtual practicum" in which student teachers can deliver and observe online classes and provide critical analysis of recorded lessons, and in which we have enhanced use of live and recorded micro-teaching. More private schools with robust online teaching infrastructure have also been engaged as practicum partners. In parallel, blended

learning was used to train over 150 teachers and principals from 30 partner schools in effective student teacher mentoring. This both ensured compliance with government Covid restrictions but also built mentors' capacity to engage online. Further guidelines are being developed to support mentors' role in a virtual practicum.

From this pivot experience, IREX is already seeing opportunities to better leverage technology in a post-pandemic world. Cross-Government engagement via the online Program Steering Committee has exceeded expectations, faculty and teachers have responded well to virtual training, and perceived limits on the potential of online engagements have been pushed. While we are all itching to gather again in person, this is an important window of opportunity to position technology as a tool to build resilience to future shocks, to think creatively about experiential education, and to widen access to pre-service teacher education.

For more information on IREX's education programs, contact rward@irex.org.

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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 helping education systems become more resilient in the face of constant change and uncertainty stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. In working with teachers and system leaders to support continuity of teaching and learning, RTI is compiling lessons about what approaches should be continued even after students return to in-person schooling.

In Tanzania, the USAID Tusome Pamoja virtual support activity began with WhatsApp messaging. It quickly transitioned to use a commercial mobile platform, Cell-Ed, which allowed the team to deliver targeted nuggets of information for teachers in less than 15 minutes each day. The technology enhances the effectiveness, quality, and diversity of content delivery, including SMS messaging, WhatsApp communications, and audio- and video-taped recordings. The approach is adaptable to a wide variety of virtual learning, with its core strength being simplicity of content and content delivery, opportunities for individual reflection and engagement with content, and cross-pollination of ideas through virtual group discussions.

In Kenya, Samuel Nasipa, a teacher at Lodungokwe Primary School, noticed that children were gathering at a nearby church for food distribution. He saw it as an opportunity to support their learning while school was closed and worked with the church to allow the children to

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listen to the English and Kiswahili radio lessons developed by the Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development and supported by USAID's Tusome project. Mr. Nasipa contacted caregivers who lived in the area and requested them to allow their children to get to the church earlier so that they could learn together. He also obtained radios from some of the families and promised to supervise and support students as they listened to the broadcast. The radio lessons proved critical for continuity of learning during school closures.

In the Philippines, the Rapid Literacy Assessment (RLA) tool from USAID's ABC+: Advancing Basic Education in the Philippines project helped teachers to address learning gaps. As the Department of Education (DepEd) pivoted to distance learning after more than six months of school closure, teachers at Iloilo Central Elementary School, serving more than 2,300 students, needed a way to remotely assess and rapidly classify students by learning level in order to provide them targeted support. The RLA, conducted online by teachers, showed that 25% of Grades 1-3

learners needed a "Full Refresher" in Hiligaynon and another 14% of Grade 2-3 learners required a "Full Refresher" in Filipino. Students who were classified as needing a full refresher have not acquired requisite basic reading skills from the previous grade level. Based on the assessment results teachers were able to identify developmentally appropriate teaching strategies and play-based activities to give these struggling students extra support.

Informed by these experiences, RTI will continue to adapt its programming and identify approaches that should be sustained once schools return to (a new) normal. To learn more about these and other programs, see

our website of shared research and tools at shared.rti.org.

For more information, contact jbulat@rti.org.

Save the Children

As thousands of children in Rwanda were affected by school closures as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, Save the Children in its USAID Mureke Dusome activity led an effort in collaboration with the Rwandan Government to conduct a mainly digital and electronic-based awareness-raising campaign. The campaign urged parents and children to stay at home and observe guidelines in light of the pandemic and offered practical tips on how to support their children to read and learn at home in a safe

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environment.

The messages developed under this campaign were adapted to be published in various media channels including radio, TV, social media, and Interactive Voice Responses.

As mass a communication tool, radio was used to disseminate audio Public Services Announcements and short instructive programs on national, local community, and faith-based radio stations to target parents in rural settings.

TV talk shows were organized to raise the awareness of the citizenry in urban settings and of key decision-makers.

In the form of posters and short instructive videos, the messages were shared through Sector and District education officials who in return shared them with parents, School General Assembly Committee members, and parents they interact with.

In addition, in collaboration with a local Interactive Voice Responder operator, those messages, in audio format and SMS format, were sent to 29,129 parents' phones. Twice a month each parent received at least 1 one-minute audio message and 2 SMS messages

with practical tips on how they can support their children to learn and read at home.

In addition, an SMS message was sent to all subscribers of a local telecom operator (MTN) urging parents to support their children to learn at home and read at least 15 minutes a day, which was the main slogan of the campaign.

A survey conducted afterward showed that over a half (51%) of parents had heard or read literacy-related messages and 69.9% of children had heard messages on how they can continue to learn, read, and write at home, in the weeks before monitoring.

