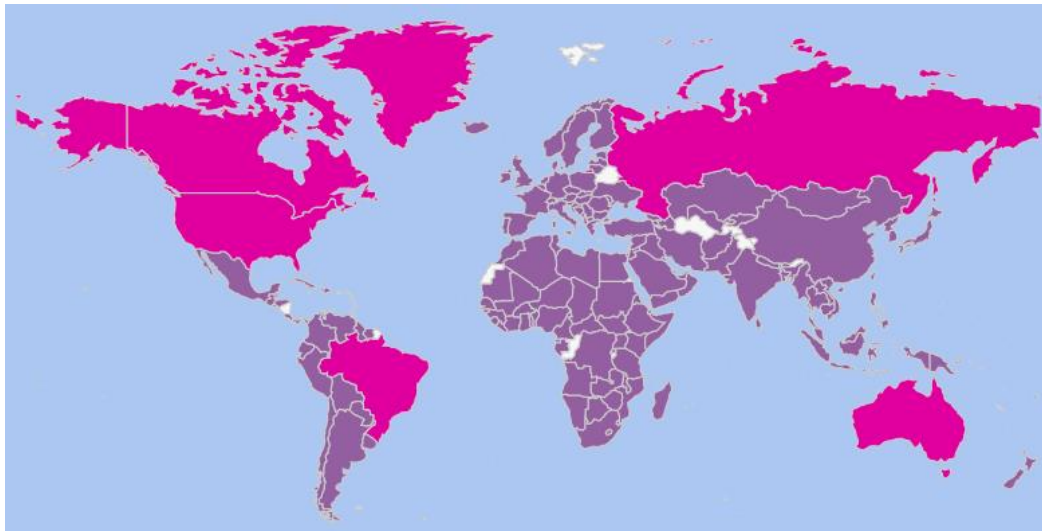


Key facts and figures about the global impact of COVID-19 on formal education systems (UNESCO)

The impact of COVID-19 on the education sector is unprecedented. As of 1 April, **188 countries** have closed all or part of their educational institutions to prevent or contain the spread of the disease, affecting **over 1.54 billion learners** (i.e., 89.5% of the total enrolled learners). UNESCO has developed and is maintaining a [map](#) of learners affected by these COVID-19 related closures (be they **country-wide** or **localized**), which provides detailed information per country and an overview of their evolution.



Global monitoring of school closures caused by COVID-19 (snapshot as of 1 April 2020 - Source: UNESCO)

Educational disruptions, even temporary, have serious repercussions on the lives and well-being of young people and their families, especially those already left behind or left out of society. Educational institutions' closure affects disproportionately learners who:

- have fewer opportunities for growth and development outside of the formal educational setting
- rely on free or discounted meals provided at schools for food and healthy nutrition
- have parents with limited education and resources who may particularly struggle to facilitate or support distance learning and home schooling
- lack access to technology or good internet connectivity which may prevent or limit educational continuity through digital learning portals during times of compulsory confinement
- are left alone at home by working parents who have no other choice for them to be looked after, which can lead to risky behaviours (e.g., increased influence of peer pressure, substance abuse)

Additionally, the closure of educational institutions bears other high economic and social costs as:

- individuals miss out on social activities and human interactions that are essential to learning and development (especially for children and youth)
- working parents are more likely to miss work to take care of their children, which incurs wage loss and related anxiety
- reduced productivity of parents working from home while taking care of their children
- confinement, anxiety and insecurity may lead to increased tensions in the family, potentially escalating into domestic violence against children, their parents or grandparents
- the propensity for loneliness and isolation leading to greater mental health issues and the risk of self-harm
- the majority of front-line health care workers are women who may not be able to work due to childcare obligations
- schools and school systems still open face increased pressure as learners are redirected to them
- dropout rates tend to rise, especially when closures are protracted

What can the IFRC and National Societies do? Insights to implement the IFRC strategic framework on education 2020-2030 in the context of COVID-19 [\(see list of related resources further below\)](#)

SO1. Access & Continuity: support efforts to minimise educational disruption, facilitate learning continuity in affected countries, and prepare for disruption/reopening. Examples of activities include:

- the dissemination of information on existing learning pathways, resources, tools and platforms in place to support the continuity of curriculum-based study to specific groups and individual learners whom authorities may face challenges reaching out to;
- remote educational support and technical assistance to learners and their families (e.g., through mobile phones, hotlines, desk support, social media - on how to access online portals and other types of available resources, and offering individualised accompaniment for home schooling)
- where possible, the distribution of educational resources to learners in remote locations and/or isolated/placed in quarantine, with no or poor Internet connectivity
- support to authorities to identify alternatives to the use of educational institutions as shelters, treatment units or quarantine centres, where such use is necessary

