In Focus

Marking International Day of Education (Jan. 24)

At the World Bank Group, we consider education a key component to achieving our two ambitious goals: Ending Extreme Poverty and Promoting Shared Prosperity. This January 24th we marked International Day of Education and the role of education in promoting and achieving sustainable socioeconomic development across the world.

Related:


BLOG | We are losing a generation: The devastating impacts of COVID-19

Authors: [Indermit Gill](https) & [Jaime Saavedra](https)
The future of a billion kids around the world is at risk. Unless we get them safely back in school again, keep them in class, and find ways to recover the learning losses, COVID-19 will result in a huge setback for this generation at all levels.

By the end of 2021, school days lost were well above two hundred — that’s about a school year and a half. Governments across the globe will spend about $5 trillion on K-12 education this year. That’s why it is key to act now if we want to avoid this generation potentially losing twice or three times that amount in lifetime earning losses.

BLOG | Schools - the great equalizer that vanished
Author: Jaime Saavedra

The COVID-19 pandemic has turned the education world upside down. We are living through a massive disruption in the lives of millions of students, teachers, principals, and parents. Draconian school closures started in March 2020, some lasting 4 or 5 months, others – too many – almost two years.

Schools should reopen and must remain open. Nearly two years into the pandemic, the evidence is undeniable – there is little or no benefit to keeping schools closed. But the costs are mounting.


The Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel (GEAAP) – co-hosted by the UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti, and the World Bank – which is made up of 15 education experts from around the world, including Dr. Abhijit Banerjee, who shared the 2019 economics Nobel Prize in part for his work in education, produced its second annual report that presents the latest data on the impact of school closures on children. The Panel’s report estimates that without urgent action, a Grade 3 child who has lost one year of schooling during the pandemic could lose up to three years’ worth of learning in the long run.

Related: Event Page | Full Report | Publications | Recording
EVENT | Mission: Recovering Education - What is needed to avoid losing a generation

In anticipation of the International Day of Education on January 24, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank co-hosted the webinar Mission: Recovering Education - What is needed to avoid losing a generation. The event focused on the importance of keeping schools open and supporting learning recovery, as the highly contagious Omicron variant spreads around the globe, adding pressure on education officials to close schools once more.


New Report | "How Learning Continued during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Global Lessons from Initiatives to Support Learners and Teachers"

On International Day of Education, the World Bank and the OECD published a collection of 45 education continuity stories: "How Learning Continued during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Global Lessons from Initiatives to Support Learners and Teachers", jointly documented by the two organizations in partnership with the Global Education Innovation Initiative at Harvard University and HundrED. The case studies cover a variety of examples of how, amidst an unprecedented health crisis, governments and non-governmental organizations quickly responded to school closures through remote learning strategies.

The stories featured in the report illustrate how countries responded to critical challenges related to supporting teachers, parents, and students; lack of digital infrastructure; and strengthening organizational capacities to deploy remote and blended learning.

Related: Full Report | Blog | Recording
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS | World Bank Group - Africa Education Fellowship Program

The World Bank Group (WBG) Education Global Practice and the Africa Chief Economist Office announce the opening of applications for the 2022 WBG-Africa Education Fellowship Program for master’s degree holders, Ph.D. candidates and recent Ph.D. graduates who are Sub-Saharan Africa nationals. Women are highly encouraged to apply, especially those interested in Education Technology.

WBG-Africa Education Fellows are eligible to spend six months gaining hands-on experience at WBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., or country offices.

Fellows will work within the Education sector, focusing on research, economic policy, technical assistance, and/or lending operations that contribute to the WBG goal of eliminating poverty and increasing shared prosperity.

