Creativity Spotlight: Five Innovation Responses to COVID-19

Report

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HUNDRED.ORG

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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

The **LEGO** Foundation

Contents

Introduction

According to UNESCO[1], COVID-19 has dramatically impacted over 90% of school education globally this year. In addition to our Creativity Spotlight report with The LEGO Foundation, we believed it important to recognise the impact this crisis has caused these innovations. This supplementary mini-report presents case studies from surveys and interviews on how five of the selected innovators have responded to COVID-19 as a result of widespread school closures. The purpose is to illuminate how a variety of innovations have coped with the challenges they faced (and continue to face), and shed light on the changes/learnings since.

We asked five different types of innovations from our Creativity Spotlight:

- **BRAC Remote Play Labs** – Low socioeconomic solution in early childhood education

- **Educate!** – Entrepreneurship education (senior high school students)

- **MyMachine** – STEM collaboration of all educational levels:

- **Remake Learning Days Across America** – Connecting parents, families, and caregivers together

- **Slam Out Loud** – Building creative confidence

These five innovations were featured because they present a range of approaches to foster Creativity and had significant challenges, interventions and learnings to offer. In the following pages, a summary of learnings is presented first before detailed responses in their voice. We hope that this report will help others to overcome the challenges we face in education as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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1   UNESCO. (n.d.). Education: From disruption to recovery. Retrieved September 2020 from https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse

THE LEGO FOUNDATION

The LEGO Foundation aims to inspire and develop the builders of tomorrow; a mission that it shares with the LEGO Group. The LEGO Foundation is dedicated to building a future where learning through play empowers children to become creative, engaged, lifelong learners. Its work is about re-defining play and re-imagining learning. In collaboration with thought leaders, influencers, educators and parents the LEGO Foundation aims to equip, inspire and activate champions for learning through play.

HUNDRED

Finland based, not-for-profit, HundrED, discovers, researches and shares inspiring innovations in K12 education. Their goal is to help improve education and foster a movement through encouraging impactful and scalable innovations to spread, mindful of context, across the world. HundrED Spotlights create unique opportunities for both educational professionals and independent organisers of the Spotlight to gain a thorough insight into the education innovations taking place in either a specific area of education, like literacy or sustainability, or within a certain geographic location, for example, India or London. For each Spotlight, we select the brightest education innovations, which then undergo a thorough study by our Research Team and an expert Advisory Board. HundrED Spotlights are organised with partner organisations, who help from their area of expertise.

Summary of Learnings

The key points from each innovation in this report are presented as a summary in a table in the Appendix for easy reference. All innovations reported that they were significantly disrupted, which had a large impact on student learning. Their reliance on in person interaction before school closures made adapting to this crisis particularly challenging. However, three innovations had digital or virtual interaction prior to the school closures through: a native app, webinars and communication, and messaging applications.

Providing for disadvantaged children with limited access to resources was seen as the most significant challenge for some, while time and financing limitations were constraints from an organisational standpoint. The primary strategies to overcome these challenges resulted in an increased use of digital technologies in order to adapt their model for remote learning. These technological tools included: phone, radio, SMS, telecounseling and tele-learning hot-lines, developing bespoke online tools, video conferencing software (e.g. Zoom), messaging applications (e.g. WhatsApp), and creating webinar series. Some innovators went further than technology only strategies through physical in person support including personal visits for phycological, nutrition, and financial needs.

Most innovators either found little or a general impact on funding opportunities. Some innovators mentioned that their work with funders was postponed for the time being – perhaps because of a shift towards responding to COVID's immediate challenges. Only BRAC Remote Play Labs found sufficient support to meet the funding challenges as a result of COVID.

All innovators agreed that this crisis presents an opportunity to rethink traditional education on a global level and push it further towards 21st century skills as well as possibilities to continue with hybrid learning models.

These responses represent a range of contexts, challenges, responses, and opportunities as a result of the COVID crisis and school closures. Each innovation experienced major shifts and adopted new methods to adapt to the challenges they faced. These rapid changes to adapt articulated here are impressive, which have helped to ensure quality education that fosters creativity was continued during school closures in their context. We hope that these learnings may help other innovators, policy makers, educators, and leaders in the future.

PERCENT OF LEARNERS' INTERACTION WITH INNOVATION IN PERSON BEFORE SCHOOL CLOSURES: 0%
*Note that 100% of 76,000 children attended Play Labs in person.

