

**COVID-19 RED CROSS RED CRESCENT EDUCATION RESPONSE
WEBINAR SERIES, APRIL-JUNE 2020, FAQ**

Should you have additional questions or supplementary information to the below answers, please send it to charlotte.tocchio@ifrc.org and karl.zarhuber@ifrc.org.

EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY (INCL. DISTANCE LEARNING)

- ***How can the IFRC and other humanitarian agencies work together to promote home schooling programmes in order to save the academic year?***

Insights into how the IFRC and NSs can support and contribute to existing efforts to meet educational needs in the current circumstances are provided into the **IFRC technical guidance note on the education response to Covid-19**. It includes a list of links to existing resources, tools, guidelines, online courses and digital platforms for various target audiences (including learners of all ages and educational levels, parents/caregivers, teachers/educators, humanitarian staff and volunteers). This list includes **all the links to the resources that were presented during this webinar and many more**. The Norwegian Red Cross is currently testing the scaling up of its [online service/platform](#) to liaise volunteers (previously screened by the police for child safeguarding/protection matters) with children so as to provide them with digital/remote home schooling assistance.

- ***For distance learning, are we considering offline apps or other ways given the challenges of Internet access and connectivity in certain areas?***

On April 7, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) hosted a webinar dedicated to matters related to remote learning in low-tech and low-resource environments during Covid-19; the recording of this webinar can be found [here](#). Besides, UNESCO has a dedicated [webpage](#) listing a number of available solutions for distance learning.

- ***Did you develop any educational material for students at country level (e.g., Pakistan)? How to educate children in lockdown days with very limited resources?***

UNESCO has a dedicated [webpage](#) listing the national learning platforms available at country level to support educational continuity. The IFRC technical guidance note provides additional resources which might prove useful in this regard.

- ***How do you use the British RC “Power of kindness” calendar?***

All resources are made to be used at home or at schools that are still open. The activities are focused on things you can do virtually or personally from your own house; there are suggestions for kind acts to start you off, and you use the calendar to record what has been done each day. The kindness calendar can be downloaded from [here](#) and used by anyone anywhere.

- ***How can NS access support for education systems, especially early childhood stimulation and access to disadvantaged children of all ages who do not have access to internet?***

We encourage your NS to engage in supporting access to education and connect with local/national education groups and education in emergencies working group or country cluster (if any). Further insights into possible ways and partnerships’ opportunities to address education-related needs can be found in the **IFRC technical guidance note on the education response to Covid-19**. Also, please do not hesitate to write to charlotte.tocchio@ifrc.org if you would like to have a bilateral conversation to explore how your NS can work further on this together with IFRC and ICRC.

- ***Which platforms can be used to setup digital home-schooling assistance?***

The use of platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams (available for free), either through their web or desktop client functionalities, can allow the setup of such remote support. You can also subscribe via your [local Techsoup branch](#) (select upper left) and get free Access to Microsoft Office 365 and Google Suite Offer for NGOs.

- ***What about children who don't have internet connection, the needed equipment or support from their parents to follow their education (e.g., no knowledge of how to use e-learning tools)? Has there been any approach developed to target these particular groups?***

The in-person home-schooling support service implemented by the French RC and Iraqi RCS provides a great example of interventions targeting those who are living in remote places and/or who may not have the necessary equipment (e.g., Internet, ICT materials) for distance learning.

- ***Are the links shared unique to education in Iraq or can they be used by students across the globe?***

The links provided have been specifically designed to support the Iraqi curriculum and the corresponding resources are available in Arabic. They may therefore not be suitable for any student. Please also note that the Kurdistan Ministry of Education has developed an official platform for all students in the Kurdistan region, but students need to get the access codes from their schools so it is not accessible for everyone unfortunately. The platform is www.ewane.krd.

Besides, UNESCO has a dedicated [webpage](#) listing a number of available solutions for distance learning as well as a dedicated [webpage](#) listing the national learning platforms available at country level to support educational continuity. Additional resources for schools can be found at https://edu.google.com/latest-news/covid-19-support-resources/?modal_active=none&topic=view-all and <https://teachfromhome.google/intl/en/> (particularly relevant for those teaching digitally), as well as in the IFRC technical guidance note.

Finally, on April 7th, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) hosted a webinar dedicated to matters related to remote learning in low-tech and low-resource environments during Covid-19; the recording of this webinar can be found [here](#).