Deadline: February 28, 2022

World Bank Education and COVID-19 Response

The World Bank’s education team is working to support countries as they manage and cope with the crisis today and is advising on remote learning at scale in the immediate to short term as well as supporting operations to facilitate learning after the pandemic is over. The Bank is also providing ongoing support to systemic education reform to ensure that when children do return to school, schools can provide the necessary environments to ensure children learn.
COVID-19 Global Education Recovery Tracker

The purpose of the COVID-19 Global Education Recovery Tracker is to capture ongoing information about the global status of schools, teachers and students amid the COVID-19 pandemic. This information is intended to be used for education and public health policy stakeholders and researchers from around the world. In this second year of the pandemic, and as many countries are starting to move from emergency responses towards policies aimed for recovery, the tracker aims to support this process by focusing on data that can help build back better and more resilient education systems.

This tracker is the result of a partnership between the Johns Hopkins University eSchool+ Initiative, the World Bank, and UNICEF.
Upcoming Events

- February 8 | Report release: Saudi Arabia's Digital and Distance Education: Experiences from the COVID-19 Pandemic and Opportunities for Educational Improvement
- February 11 | International Day of Women and Girls in Science
- February 15 - 17 | Global Disability Summit
- March 8 | International Women's Day
- March 25 – 26 | Event: Teacher Tech Summit
- April 22 – 24 | World Bank-IMF Spring Meetings
- April 22 | International Girls in ICT Day
- April 23 | World Book and Copyright Day
- April 30 | International Day to End Corporal Punishment of Children

Blogs

Unleashing women and girls’ human capital: a game changer for Africa

Since decolonization, Sub-Saharan Africa has made great progress on human capital—the knowledge, skills, and health that people accumulate throughout their lives, enabling them to realize their productive potential. The region’s progress is, in large part, a result of improved access to services and narrowing gender gaps in education, health, nutrition, and social protection.

HANA BRIXI & LAURA RAWLINGS | JANUARY 31, 2022

Ensuring learning continuity during COVID-19-related school closures: lessons from remote learning experiences in over 45 countries

Despite generally been seen as overly resistant to transformation, more change and innovation have probably occurred in education systems during the COVID-19 pandemic than in the previous decade. The emergency remote learning responses adopted during the pandemic have highlighted many highs and lows, and a host of questions: what worked well and what didn’t? which innovations amplify, expose, or mitigate preexisting inequalities? what institutional capacities proved useful to quickly adapt to the crisis? how to scale and possibly sustain effective remote learning policies?

MARIA BARRON, INAKI SANCHEZ CIARRUSTA, CRISTOBAL COBO & STÉPHAN VINCENT-LANCRIN | JANUARY 24, 2022
2022 International Day of Education: looking back and leading forward in post-COVID19 learning recovery

We mark the fourth International Day of Education grappling with the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our current generation of learners, which at the peak of school closures disrupted learning of more than 1.6 billion children and youth across the world. We are living a “crisis within a crisis”.

OMAR ARIAS | JANUARY 24, 2022

READ BLOG

100 weeks into the pandemic: the importance of keeping schools open and investing in learning recovery programs

We are heading toward the 100th week of education disruption around the world. On average, each country has experienced 20 weeks of full school closures, plus another 20 weeks of partial closures. School children have lost an estimated 2 trillion hours – and counting – of in-person instruction since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns.

STEFANIA GIANNINI, ROBERT JENKINS & JAIME SAAVEDRA | JANUARY 24, 2022

READ BLOG

The Eastern Caribbean should invest more in higher education

Until 2019, Eastern Caribbean states successfully kept tourism at the heart of their economic models.

With almost two-thirds of the workforce comfortably absorbed by the industry, most governments delayed the diversification of their economies away from tourism. Under this approach, the demand on the education system was focused mostly on producing a workforce with specialized technical skills needed in the hospitality industry (such as for chefs, hotel clerks and tour guides). During economic downturns, unemployed workers would often migrate, especially to the United States, and send remittances back home. The model seemed to be crisis-proof too.

DIEGO ANGEL-URDINOLA & CYNTHIA MARCHIONI | JANUARY 21, 2022

READ BLOG

Is vaccination the silver bullet for keeping schools open?