SO2. Equity & Inclusion: contribute to addressing the barriers that may hinder the full and effective participation of individuals of all diversities in the particular measures put in place to ensure educational continuity. Examples of activities include:

- the translation and/or dissemination of information and educational materials and risk messaging on COVID-19, as well as of/on existing learning pathways, curricula, resources, tools and platforms in appropriate local languages and other relevant audio-visual formats (e.g., pictures, Braille, sign language, text captioning, etc.) through as many diverse communication channels as possible
- economic and material support to families (e.g., through cash transfer programming, distance learning equipment) for nutrition-related matters (especially for those who relied on schools' meals) and for enabling access and good connectivity to the Internet wherever possible

SO3. Protection, Safety & Well-being: promote the protection of learners, teachers and other education personnel from the harmful consequences of all potential risks and hazards and from all forms of violence, as well as create and ensure safe, secure and supportive learning environments (in educational institutions still opened as well as online and at home). Examples of activities include:

- the dissemination and implementation of globally harmonised key messages and actions for COVID-19 prevention and control in educational institutions that are still opened or reopening:
 - the rearrangement of classrooms to ensure one metre of physical distancing between desks
 - the cleaning and disinfection of classrooms, lunchrooms and WASH facilities at least once a day, in particular of surfaces that are touched by many people (e.g., railings, lunch tables, sports equipment, door and window handles, toys, teaching and learning aids)
 - placing adequate (age-appropriate, gender and diversity-sensitive) water, sanitation and hygiene/handwashing facilities, including hand sanitizers or soap in toilets, classrooms, halls, lunchrooms, near entrances and exits.
- supporting education authorities, administration and personnel with:
 - the establishment or strengthening of safety procedures and contingency plans (including child protection/safeguarding systems/measures) of educational institutions in the face of epidemics and multiple crisis
 - the whole rearrangement, cleaning and disinfection of educational institutions that were used as shelters, treatment units or quarantine centres where no alternatives existed
- the provision of psychosocial support and protection-related activities (e.g., online, through home visits, etc.)

SO4. Provision & Quality: continue providing complementary quality (humanitarian) education opportunities on all relevant thematic areas of focus (e.g., good hygiene practices, risk reduction, first aid, healthy lifestyles, non-discrimination, violence prevention, stress and emotional management, etc.) through creative and innovative means in the given circumstances (and strongly engaging youth volunteers' networks). Examples of activities include:

- the development of creative information, communication and educational materials (e.g., cartoons, videos, online challenges, etc.) to address COVID-19 related issues (e.g., precautionary measures, stigma) which could be disseminated through traditional mass and social media channels (e.g., TV, radio, WhatsApp, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)
- the promotion of existing online courses, platforms and mobile applications for complementary, quality learning opportunities, ideally embedding a link to those into national learning platforms used by authorities for the continuity of formal, curriculum-based studies
- investment in the digitisation and online accessibility and delivery (including through mass and social media) of complementary, quality educational resources, activities and messages for educators, parents/caregivers and learners

Partnerships

- The IFRC has a renewed, global [Project Cooperation Agreement](#) signed with **UNICEF** which calls for increased collaboration in the areas of health, education and child protection, community engagement and accountability, National Societies' capacity development, as well as resilience. For further details and/or support to approach UNICEF's country offices, you may contact Petra Demarin (IFRC Senior Officer, Multilateral & IFI Partnerships) at petra.demarin@ifrc.org.
- **UNESCO** has recently launched a [Global Education Coalition #LearningNeverStops](#) and is interested in partnering with organisations to expand national and local capacities to ensure the continuity of education for all learners through the inclusive and equitable provision of distance education. The IFRC would be keen on joining it and acting as a focal point for interested National Societies that would be able to offer free support, tools or services to help countries extend educational opportunities during periods of school closure. Should your National Society be interested in this open partnership, kindly send information on what specific support you could offer at your country level to Charlotte Tocchio (IFRC Coordinator, Humanitarian Education) at charlotte.tocchio@ifrc.org
- Seriously consider liaising with **national or local education groups and/or education in emergencies working groups or activated clusters** to coordinate with other actors any interventions you may plan and thereby ensure complementarity, relevance and effectiveness in our collective response to this pandemic. Should you wish to contact an education cluster at a country level, please write to help.edcluster@humanitarianresponse.info.
- Should you have relevant resources to share, questions to ask or need support, you can also contact the **Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)** at covid-19@inee.org.