DIGITAL OR VIRTUAL INTERACTION WITH LEARNERS BEFORE SCHOOL CLOSURES: None

SCHOOL CLOSURE IMPACT ON LEARNERS PARTICIPATING IN INNOVATION:
Very little impact 1 —————————————— 10 Impacted a great deal

Facilitating learning, development, and healing through play in the wake of COVID-19.

BRAC Remote Play Labs

Bangladesh, Tanzania, and Uganda

Play Labs are play-based learning centers for children ages 3-5 in low-resource settings. With the onset of COVID-19, BRAC is adapting the model for remote learning through radio and telecommunications, ensuring quality, affordable early learning opportunities for children affected by the crisis and helping them build better futures at a critical time in their development. Photo: BRAC / Lee Cohen

2020	76 000	3
YEAR ESTABLISHED	CHILDREN / USERS	COUNTRIES

HOW HAVE YOU ADAPTED YOUR INNOVATION DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES?

BRAC is adapting the Play Lab model for remote learning, ensuring delivery of quality early learning opportunities to children affected by the COVID-19 crisis, and helping them build better futures at a crucial stage of their development. Building on the foundation of the Play Lab model, BRAC is safely delivering remote playful learning experiences for children ages three to eight through radio and telecommunications platforms.

Remote Play Labs reach more than 76,000 children in Bangladesh, Tanzania, and Uganda to support children's social, cognitive, and language development and ensure caregivers are equipped to support children's wellbeing and remote learning. Radio Play Labs will also reach millions of additional children with play-based learning content through local radio stations.

WHAT NEW TOOLS HAVE YOU USED OR DEVELOPED TO DELIVER YOUR INNOVATION REMOTELY?

In partnership with telecommunications companies, BRAC is launching tele-counseling and tele-learning hotlines and SMS campaigns to connect caregivers and children with teachers, Play Leaders, and counselors to provide continued psychosocial support and guidance on play-based learning at home.

To expand our reach even further and support millions of additional families, BRAC is adapting elements of its flagship Play Curriculum and parenting curriculum for radio to share interactive, playful activities for literacy and numeracy, hold storytelling sessions, and share messages on child development, positive parenting, nutrition, stimulation, safety, and wellbeing.

BRAC has also learned the value of building on existing infrastructure through partnership with national hotlines, particularly in Tanzania, which has led to government buy-in and support, and ensured that the model is sustainable and accessible.

These interventions will enable children and their families to stay connected, continue learning, and maintain their wellbeing through the global pandemic. Play Labs' use of telecommunications and radio to reach children and families in this time will serve as a foundation to 'build back better', as remote learning will be a valuable modality in the contexts where BRAC works during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES?

Nearly 91% of learners around the world were out of school as of April 9, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The children that Play Labs serve are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, not only with respect to their educations, but also in terms of health, food security, and economic impacts. In these low-resource, developing, and humanitarian contexts, children are also disproportionately vulnerable to poverty and other adversities and stressors, which can impede brain development without supportive caregiving interventions. It is vital to provide these children – and their caregivers – with psychosocial support and playful early learning and stimulation opportunities that help address trauma, support healthy development, and provide a sense of routine and normalcy during this uncertain time.

Moreover, since the onset of the crisis, BRAC has iterated on implementation of the remote learning model, integrating components that address the increased prevalence of domestic and gender-based violence through an increased focus on child protection and meaningful engagement and mental health support for their parents and caregivers.

WHAT OTHER METHODS HAVE YOU USED (OR DEVELOPED) TO DELIVER YOUR INNOVATION REMOTELY?

During BRAC's initial response to COVID-19, our frontline staff visited households to raise awareness, highlighted precautionary and protective measures, and provided guidance on ways to support child and family wellbeing. Given how hard-hit many families are in communities with Play Labs, BRAC is also providing nutritional supplements to the most disadvantaged children to ensure they have the energy to learn through play. This intervention fits within BRAC's broader response work, which includes providing cash transfers, food assistance, and essential health services. As COVID-19 continues, BRAC is committed to protecting and engaging children and caregivers and ensuring children have the resources they need for their play, learning, and wellbeing.

HOW HAVE EXISTING OR NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATIONS CHANGED AS A RESULT OF COVID-19?

