



Supporting Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic



With more than 1.5 billion children and youth out of school due to COVID-19, representing 87% of all students around the world, the need for education has never been more urgent. In all 16 countries where Room to Read operates our programs, there have been national or localized school closures. According to the most recent data published by UNESCO, 165 countries have closed primary and secondary schools nationwide.

Education is a fundamental human right and during this time of crisis, we must protect our students' right to learn. Only through education can people build the skills and resources they need to best respond to crises like the one our global community is currently facing. Parbati, one of our Girls' Education Program participants in Nepal, communicated this sentiment best when she said, **"Education is the only thing that cannot be taken away. It is the key to fulfilling my dreams."** Room to Read's programs, contextualized for the current situation, are needed now more than ever and we are committed to ensuring that this crisis does not result in a generation of children who are left behind.

When any disaster strikes, children in low-income communities are particularly vulnerable and often excluded from recovery and relief efforts. Many also predict that women and girls will be especially adversely affected by this pandemic, as childcare and healthcare responsibilities fall disproportionately to them. Also, when family budgets tighten, girls are often pulled out of school.

We are not giving up on our students and are working towards our mission with even more enthusiasm. We understand that there will be both immediate and long-term negative impacts as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Room to Read is working tirelessly with governments and other partners to understand the greatest needs and develop a strategic response to this crisis. Our organizational expertise will be invaluable as the situation continues to evolve.

Your generous donations help us to directly serve millions of children with crucial educational resources. **Please join us in supporting children around the world during this time of upheaval by making an unrestricted investment.**

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION

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All 16 countries

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HOW TO SUPPORT ROOM TO READ DURING THIS TIME

Unrestricted donations support our program continuity during financially challenging times like these when we've seen steep revenue declines due to canceled and postponed fundraising events.

This flexible funding helps Room to Read to be nimble and attend to these pressing needs in real-time through program adaptations.



OUR LITERACY PROGRAM

We are addressing emerging needs for learning in a variety of ways. Our online learning platform called Literacy Cloud (literacycloud.org) enables a new generation of teachers and young learners to access original, high-quality children's storybook titles in their local language, paired with accessible professional development resources for teachers, children's book creators, members of the international publishing community and governments to create a culture of reading for early-grade learners in low-income communities around the world. Room to Read has already begun to tape read-aloud videos for our storybooks and will upload a library of video read-alouds to Literacy Cloud. You can find an example of a read-aloud from a project in Jordan targeted to Syrian refugee children [here](#).

In South Africa, we are looking at sharing read-alouds of our books on public broadcasting networks. We are also sharing books and animated videos of our stories that we have produced for Grenada across several other countries.

In addition, we are creating worksheets that can facilitate distance learning. We have previously done this effectively for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, which illustrates our experience in supporting out-of-school children.

OUR GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRAM

Our Girls' Education Program team is currently taking measures to deliver our life skills activities and mentoring support via video or telephone so girls have the critical support they need to stand strong, continue learning and navigate new challenges.

We are designing new ways to support girls with distance learning options like remote mentoring, helping them not to lose sight of the importance of continuing school, and further developing and applying key life skills like empathy, critical thinking and perseverance. For an example of ways we are adapting our curriculum for distance learning, see a life skills lesson [here](#) that we adjusted for use during a visit by the Obama Foundation's Girls Opportunity Alliance.

Girls will need these skills now more than ever before to cope with these challenging times, resist the societal pressures to marry young and drop out of school, and support their families and communities to rebuild a better world.

FUNDING OUR GREATEST NEEDS

In times of unparalleled global crisis, we are trying to adapt quickly to ensure that children do not lose precious time in their educational journey. Giving unrestricted funds allows Room to Read the maximum flexibility to work swiftly to develop program adaptations that will be immediately impactful.

In the past, these funds have been used to replace books and program materials lost to natural disasters, like floods in Cambodia and earthquakes in Nepal, and invested in work around delays and travel barriers, such as those caused by political unrest in Bangladesh. Without this additional support, communities in these countries could not have replaced much needed educational resources or built and repaired libraries and classrooms, halting their children's important educational progress.

Unrestricted funds also give us the ability to ensure we can still cover the costs of essential operations, that may not be immediately apparent but that become even more crucial during emergencies, including:

- Supporting our technological infrastructure that allows us to work remotely and continue to support our programs across the globe.
- Ensuring our financial integrity and transparency by continuing to deliver financial audits in times of office closures.
- Providing human resources support to our global teams.

Unrestricted funds make it possible for great organizations to weather crises without losing momentum. Your support would allow Room to Read to focus on delivering maximum impact with the greatest efficiencies. Investing in Room to Read through an unrestricted gift reflects maximum trust in the organization's ability to make effective and impactful decisions.

Have questions?
Contact us online at
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