On average, 40.2% of parents who heard or read literacy-related messages

reported to have practiced reading/storytelling, played or sang with their children, supported home learning, or set aside 15 minutes a day for reading to or with their children after hearing or reading the literacy-related messages. In terms of creating a safe home learning environment, 27% of parent respondents reported that they use positive methods to discipline their children and practice positive parenting in their everyday activities; unfortunately, 8% of respondents reported using physical and humiliating punishment in the week before phone surveys.

Among 1,315 parents who have children in primary grades, 42% confirmed that their

This is why treating books well and repairing them are necessary actions

Screenshot of an instructive video that was produced and disseminated on social media.

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children have participated in Kinyarwanda, Mathematics, and English Radio/TV lessons, and 26% of parents were with their children, assisting them. In addition, 74.9% of 1,063 children reported that they get assistance from their parent, guardian, or siblings to learn, read, or write at home.

Inspired by the campaign, children from the City of Kigali transformed the messaging into a YouTube sketch that was broadcasted at the peak of the pandemic. The sketch sensitized children to stay safe, and to read and borrow books while they are staying at home.

All materials produced by Save the Children under this campaign can be found here.

For more information contact hschubert@savechildren.org.

Teach for All

Across the Teach For All network, partner organizations have provided both high-tech and low-tech learning solutions to reach the most marginalized children affected from school closures to continue learning in the context of COVID-19. In 2021, as Teach For All network

teachers and alumni continue to innovate, mobilize available resources, and bring communities together to keep students learning, the network is finding that these new innovations are supporting the reopening of schools, providing support to other teachers in social-emotional learning and blended learning strategies, and could pave the way to reimagining education systems.

Teach For Uganda fellows started holding small outdoor "cluster" classes in village communities, which enabled 8,000 primary school students to continue learning. Teachers reported improvements in reading and comprehension, increased confidence, and a rise in parental engagement. Teach For Uganda is now working to partner with schools to continue using this model as complementary to school instruction. Teach For Zimbabwe began recording lessons and converted these into video files that can be shared without an internet connection, which going forward will allow students in remote locations to have access to lessons when they are unable to attend school due to illness or flooding

during the rainy season.

Enseña por México launched the Jugamos Juntos ("Playing Together") program to help parents develop responsive caregiving skills and provide tools for relating with their preschool children. COVID-19 forced Enseña por México to deliver all of the content online, and they found that by switching to a 100% virtual approach they were able to scale and impact communities far beyond the families of their teachers' students.

During the pandemic, Enseña Chile created their own radio lessons which aired on more than 200 stations across the country. Now, the initiative Canales Enseña – envisioned as "the Netflix of education" in Chile – will house the 140 radio lessons already developed, along with new audio content, online and printed learning guides, an online platform where students and teachers can easily find content, and a WhatsApp chat bot called Aló Enseña to provide AI-driven automated learning support.

For more stories and resources like those highlighted above, check the Teach For All website.

For more information contact Phil.McComish@teachforall.org.

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World Learning

In Lebanon, a country already contending with a crumbling economy, the situation was no different. Since the pandemic's start, Lebanon has endured several lockdowns to contain the virus' spread, which have impacted livelihoods, businesses, and the education sector.

Building on the education ministry's distance learning plans, the USAID-funded Quality Instruction Towards Access and Basic Education Improvement program (QITABI 2) pivoted to provide comprehensive support to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) and the Center for Research and Development (CERD) for continuity of learning. This support included (1) developing flexible digital content, (2) capacity building of ministry trainers and coaches on distance learning, and (3) providing education materials directly to families.

In the early stages of the pandemic and as the ministry was developing its distance learning plan, QITABI 2 moved forward with creating basic concept lessons that are open source and posted on YouTube.

More than 450 short interactive videos covering grade 1-3 basic literacy and numeracy have been created. The video content incorporates formative assessments throughout and offers support to struggling learners allowing them to recap concepts that have been taught previously. Several SEL (social emotional learning) competencies, such as executive function/ cognition, emotion regulation, positive social skills, and conflict resolution are also integrated in these lessons. To make these videos more accessible, teachers divide these lessons into smaller chunks and send them to students via WhatsApp.

A second set of 2,500 digital lessons for grades 1-6 will soon be posted on the ministry's digital learning platform. This set of lessons has been aligned with the 13-week abridged curriculum rolled out by the ministry in response to the pandemic. The lessons are self-paced and interactive, with clear guidelines and prompts to help coach and support the teachers. The materials can be used in-class and online, both synchronously and asynchronously.

Both the YouTube-based basic concepts and the curriculum-aligned lessons on the ministry's digital learning platform were informed by a

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thorough mapping of the curriculum process to identify essential objectives and skills which are considered crucial for students' learning and success. Prior to rolling out, the content was piloted in nine low-cost private schools that are affiliated with faith-based associations. By the end of the pilot, the teachers had administered the e-content to more than 5,000 students in grades 1-6 and their feedback was analyzed to generate recommendations for the content enhancement. QITABI's final e-content will support the teaching and learning of more than 500,000 primary students in Lebanon.