Amid COVID-19, we have been thrilled to see many funders step up to meet the unprecedented education challenges we are witnessing around the globe. For example, The LEGO Foundation, our longtime partner, made a $50 million commitment to a selection of partners responding to COVID-19, including a grant to BRAC that has enabled us to roll out Remote Play Labs. Other partners, such as Echidna Giving and the Mastercard Foundation, have also been exceptionally generous in supporting our work amid the pandemic.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 IMPACT ON SCHOOLS?

COVID-19 has illuminated and exacerbated pre-existing inequities in education around the world. This is an opportunity to test and scale education solutions that will enable communities to build back better following COVID-19. At BRAC, we are exploring how we can bring learnings from our Remote Play Labs to supplement traditional in-person learning and to bring remote learning to other challenging crisis contexts. For example, we are exploring how we might bring remote playful learning to contexts like Afghanistan, where security challenges and long distances to school have made it very challenging for children, and girls in particular, to attend school in person.

Educate! prepares youth in Africa with the skills to succeed in today's economy.

Educate!

Uganda, Rwanda, and Kenya

Educate! tackles youth unemployment by partnering with youth, schools, and governments to redefine education so that youth in Africa receive the skills to attain further education, overcome gender inequities, start businesses, get jobs, and drive development in their communities.

2002	46 000	3
YEAR ESTABLISHED	CHILDREN / USERS	COUNTRIES

PERCENT OF LEARNERS' INTERACTION WITH INNOVATION IN PERSON BEFORE SCHOOL CLOSURES: >80%

DIGITAL OR VIRTUAL INTERACTION WITH LEARNERS BEFORE SCHOOL CLOSURES: None

SCHOOL CLOSURE IMPACT ON LEARNERS PARTICIPATING IN INNOVATION:
Very little impact 1 ——————————— 10 Impacted a great deal

HOW HAVE YOU ADAPTED YOUR INNOVATION DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES?

To help bridge the learning gap created by COVID-19, Educate! has developed a new distance learning model to remotely deliver key components of our proven in-school model, the Educate! Experience, during school closures across East Africa. Our distance learning model has the same core components as our in-school model — skills-based leadership and entrepreneurship lessons, practical experience and mentorship, and assessments. These components are delivered to youth directly through radio and basic phone technologies (no smartphone required) like texts and phone calls.

In this crisis, one thing is abundantly clear: Young people's continued engagement with their education is more critical today than ever before. Now more than ever, youth need to be gaining critical 21st century skills that will support their resilience and recovery to the COVID-19 crisis.

WHAT NEW TOOLS HAVE YOU USED OR DEVELOPED TO DELIVER YOUR INNOVATION REMOTELY?

Educate! is taking a multi-pronged approach to our response strategy. We are aiming to deliver components of the student experience we typically provide in person through radio, calls, and texts. This "digitalization" of our in-school model leverages radio for content delivery and mobile phones for remote mentorship and learning assessments.

Core to our overall COVID-19 response strategy is that we are not creating "one-off" solutions to this crisis. The extreme uncertainty of the pandemic has meant we needed to design a remote learning model with flexibility baked in, to accommodate unknown school reopening timelines, local variation in lockdown policies and government regulations, and the likelihood of future outbreaks or start-and-stop reopening. As a result, the above distance learning model is designed to fully integrate with our proven in-school solution once safe and feasible.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES?

Our greatest challenge has been determining how to effectively and consistently reach youth during mandatory school closures and COVID-19 restrictions across East Africa. Many of Africa's youth do not have the infrastructure or resources to transition their studies to the distance learning strategies now common in other regions of the world. The challenges inherent to delivering effective remote learning in resource-constrained areas remain largely unsolved—requiring creative, context-driven solutions.

WHAT OTHER METHODS HAVE YOU USED (OR DEVELOPED) TO DELIVER YOUR INNOVATION REMOTELY?

In addition to the distance learning model detailed above, Educate! has been exploring the implementation of all-girl listener groups as a way to create safe spaces at home for female learners. Following the release of a radio lesson, a female Educate!-trained youth mentor will convene five to ten girls on a conference call, where they connect to reflect on what they learned during radio lessons as well as discuss challenges they face learning at home.

HOW HAVE EXISTING OR NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATIONS CHANGED AS A RESULT OF COVID-19?