Useful IFRC Geneva Secretariat contacts for support related to the COVID-19 education response

- Charlotte Tocchio (Coordinator, Humanitarian Education): charlotte.tocchio@ifrc.org
- Francisco Ianni (Senior Officer, Floods Resilience - IFRC representative at GADRRRES Steering Committee): francisco.ianni@ifrc.org
- Gurvinder Singh (Senior Advisor, Child Protection): gurvinder.singh@ifrc.org
- Stephen Wainwright (Coordinator, Social inclusion and Protection): stephen.wainwright@ifrc.org
- Nancy Claxton (Senior Officer, Health Promotion): nancy.claxton@ifrc.org
- Maya Schaerer (Officer, Grant Management, Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness): maya.schaerer@ifrc.org
- Bhanu Pratap (Senior Officer, Care in the Community): bhanu.pratap@ifrc.org
- Ombretta Baggio (Senior Officer, Community Engagement): ombretta.baggio@ifrc.org

List of related resources

SO	Title (with hyperlink)	Organisation(s)	Short description	Target audience
All	COVID-19 resource collection	INEE	List of materials (e.g., manuals, handbooks, child-friendly resources) from numerous organisations to support the provision of education in places affected by COVID-19, with particular focus on distance learning, alternative education, e-learning, child protection, psychosocial support and inclusion	EiE practitioners School administrators Teachers/Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners
All	Resource menu for Covid-19 and the related box folder	Global Education Cluster	Compilation of resources, tools and guidance for education sector preparedness, response and recovery from health emergencies (e.g., COVID-19, Ebola), including joint education needs' assessments, logframes and examples of country response plans, organizational charts of coordination mechanisms, materials for distance learning and prevention (radio programme, child-friendly communication materials), as well as guidance notes and protocols to support the preparations for back to school activities	EiE practitioners
1,4	Distance learning solutions	UNESCO	List of free educational applications, platforms and resources to help facilitate learning and provide social care and interaction during periods of school closure (many cater to multiple languages).	School administrators Teachers/Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners (all ages)
1,4	National distance education platforms	UNESCO	Selection of learning platforms available in each region (per country), including a brief description of it.	School administrators Teachers/Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners (all ages)
2,3,4	IFRC FedNet Covid-19 page and IFRC learning platform	IFRC	Webpage repository of all IFRC guidance documents and online portal/community offering a specific playlist and e-learning courses on Covid-19, as well as numerous learning opportunities in multiple languages on many other topics (e.g., disaster management, health, volunteering, personal and professional development).	National Societies' staff and volunteers General public
2,3,4	Community guidance for social mobilizers, frontline workers and volunteers	IFRC, UNICEF, WHO	Key tips and discussion points on Covid-19, including a three-step approach on how to engage the community, ask the right questions (incl. to address stigma and xenophobia) and what to say (incl. FAQs).	Community workers, networks and volunteers

2,3,4	Covid-19 key messages on protection, gender and inclusion and technical guidance note	IFRC	Key tips and guidance to consider protection, gender and inclusion related matters into the emergency response.	NS staff & volunteers
2,3,4	A guide to preventing and addressing social stigma associated with COVID-19	IFRC, UNICEF and WHO	Tips on how to address and avoid compounding, social stigma, including dos and don'ts when talking about Covid-19, simple ideas to drive stigma away, and communication tips and messages.	Government Media Local organisations
1	Digital Leksehjelp	Norwegian RC	Online platform liaising volunteers (previously screened by the police) with children to digitally/remotely support homework	Learners (children)
3	Bounce	New Zealand RC	Online bunch of tips, ideas, videos, inspiration and peer support for emotional well-being and resilience	Youth
3	Key messages and actions for COVID-19 prevention and control in schools	IFRC, UNICEF and WHO (IASC endorsed)	Clear and actionable guidance for safe operations through the prevention, early detection and control of COVID-19 in schools and other educational facilities, including checklists.	School administrators, teachers and staff Parents/Caregivers Learners (from preschool to upper secondary school)
3	14-day Well-being Kit	Hong-Kong RC	Diary seeking to offer some ideas for daily activities and small goals in order to stay physically and mentally active and healthy	General public (esp. youth)
3	My Hero is You	IASC Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings	This storybook seeks to address children's mental health and psychosocial needs during the Covid-19 outbreak, based on the results of a survey conducted in 104 countries. A supplementary guide called "Actions for Heroes" (forthcoming) will offer support for addressing topics related to Covid-19, helping children manage feelings and emotions, as well as supplementary activities for children to do based on the book.	Teachers/Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners (children)
3	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support resource collection for Covid-19	IFRC Psychosocial Centre	Compilation of information packages, manuals, guidelines, activity kits and brochures on remote psychological first aid, well-being, coping, caring, and addressing mental health and psychosocial aspects of the outbreak (many are available in multiple languages)	NS staff & volunteers Affected populations General public
3	Coronavirus disease: What you need to know about the virus to protect you and your family	UNICEF	Series of webpages including explainers, blogposts and stories about Covid-19	Parents/Caregivers Learners (children)