Long-term, nationwide school closures during the COVID-19 crisis have resulted in significant
learning losses among the world’s children and have widened existing educational inequalities.

In 2020-2021, students in Europe and Central Asia lost 100 school days of learning on average, with 10 out of 13 countries having reported learning losses among at least some students. These COVID-related learning losses have so far amounted to one-third to half a year of learning on average in the region.

HARRY A. PATRINOS, ALINA SAVA, & TIGRAN SHMIS | JANUARY 20, 2022

**Pandemic priorities: Where is early childhood education on national policy agendas?**

As the COVID-19 pandemic prompted a worldwide wave of school closures beginning in March 2020, advances in early childhood education (ECE) were among the most threatened of the world’s hard-won gains in education. Due to their stage of development, learners in early childhood (defined most expansively from ages 0 to 8) may be less able than older children to engage in remote learning, to cope with lost routines and opportunities for social and emotional development, and to comply with health and safety measures as schools seek to reopen safely. A World Bank report published early in the pandemic warned that a "crisis-driven weakening of early childhood development and foundational learning...will mean lower learning trajectories for a whole generation."

SHAWN POWERS & MICHELLE NEUMAN | JANUARY 20, 2022

**Lessons for the education sector from the COVID-19 pandemic**

Today, after two years of COVID-19, we have been forced to look at a new set of relevant trends. Neuroscience remains as relevant, perhaps more so given the ability of science to advance learning. MOOCs were seen relevant for post-secondary education. In addition, the following topics may become more relevant: the role of the private sector; education technology; inequality; and pedagogy.

HARRY A. PATRINOS & EDUARDO VELEZ BUSTILLO | JANUARY 11, 2022

**The global education crisis – even more severe than previously estimated**

In our recent The State of the Global Education Crisis: A Path to Recovery report (produced jointly by UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank), we sounded the alarm; this generation of students now risks losing $17 trillion in lifetime earnings in present value, or about 14 percent
of today's global GDP, because of COVID-19-related school closures and economic shocks. This new projection far exceeds the $10 trillion estimate released in 2020 and reveals that the impact of the pandemic is more severe than previously thought.

ELLINORE AHLGREN, JOÃO PEDRO AZEVEDO, JESSICA BERGMANN, MATT BROSSARD, GWANG-CHOL CHANG, BORHENE CHAKROUN, MARIE-HELENE CLOUTIER, SUGURU MIZUNOYA, NICOLAS REUGE & HALSEY ROGERS | JANUARY 04, 2022

See Education for Global Development for all blogs posted by the Education Global Practice.

Podcasts

Lessons for 2022

Spotify | Apple | Jan. 26 - Word Bank EduTech Podcast

Latest Projects Approved

• Uruguay: Strengthening Pedagogy and Governance in Uruguayan Public Schools Project, Jan. 19

• Cambodia: General Education Improvement Project, Jan. 18, 2022

TOP TWEETS (January)

Visit our website: wrld.bg/Bymj50H8Cj3
Severe learning losses and worsening inequalities in education

Results from global simulations of the effect of school closures on learning are now being corroborated by country estimates of actual learning losses. Evidence from Brazil, rural Pakistan, rural India, South Africa, and Mexico, among others, shows substantial losses in math and reading. In some low- and middle-income countries, on average, learning losses are roughly proportional to the length of the closures—meaning that each month of school closures led to a full month of learning losses (Figure 1, selected LMICs and HICs presents an average effect of 100% and 43%, respectively), despite the best efforts of decision makers, educators, and families to maintain continuity of learning.

However, the extent of learning loss varies substantially across countries and within countries by subject, students’ socioeconomic status, gender, and age or grade level (Figure 1 illustrates this point, note the large standard deviation, a measure which shows data are spread out far from the mean). For example, results from two states in Mexico show significant learning losses in reading and in math for students aged 10-15. The estimated learning losses were greater in math than reading, and they disproportionately affected younger learners, students from low-income backgrounds, and girls.