Overall, our team has observed a slight reduction in general funding opportunities across the education sector and youth skills ecosystem, as many funders in the space have shifted their support to COVID-19 response and public health efforts or are continuing to fund within their partner portfolio—limiting the amount of new funding opportunities and calls for innovations.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 IMPACT ON SCHOOLS?

Ultimately, it is Educate!'s hope that this crisis will encourage rethinking of traditional education on a global level, pushing it further into the 21st century and towards a more equitable future.

Schools across East Africa have been closed since March and access to tools like smartphones, internet, and electricity is scarce in the region. This means that many distance learning strategies being deployed in other parts of the world are not feasible, and we've observed a significant gap in solutions for youth in this context. By developing effective and equitable remote learning strategies, Educate! aims to design solutions for youth who have been historically marginalized by the digital divide.

Currently, we are deploying our distance learning model while we cannot reach youth in schools and plan to integrate its most successful components into our in-person model to strengthen our impact once schools reopen. The distance learning model we've developed and the tools we've adopted during this time will help us reach more youth at a lower cost in the future, ultimately strengthening our long-term impact and sustainability.

WHAT ARE SOME STARTING POINTERS FOR ORGANISATIONS LOOKING TO ADAPT YOUR SOLUTION?

- Deeply understand youth realities and leverage stakeholder feedback to adapt your programming

- Engage families and caregivers in the learning process

- Integrate story-based and interactive learning to keep youth engaged

MyMachine is a unique collaboration of all educational levels to create dream machines invented by kids.

MyMachine

Belgium

3 educational levels co-creating:
1) Primary schoolchildren invent (IDEA) a 'dream machine';
2) together with university students they design a CONCEPT for it;
3) and together with students from technical/vocational secondary schools they build a working prototype.

2008	11 000	12
YEAR ESTABLISHED	CHILDREN / USERS	COUNTRIES

PERCENT OF LEARNERS' INTERACTION WITH INNOVATION IN PERSON BEFORE SCHOOL CLOSURES: 80%

DIGITAL OR VIRTUAL INTERACTION WITH LEARNERS BEFORE SCHOOL CLOSURES: Native web or mobile app, Communication and messaging

SCHOOL CLOSURE IMPACT ON LEARNERS PARTICIPATING IN INNOVATION:
Very little impact 1 ———— 4 ———— 10 Impacted a great deal

HOW HAVE YOU ADAPTED YOUR INNOVATION DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES?

Our partners around the world are continuously on speaking terms with all participating schools. Our MyMachine Coordinators in each country are working hard to create tailor-made solutions in relation to the specific measurements in the country.

For some countries this means that we will use more time -probably beyond the current school year- to enable the involved students to finish the elaboration of the working prototype and with that, the very essence of it all: the ability to learn what it takes to bring an idea to life. Just as we promised them at the beginning of this school year. For other countries or schools we will deliver within the current school year, but with a custom made time frame and potentially altered ways of delivering. One thing is key: we will deliver! As always.

WHAT NEW TOOLS HAVE YOU USED OR DEVELOPED TO DELIVER YOUR INNOVATION REMOTELY?

We are not in favour of an only-online-world. That is not what MyMachine is about. And we believe that this is not what humanity should strive for. That is why we are not just switching to online. On the contrary, we want to navigate the whole situation focussing on how to continue -as much as possible- the human to human interaction; making sure that the students of primary, secondary and higher education can collaborate within the MyMachine context.

During the fuzzy start of this situation, most schools were closed and the MyMachine process was on hold. Some 4 to 5 weeks later, the first schools started to reopen. And so, the MyMachine process continued, in most cases slightly adapted. Luckily, we already had developed MyMachine DreamsDrop: an online (upload your dream machine idea to our world map of ideas-) tool for complementary goals we have as a foundation. Should step 1 of our standard MyMachine process be jeopardised within some schools, then this tool can be used instead.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES?

The current situation is that we have been able to complete our methodology in the school year 2019-2020 with some 60% of schools. We are still collaborating with the other 40% of schools to use part of the 2020-2021 school year to finish the job (while starting a new cycle 2020-2021 at the same time).

In MyMachine, we made a promise from the very start: we will always deliver! We will never let anything stop us from producing a working prototype, while all students learn 21st century skills along the way that will serve them for life.

WHAT OTHER METHODS HAVE YOU USED (OR DEVELOPED) TO DELIVER YOUR INNOVATION REMOTELY?