- ***What mechanism is used to distribute the education materials produced in the prison?***

Educational materials are distributed through the Red Cross volunteers. Prisoners can request specific materials, courses or simply word searches, Sudoku, etc. Education was pulled out of prisons on March 13th with three hours' notice, which left teachers with little means to communicate with their students, hence why the Red Cross volunteers stepped up and helped out. All this work because it is based on trust, integrity and the practice of truth.

- ***Can the prisoners receive certificates of completion and/or academic recognition for any of the listed subjects?***

This very much depends on the student and the course. Some are in the middle of courses and many need a lot of literacy support to actually complete them.

- ***What was the role of those volunteers in prison before Covid-19?***

These volunteers are engaged in the community-based health and first aid programme (CBHFA) which was presented in its online version during the first webinar (see related PPT and takeaways [here](#)). Their role includes raising awareness and inspiring behavioural change on health-related matters (and their determinants) as relevant to the prison context.

- ***Does our goal extend to all aspects of education or only to feasible academic studies that can be facilitated in a self-quarantined environment (e.g., math and science vs physical education)?***

Our strategic framework encompasses all educational settings (formal and non-formal) and therefore focuses not only on academic studies but also (and probably more) on other aspects where our expertise lies when it comes to supporting the provision of education (e.g., health (incl. first aid, hygiene promotion), risk reduction, social and emotional learning, etc.). Webinar n°5, scheduled on May 27th at 15:00 (CEST), will provide examples of educational initiatives provided by the RCRC in the current Covid-19 context. It is also worth highlighting that physical education may also - like literacy, numeracy and sciences - be delivered virtually.

- ***How can the tools presented be accessed? Can anyone (including teachers) download and use them? Are there any available in Braille or sign language for people with visual and hearing impairments?***

All materials of the IFRC Psychosocial Support Center (be they Covid-19 related or not) are open source and can be freely accessed, downloaded and used by anyone interested at <https://pscentre.org/resource-centre>. The specific Covid-19 related resources can be found at <https://pscentre.org/archives/resource-category/covid19>. The PS Center is currently exploring possibilities to adapt for those living with disabilities the [IASC endorsed storybook "My Hero Is You"](#).

- ***Where can we find guidance for the safe reopening of schools? How to manage such reopening (e.g., physical distancing measures) when there are large groups of students in each classroom (e.g., like in informal settlements)? What is the recommendation in terms of mask wearing and minimum distance between students and with teachers?***

The IFRC, UNICEF and WHO co-developed [key messages and actions for Covid-19 prevention and control in schools](#) which has been endorsed by IASC. WHO also recently released [considerations for school-related public health measures in the context of Covid-19](#). Additional guidance and materials in several languages can be found in this [online library folder](#).

- ***Have studies been conducted on the transmission rates to children which is said to be lower?***

Yes, new data is coming in almost every day and most studies emphasize that children are not a significant source of transmission. There are a number of studies to this effect, some of which are included in the recent systematic review "Children are unlikely to be the main drivers of the Covid-19 pandemic" conducted by Acta Paediatrica, and dated 19 May 2020, that you may like to consult at https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32430964/?from_term=coronavirus&from_sort=date&from_page=3&from_pos=3. Out of a detailed analysis of 700 scientific papers and letters and 47 full texts, children accounted for a small fraction of COVID-19 cases and mostly had social contacts with peers or parents, rather than older people at risk of severe disease. Data on viral loads were scarce, but indicated that children may have lower levels than adults, partly because they often have fewer symptoms, and this should decrease the transmission risk. Household transmission studies showed that children were rarely the index case and case studies suggested that children with COVID-19 seldom caused outbreaks. However, it is highly likely that children can transmit the SARS-COV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19, and even asymptomatic children can have viral loads. This review concluded that children are unlikely to be the main drivers of the pandemic and that opening up schools and kindergartens is unlikely to impact COVID-19 mortality rates in older people.

- ***Is the reopening of schools monitored and are observations/studies being carried out on it?***

Yes, but not in a systematic way. A number of countries are beginning early analysis such as Ireland and France. Norway is the first to really analyse consequences of school closures. Norway's statistics

agency was also the first in the world to calculate the permanent damage inflicted by school closures: every week of classroom education denied to students, it found, stymies life chances and permanently lowers earnings potential. So a country should only enforce this draconian measure if it is sure that the academic foundation for lockdown was sound. And in Stoltenberg's opinion, 'the academic foundation was not good enough' for lockdown this time (<https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/norway-health-chief-lockdown-was-not-needed-to-tame-covid>).