To ensure that teachers have the necessary skills and techniques to conduct effective distance teaching and learning, QITABI 2 conducted a two-month training of trainers' course with ministry coaches as well as teacher champions from faith-based schools, that cater to students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The training touched on the principles of distance teaching and learning and adapting pedagogical approaches to the distance learning format. The sessions targeted coaches and trainers with different

backgrounds in teaching and levels of expertise in e-learning. Additionally, with more trainings now moving to a blended format, QITABI 2 worked with CERD to provide an orientation on instructional design and converting face-to-face courses to an online format, in line with the Center's Teacher Training Curriculum Model.

Informed by the Rapid Education Risk Analysis conducted by QITABI 2 to understand the impact of the multiple crises in education in Lebanon, including the pandemic, the project provided educational materials to families who did not have access to advanced technology (e.g. smartphones/laptops, electricity, generator, WiFi connections). Each of the targeted families received an 'educational box' that included reading books (Arabic, English, and French), educational games, and stationery materials. QITABI 2's literacy and numeracy specialists designed the boxes to stimulate homebound students' learning and included materials to support students' educational and emotional development through play and increased

positive engagement with their siblings and parents. So far 174,102 students have benefited from these education materials.

For more information contact rajani.shrestha@worldlearning.org.

Worldreader

Since the start of the pandemic, Worldreader has been supporting children at home with its Keep Children reading program. Families can read from an online library on their mobile phones via an app called BookSmart.

The app was first available in the Global South, and later became available in the US where Worldreader launched for the first time in response to the pandemic.

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.

So far, over 1.1 million users have used the application across Africa, India, The Middle East, Latin America, and the United States.

As schools start to open around the world, Worldreader is helping teachers transition

Pivot Stories

back to the classroom by delivering the reading app on tablets, along with reading support.

For more information contact deborah@worldreader.org.

World Vision

World Vision US' education projects primarily use the Unlock Literacy model, an evidence-based approach to developing literacy skills in early primary (grades 1-3) through school, community, and home-based approaches. This model is implemented in a number of World Vision's sponsorship programs as well as through two subgrants in Rwanda and Ethiopia that have developed context-specific pivots to continue supporting children's literacy acquisition over the last year, helping them make the jump from learning to read to reading to learn.

Through a subgrant to the World Food Program in Rwanda, World Vision implements a USDA Food for Education project. When schools closed in the spring of 2020, World Vision largely transitioned from school-based interventions to home-based interventions. One of the project's most notable pivots

was utilizing the 936 volunteers that had previously been leading Reading Camps in their communities to instead conduct home visits to students and their families using appropriate COVID-19 prevention protocols. By doing so, the project reached students twice a month with supplementary storybooks, benefitting 33,624 (43%) of targeted students. Assessments of students receiving storybooks showed a 71% (67% boys, 74% girls) comprehension rate. Additionally, the project's home visits reached 19,134 parents with guidance on how to support students' learning at home and 28,834 students with messaging on good health and hygiene practices.

Through a subgrant to Creative Associates International in Ethiopia, World Vision implements the USAID READ II project. World Vision fosters and maintains community support for education mainly by overseeing recruitment of 11,088 volunteer Community Literacy Leaders who lead 5,549 Reading Camps for students on the weekend.

When the government of Ethiopia closed public schools last year, READ II temporarily stopped its Reading Camps.

The project faced the prospect of completely losing some Reading Camps and the volunteers that run them during that 9-month long interruption. But project staff stayed connected with the volunteers and community leaders, providing ideas for them to stay involved and safely connect with their students. READ II was able to stay connected to volunteers and parents through an automated call-in hotline that went live soon after schools closed. As a result of that engagement, READ II lost only about 6% of the project's volunteers and 18% of Reading Camps' sites during the COVID-19 shut-down. The project developed detailed guidelines for how Reading Camps could re-open safely and worked closely with communities in early 2021 to reopen the camps in varying capacities. This became especially critical with the increased need for remedial learning for so many Ethiopian students. As of March, new volunteers have been trained, Reading Camps' sites are operational, and World Vision is serving 815,600 children throughout the country.

For more information, contact aphillip@worldvision.org.

Resources

Click on the buttons below to access each resource.

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
COVID-19 guidance to implementing partners

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

EDUCATIONLINKS
Education Resources in Response to Coronavirus

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

ECDAN Early Childhood Development Action Network
Early Childhood Focused COVID-19 resources

UNESCO
Distance learning solutions

Save the Children
Coronavirus and Kids resources

EDC Learning transforms lives.
International Resources for the COVID-19 Crisis

mEducation Alliance
COVID-19 EdTech Idea Call

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
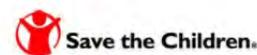
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