We are not in favour of an only-online-world. That is not what MyMachine is about. And we believe that this is not what humanity should strive for. Technology, online tools can be useful in many ways, but it should never replace our human to human collaboration in MyMachine nor in schools at large.

Belgium has an art-history in surrealism and one painting in particular is quite famous: "Ceci n'est pas une pipe" by René Magritte. This painting pictures a pipe with those words underneath, challenging the viewer to understand that a painted pipe is not the same as a real pipe. During the first weeks of the whole situation, a parody-image occurred, showing a laptop with the words underneath "this is not a school". That image is very strong and is exactly how MyMachine feels about this. Technology can be really useful, but in the end schools as we know them, should never be replaced by Macbooks and iPads.

HOW HAVE EXISTING OR NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATIONS CHANGED AS A RESULT OF COVID-19?

We have, so far, encountered no impact on that level.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 IMPACT ON SCHOOLS?

We have witnessed numerous parents, grandparents, teachers and most importantly the students themselves, screaming for human interaction. Longing to go to school to meet their friends. If anything, society, schools and us, the people, should understand that schools are not just about knowledge transfer, but are more importantly about human skills, about allowing young people to discover their passions and talents. A part of the education process like knowledge transfer can sometimes take place online and remotely, and the use of (AI-powered) EdTech certainly has potential for personalized learning, but skills development, and social and emotional learning are equally important aspect of education. This includes bonding with your friends and peers, experiencing the magic of teamwork, sensing others' ideas, fears, anxieties, and having fun while learning.

Today we hear many voices claiming online is where education has to be. But we hope that those in charge of our education systems will continue to safeguard the fundamental DNA of our schools: an inspiring learning eco-system, focused on human connections between educators and students, among students themselves, and with society at large; a supportive environment where all students can develop their whole being.

WHAT ARE SOME STARTING POINTERS FOR ORGANISATIONS LOOKING TO ADAPT YOUR SOLUTION?

The growth of our network is driven by the interest of social entrepreneurs around the world who share our mission and vision. We believe that local ownership is critical to maximizing impact and to its sustainability. It's the initiative and leadership of these emerging entrepreneurs that sets the foundation for launching a MyMachine Chapter in their regions or countries.

The best way for applying for a MyMachine Chapter in your region is to start thinking about how you would set up a pilot. Who would be the participating schools (primary, technical secondary and higher education)? Who would coordinate your MyMachine Chapter? Who could be potential funders? Building and launching a new MyMachine Chapter requires programmatic and organizational planning. Upon signing our Charter, we will help you on all levels and stages of starting a Chapter, including templates, tools, training and access to our global MyMachine Coordinators community.

If you are a teacher in a primary school, you can join with your classroom -regardless of whether or not we have a running MyMachine Chapter in your region. Go to https://dreamsdrop.mymachine-global.org and upload the dream machine ideas from your students. Once a year we pick ideas from that map and bring them to life with education partners from around the world. Who knows, there might be one in your classroom!

RLDAA is a festival of creative, hands-on experiences for youth and families to learn together about how education is being remade.

Remake Learning Days Across America

Pittsburgh, PA, United States

RLDAA is a multi-day festival designed to help parents, families, and caregivers engage in innovative education that youth experience when they make, code, play, design, and tinker. With dozens, even hundreds, of events held in local schools, libraries, museums, and other learning sites, families can easily participate in creative educational moments. Fifteen cities now host their own #RemakeDays.

2016	150 000	2
YEAR ESTABLISHED	CHILDREN / USERS	COUNTRIES

PERCENT OF LEARNERS' INTERACTION WITH INNOVATION IN PERSON BEFORE SCHOOL CLOSURES: 80%

DIGITAL OR VIRTUAL INTERACTION WITH LEARNERS BEFORE SCHOOL CLOSURES: Communication and messaging

SCHOOL CLOSURE IMPACT ON LEARNERS PARTICIPATING IN INNOVATION:
Very little impact 1 ———————⑤——————— 10 Impacted a great deal

HOW HAVE YOU ADAPTED YOUR INNOVATION DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES?

We shifted our support to helping educators and providing tips to families on engaged learning. One of our sixteen regions did pivot to a virtual festival (on a smaller scale) and held workshops via Zoom for families.