- ***Where can we get the YABC toolkit?***

Information on the YABC initiative, including a sample of its toolkit and the executive summary of the global impact study conducted by an independent academic researcher, is available at <https://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/principles-and-values/youth-as-agents-of-behavioural-change-yabc/>. For further details, please contact Charlotte Tocchio at charlotte.tocchio@ifrc.org.

- ***Can Qi-Gong be conducted with blended age groups (e.g., 9-17 together)? What about organising an online gathering to do Qi-Gong together with all (young) RCRC volunteers?***

The YABC Qi-Gong sessions have been designed in such a way so as to be suitable to most age groups and diversities. Such Qi-Gong exercises can definitely be practiced by people from all ages together, and have even been run with people living with disabilities (e.g., in wheelchairs).

As for the suggestion of a global online gathering to practice it, we will make sure to relay it to the global YABC and regional youth networks for their consideration. We will also explore the possibility to make this video series available through different channels than the [RCRC SEAYN Facebook page](#) and the [IFRC Strategy 2030 website](#).

SPECIFIC HEALTH, RISKS AND TARGET GROUPS CONSIDERATIONS IN THE COVID-19 RESPONSE

- ***How is it possible to properly distribute printed material without risking spreading the virus?***

You can use billboards instead, or put materials under doors, or use gloves to hand them to people. Social media channels like WhatsApp and Facebook groups, status, etc. are another way. An idea suggested in the chat was to print COVID-19 messages/pictures on paper towels.

- ***Can paper materials transmit the virus?***

While the virus can be transmitted on paper for up to four hours, there has to be a LOT of virus on the surface to survive for that long. In addition, studies thus far have not shown that people are getting sick from paper, but more so through respiratory droplets from person to person and high touch surfaces like light switches, doorknobs, etc.

- ***What about pregnant women? Do we have any specific resources on Covid 19 for this group?***

You can find specific information for this audience at <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-on-covid-19-pregnancy-childbirth-and-breastfeeding>. The IFRC also prepared a specific technical guidance note and key messages for protection, gender and inclusion considerations in our response to Covid-19, which can be found [here](#) and includes information for pregnant women, among other specific groups. You can also write to pgi.covid@ifrc.org for further details in this regard as well as to support/contribute to existing work in this particular field

- ***Is there a policy or guideline on how to work with aged people and people with disability?***

The IFRC technical guidance note and key messages for protection, gender and inclusion considerations in our response to Covid-19, which can be found [here](#), includes information related to

these two specific groups (among others). You can also write to pgi.covid@ifrc.org for further details in this regard as well as to support/contribute to existing work in this particular field.

- ***What specific support exist/is provided to single mothers?***

This is an important and interesting question on which we currently do not have much information and which we would like to further exchange on in a future webinar. Also, if you know of specific intervention or materials targeting this group, please do share the information with us, by e-mailing charlotte.tocchio@ifrc.org.

- ***Is there any cash programming in response to Covid-19?***

As part of the [Movement revised emergency appeal](#) to assist the world's most vulnerable people in the fight against Covid-19, the IFRC is appealing for 550 million Swiss francs (566 million US dollars) to **support National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** in health care, prepositioning of goods, risk communication, lessons learned from the global network of local responders, as well as **cash grants for families**, and mitigating impacts of large outbreaks). For an overview of National Societies' activities worldwide and further details about proposed interventions in a number of thematic areas (including health, WASH, protection / gender / inclusion, disaster risk reduction, education, etc., you can read online or download the IFRC appeal [here](#).

- ***What is the current role of the IFRC in Nigeria/Cameroon with regards to the Covid-19?***

As per their statutory mandate, the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies support public authorities in the prevention of the disease, the promotion of health and the mitigation of human suffering for the benefit of the community. Similarly, in line with its [mission](#), the IFRC brings relief to those affected by disasters while encouraging and coordinating the participation of National Societies in activities for safeguarding public health and the promotion of social welfare in cooperation with national authorities. The role of the IFRC secretariat in Geneva is to coordinate and mobilize relief assistance for international emergencies, promote cooperation between National Societies and represent these National Societies in the international field. The role of the field delegations is to assist and advise National Societies with relief operations and development programmes, and to encourage regional cooperation.