3	Technical note for the protection of children during the Coronavirus Pandemic	Alliance for child protection in humanitarian action	Brief to support the emergency response to the potential child protection risks posed by the pandemic, including programmatic options.	Child protection practitioners
3,4	Protecting children during the Covid-19 outbreak	Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children	Stream of resources to reduce violence and abuse against children, including tips to practice healthy parenting, colouring and comic books to talk about Covid-19, resources to protect children's safety online, links to distance learning solutions, and Education for Justice entertaining games.	Children Adults Learners & Responders
3,4	PrepareCenter.org (incl. Covid-19 kids' activity kit)	IFRC Global Disaster Preparedness Centre	Online portal and community offering numerous resources on a range of topics (e.g., climate change and environment, community preparedness and risk reduction, hazards, health and human security, public awareness and youth engagement, urban resilience, institutional and legal readiness), including a dedicated section on Covid-19.	Disaster preparedness practitioners General public Children
3,4	Gemeinsam Lesen and Coronavirus infopacket	Austrian RC(Y) Ministry of Education	Educational resources including cartoons, songs and videos on good hygiene practices, prevention measures, etc.	Learners (primary and secondary school age) Parents/Caregivers
3,4	Get involved/Teaching resources (incl. Coronavirus Newsthink)	British RC	Collection of free teaching resources (lessons plans, stories, events, ideas and activities) on a wide range of topics (e.g., conflict, disasters, migration, first aid, humanitarian principles and values), including ones on Covid-19.	Teachers Learners (primary and secondary levels)
3,4	Campus Virtual	Colombian RC	Online portal offering educational resources on da and certified e-learning courses on various topics (e.g., disaster risk management, climate change, IHL, health, violence prevention, pedagogical approaches and interactive teaching methods), including free courses on first aid and Covid-19	NS staff & volunteers Teachers/Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners (all ages)
3,4	Covid-19 IEC materials (forthcoming)	Croatian RC Teacher Training Agency	Educational videos (under development) on relevant topics (i.e., handwashing, infection control measures, stress reactions, creative activities to reduce stress).	Parents/Caregivers Learners
3,4	Learning material service	Finnish RC	Digital content for all education levels on four main themes (i.e., equality, first aid and health, global education, morning assemblies), incl. hygiene instructions, non-discrimination quizzes, discussion and video on Covid-19	Teachers/Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners (from 6 to 20)
3,4	YABC Inner peace practice	IFRC	Video of a 30 minutes Qi-Gong session	NS staff & volunteers Teachers/Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners (all ages)

3,4	#WashYourHands	Portuguese RC(Y)	Online awareness raising and prevention/mitigation materials through social media, including an online video challenge as well as daily at-home gym exercises to promote good health and hygiene	Learners (youth)
4	Learning through games	IFRC Climate Center	Online repository of games of varying durations on a range of topics (e.g., climate change, disaster risk reduction, violence prevention, health, resilience, migration, shelter, livelihoods, social inclusion, WASH, etc.)	Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners
4	Get involved/Learn/School resources	Australian RC	Collection of educational and teaching resources (including lessons' plans, project ideas and mobile applications) on disaster preparedness and recovery, psychosocial support and coping, first aid, blood donation and migration	Teachers/Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners
4	Hero Kids	Australian RC	Campaign made of 48 entertaining family activity cards to collect, a storybook and postcards to promote the living of humanitarian values	Children (from 3 to 8) Parents/Caregivers
4	Learning online and How we help	Canadian RC	Series of webpages and online portal offering free educational programs, teaching aids and other resources on a wide range of topics (e.g., disaster preparedness, psychosocial support and coping, health and safety, violence prevention, migration)	NS staff & volunteers School administrators Teachers/Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners
4	Salaby	Norwegian RC Gyldenda	Digital learning universe offering a collection of educational games, animations, videos on many subjects (e.g., literacy, migration, etc.)	Teachers/Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners (kindergartens and primary school age)
4	Pre20	Spanish RC Spanish Government	Online portal offering a variety of educational resources on a range of topics (e.g., gender, intercultural dialogue, violence prevention, peace education, psychosocial support, health and safety)	Teachers/Educators Parents/Caregivers Learners