WHAT NEW TOOLS HAVE YOU USED OR DEVELOPED TO DELIVER YOUR INNOVATION REMOTELY?

This is not a new tool but we've relied heavily on Zoom.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES?

Remake Learning Days Across America is a springtime festival. We work with many schools and after school organizations throughout the year but the events for student learners don't occur until April-May.

Since our learning festival was postponed and schools/after school organizations had to pivot unexpectedly for stay-at-home closures, we found that many of our event hosts were either inundated with the change in teaching or furloughed from work. Plus, families were overwhelmed working through all the changes due to the pandemic. So, we found that we needed to pause our work and rather support what was happening in the moment and provide space for educators and families

to "figure out their plan." This is a challenge for us because we lost our momentum building up to the spring festival.

WHAT OTHER METHODS HAVE YOU USED (OR DEVELOPED) TO DELIVER YOUR INNOVATION REMOTELY?

We created a new webinar series for parents and caregivers called "So Now What? Helping Parents and Caregivers Navigate a School Year Like No Other." This 6-part series is free for families and covers topics like: health & safety, mental health, social emotional wellness, effective communication between parent and teacher, tech safety and balance, and learning resources. This series is led by RLDAA/Remake Learning in partnership with PBS Kids, Learning Heroes, Common Sense Media, Fred Rogers Production and Fred Rogers Center. Here is a link: https://www.kidsburgh.org/a-new-webinar-series-gives-parents-and-caregivers-practical-tips-on-how-to-manage-back-to-school/

We've also relied on partnerships with other institutions/organizations who are still in contact with families to help share information.

HOW HAVE EXISTING OR NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATIONS CHANGED AS A RESULT OF COVID-19?

It hasn't necessarily changed for RLDAA (we postponed work with our funders to 2021). But, we have seen new funding opportunities for many of our event hosts and intermediaries to help them collaborate and provide support for families (whether it may be devices, distribution of supply boxes, learning webinars, etc.).

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 IMPACT ON SCHOOLS?

Part of our mission has been to ignite a conversation about engaged learning with parents and caregivers. Because of COVID-19 and virtual learning, parents and caregivers had an unique lens into how their kids learn and saw firsthand how learning happens. They had to be more engaged and we feel that there is more understanding now of how learning can happen anywhere and everywhere.

As for points of high level recommendations/tips/starting pointers for people who want to produce their own Remake Learning Days festivals, we recently created two videos for Ted Dintersmith's Innovation Playlist. One video is for teachers/schools who

might want to host a school event and the other video is for regions/cities that might want to host a festival. Here are links to the videos:

WHAT ARE SOME STARTING POINTERS FOR ORGANISATIONS LOOKING TO ADAPT YOUR SOLUTION?

As for points of starting pointers for people who want to produce their own Remake Learning Days festivals, we recently created two videos for Ted Dintersmith's Innovation Playlist. One video is for teachers/schools who might want to host a school event and the other video is for regions/cities that might want to host a festival:

- Regional/City-wide festival: https://vimeo.com/463611294
- Hosting an event (from a teacher perspective): https://vimeo.com/463608563

And, here are some points for starting a RLD festival:

- Find the best timeframe for your community: Think about your intended audience, identify partners, and find a timeframe that works for everyone. It's better if you define a specific timeframe (we suggest between 2-10 days) for your events.

- Think of your audience: One goal for Remake Learning Days is for parents, families, and caregivers to experience new ways of learning alongside their kids. Think about what families need and need to know so that they're comfortable attending your event.

- Reach out to event hosts and be creative: It's important to reach out to a variety of places where learning happens, and invite them to put a spotlight on the great work that they're already likely doing. They probably have a new space, new activity, or new approach that they're keen to share with families in their community. Think creatively about who may want to be involved, including schools, libraries, tech centers, community centers, museums, parks, and local businesses.

- Make it easy for families to find events: Make it easy for families to learn about your festival by putting all your events in one central location online. Encourage families to explore events and help them search by using filters such as intended age, geographic location and learning theme. In addition to marketing and social media outreach, partner with teachers, librarians, youth workers, and other caring adults and ask them to be ambassadors by alerting families about what's going on.

We leverage the power of visual and performing arts to build Creative Confidence (SEL, 21st century skills) in disadvantaged children.