- ***What does CBHFA mean?***

CBHFA means Community Based Health and First Aid; it is both an approach and a tool. A dedicated e-CBHFA learning module on COVID is available at <http://ifrc-ecbhfa.org/guides-and-tools/>. If you are interested in getting involved in it, kindly contact [Nancy Claxton](#) who will be happy to liaise you with the CBHFA focal point in your National Society.

- ***How should we handle the stigma associated with persons who tested positive with COVID19 or those persons who are under monitoring or investigations?***

The IFRC, UNICEF and WHO have developed [a guide to prevent and address social stigma associated with Covid-19](#) which provides 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. They have also developed [a community guidance for social mobilisers, frontline workers and volunteers](#) which provides 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).

- ***When to use facemasks?***

Facemasks can reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19, but the type, quality, material of the mask, whether a filter is incorporated into the mask, as well as mask hygiene practices are all contributing factors to its protection value in preventing virus transmission. The WHO and IFRC advises that you only need to wear a mask if you are coughing or sneezing OR if you are taking care of a person who may be infected with Covid-19. Some countries and cities are mandating masks anytime you leave the house, so stay within the local guidelines, but note that if you wear a mask, learn how to put in on properly, wear it properly, take it off properly, throw it away or wash it (if a cloth mask) properly to reduce the risk of infection.

PARTNERSHIPS

- ***What about further engaging the corporate sector?***

Partnership with the corporate sector, especially ICT companies, would be particularly important to come up with innovative solutions to the unprecedented challenges posed by this global pandemic. On April 6, **UNESCO** launched a **CodeTheCurve Hackathon**, in partnership with IBM and SAP, to develop digital solutions in response to COVID-19. This initiative comprises two phases: a video competition for ideas, followed by a Hackathon among 40 selected teams. The Hackathon will run until 30 April 2020 and participating teams will work on one of three main themes: 1. Ensuring continued learning; 2. Data management and information, and 3. The present and the future: societal and health issues. If you're interested to participate in the CodeTheCurve Hackathon, register on <http://codethecurve.org>. For more information on this initiative, please visit <https://en.unesco.org/news/codethecurve-hackaton>.

Besides, the **REACT initiative of the Global Business Coalition for Education** offers a platform that channels resources and assets offered by the business communities to match them with and support the challenges and needs identified by organizations delivering education in emergencies. More details about how it works and how to register to the platform to submit a Covid-19 response project proposal can be found at <http://now-react.org/>.

VOLUNTEERING

- ***How can interested individuals get involved and volunteer for the Red Cross/Red Crescent?***

If you want to volunteer, go to the NS branch that is closest to you. If you do not know where it is located or cannot find it, please write to nancy.claxton@ifrc.org and/or charlotte.tocchio@ifrc.org and we will do our best to connect you with them.

- ***Does the Red Cross provide online lessons/training of English as a second language? We would be interested in volunteering as a language teacher.***

The IFRC developed in collaboration with King's College London, a series of free online, certified courses specifically designed for refugees and displaced people. The current offer consists of 4 courses: Elementary English, Intermediate English, English for Healthcare and Introduction to Nursing; additional courses in Business and Digital Skills are on their way. To take one of those or share this information, please visit <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/collections/refugees-displaced-people>.

Besides, many National Societies in Europe used to provide language courses for migrants to support their inclusion in host countries; however, we need to double check whether English is part of the languages offered and whether such offer continues in the current Covid-19 context. We will update this answer as soon as we will have heard from our migration colleagues and concerned National

Societies in this regard, including in terms of the potential for volunteering as a language teacher for those who expressed such interest.

Finally, please note that there is a number of mobile applications for both Android and iOS offering such courses (e.g., [Memrise](#), Babbel, Beelinguapp, BBC Learning English, [Duolingo](#), FluentU, Hello English, etc.); this [list](#) of the top ten provides detailed information on their respective cost (if any), pros and cons.

GENERIC WEBINAR-RELATED ASPECTS

- ***When will the next webinar be held? How we will know about it?***

Invitations for upcoming webinars are sent to all those who subscribe to our community of practice. Please do not hesitate to forward it to colleagues or others whom you think would be interested.

- ***Will certificates for attending this webinar (series) be awarded?***

No, certificates won't be provided. However, we are discussing the possibility to do so in the future.

- ***Does the IFRC intend to consolidate a unified package of all the good practices presented through this series of webinars?***

Yes, the IFRC is currently preparing a list of all the Red Cross Red Crescent education-related practices in response to Covid-19 which will soon be made available [here](#), alongside the IFRC guidance note which already provides a list of available resources and which we are inviting you to help us populate.