Slam Out Loud

New Delhi, India

Slam Out Loud is a for-mission, non-profit that places professional artists in classrooms for a 5-year program and through lived experience create scalable, contextualised learning products. SOL enables children from the most vulnerable communities to find their voice through creative expression, build socio-emotional learning and 21st-century skills to dream bigger and create their future.

2017	79 988	16
YEAR ESTABLISHED	CHILDREN / USERS	COUNTRIES

PERCENT OF LEARNERS' INTERACTION WITH INNOVATION IN PERSON BEFORE SCHOOL CLOSURES: 60-80%

DIGITAL OR VIRTUAL INTERACTION WITH LEARNERS BEFORE SCHOOL CLOSURES: Communication and messaging, Webinars or virtual events

SCHOOL CLOSURE IMPACT ON LEARNERS PARTICIPATING IN INNOVATION:
Very little impact 1 ————————— 8 —— 10 Impacted a great deal

HOW HAVE YOU ADAPTED YOUR INNOVATION DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES?

With some 826 million (82.6 crore) students kept out of the classroom by the Covid-19 pandemic without access to a household computer, we have rapidly adapted our interventions to prioritize children's well being, leveraging the power of art and low tech platforms. Slam Out Loud's COVID-response project, Arts For All, aims to leverage the power of arts and the reach of multiple low tech platforms to deliver mental wellbeing and SEL support to the most vulnerable children at scale. By offering localised, need-sensitive and engaging at-home audio, video, text, and print resources for learners who have limited internet access, we are leading children towards creative outcomes and building mental resilience during the COVID-19 based school closure period. We have created resources that are free of cost, interactive, and accessible in English & Hindi (and translated in 4 more languages) - made available through various low-tech distribution channels (Whatsapp, IVR and Radio), as well as in the process of being distributed as printed copies in collaboration with on-ground NGOs and State governments. Our art based SEL activities currently reach 4.7 million children across 23 Indian states and 19 countries.

WHAT NEW TOOLS HAVE YOU USED OR DEVELOPED TO DELIVER YOUR INNOVATION REMOTELY?

With 50% of India's internet-enabled audience (over 400 million users) having access to WhatsApp, and a previous internal review finding that 75% of children in

SOL's programs have access to their parent's WhatsApp accounts for at least one hour in a day, WhatsApp presented itself as the most immediate medium to reach children. Additionally, deploying WhatsApp content in various formats such as text, image, video, and voice notes made for more equitable learning opportunities for children with diverse learning skills and needs.

At SOL, we are in the process of automating the way children receive activities, through setting up a WhatsApp API chatbot, as well as an Integrated Voice Response System (IVRS) for children with little or no internet access to enable them to call, listen to art activities and record their own creative responses. With institutional and government partners, we are in the process of disseminating our innovation remotely via a high quality, context specific art-based curriculum in local languages with a focus on gender equality and building SEL skills.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES?

The key challenges faced by Slam Out Loud, along with how they were mitigated is captured below:

- **Market:** Art learning through low tech platforms was not being used at scale before this point. Slam Out Loud created a scaled market through government partnerships, thereby reaching vulnerable children and centring focus on their wellbeing.

- **Operations:** Slam Out Loud faced the challenge of content requirement steadily increasing with the program process. This was mitigated by consistently introducing new volunteer cohorts who specialised in content creation, along with subsequent capacity building of existing volunteers.

- **Finance:** API/IVR are largely tech-heavy platforms that lead to project costs shooting up. Given the financial constraints in which Slam Out Loud was operating, we relied on institutional partnerships to cover part of their costs. For example, a tech based non-profit (assisting the setting up of a WhatsApp API), subsidised rates from an IVR vendor and implementation partners to pay for printing and distribution of physical copies of learning resources.

- **Regulations:** Child protection regulations vary across different countries. Since Slam Out Loud's primary beneficiaries were children, it was paramount to ensure that parental permissions and individual data protection was focused upon.

WHAT OTHER METHODS HAVE YOU USED (OR DEVELOPED) TO DELIVER YOUR INNOVATION REMOTELY?

We deploy content in various formats like text, image, video, and voice notes to make for more equitable learning opportunities for children with diverse learning skills and needs, and ensure these are made available free of cost.

To enable remote learning for a vast majority of children, we are also exploring Radio and Television as mediums to reach children.

Arts For All is India's first COVID-response project that leverages art and low tech mediums to focus on children's well being and SEL skills, at a cost of almost 0.5 US$ per child per month (other organizations in the same field start at costs of about $4-5).

Our intervention is highly scalable with content that is flexible, age-appropriate and adaptable to context. With a robust monitoring system, our program is already disseminated to 4.7 million children across 23 Indian States and 18 countries - allowing us to revise the program process with feedback received from children and educators alike. We make use of pre-existing technology (WhatsApp) and resources exist in 6 languages, which makes it easy to scale in most demographics in India. Remote learning content is also designed keeping in mind children's limited access to resources, ensuring that meaningful learning can be driven even amidst these unprecedented times.

HOW HAVE EXISTING OR NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATIONS CHANGED AS A RESULT OF COVID-19?

Since the COVID-19 pandemic reached India, the focus of nonprofits and CSR funders has shifted towards responding to it immediately - from providing relief to migrant workers or giving targeted support to their end beneficiaries. While this is essential at the moment, it has short and long-term impacts on nonprofits, especially those with significant CSR funding.

According to a study conducted by FSG in the initial few months of the pandemic, funding for traditional CSR activities was bound to be reduced by 30-60 percent with funders contributing a majority towards COVID-19 related activities, or in national relief funds. All CSR heads also said that they were unlikely to fund non COVID-related work.

In the absence of adequate funding for non COVID related work, the pandemic has provided innovations worldwide with an opportunity to pivot their programs and adapt them in accordance with the digital landscape. It has also led to the creation of new funding opportunities - in the form of awards and grants that especially recognise COVID-response projects in several fields, and ensure that end-beneficiaries of the project receive access to equitable opportunities.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 IMPACT ON SCHOOLS?

We believe the pandemic has created an opportunity for learners to receive access to high-quality education resources within the safety of their own homes, and an increased focus on their physical, emotional and mental health - thus making the education they receive more holistic. One of the biggest opportunities for educators is to make learning equitable for children with diverse skills and needs, and to focus on their well being and development of SEL skills, especially during these unprecedented times.

WHAT ARE SOME STARTING POINTERS FOR ORGANISATIONS LOOKING TO ADAPT YOUR SOLUTION?

Individuals and organisations in 19 countries already subscribe to our intervention at the moment and our project is largely replicable across any space within the English-speaking population. Educators and institutions alike can reach out to Slam Out Loud to access our remote learning material and further seek help in customizing the program to suit their context and translate content into languages other than English with the SOL team. The learning content is age-appropriate and applicable to children across contexts. Some more prerequisites to keep in mind for a successful adaptation are:

1. Interventions should require few resources that are easily available to enable access for as many children as possible.

2. Pre-existing technology such as WhatsApp, Radio and Television should be leveraged, particularly for children with limited access to the internet.

3. Community members should be involved and regularly updated with progress, including parents of the children and their primary educators.

4. The chief concern should be ensuring safety of children, ensuring that parents give permission for children to be involved and that data regulations are carefully followed.

5. Mechanisms to provide feedback to children should be created, so that they receive suggestions for development and appreciation for their work to build confidence and skills throughout the program.

6. It is important to ensure that all learning resources are relevant to the context and simple to understand, keeping in mind where the children who use them come from and what they most relate to.

Appendix

The table below shows an overview of the responses for an easy reference across the innovations.

INNOVATION*	BRAC REMOTE PLAY LABS	EDUCATE!	MYMACHINE	REMAKE LEARNING DAYS ACROSS AMERICA	SLAM OUT LOUD
Percent of learners' interaction with innovation in person before school closures:	0% (Note: 100% of 76,000 children attended Play Labs in person, but Remote Play Labs is a new initiative started in 2020.)	>80%	>80%	>80%	60-80%
Digital or virtual interaction with learners before school closures:	None	None	Native web or mobile app, communication and messaging	Communication and messaging	Communication and messaging, webinars or virtual events
School closure impact on learners participating in innovation (from 'Very little impact' = 1 to 'Impacted a great deal' = 10):	10/10	9/10	4/10	5/10	8/10
Biggest challenge:	Catering for disadvantaged children in low resource settings (e.g. nutrition and health services).	Providing for children with limited internet access and access to phone and radio.	40% of schools needed additional assistance to finish their programme.	Event hosts and families were overwhelmed with changes, pausing and shifting focus to support in this way.	Limited finance and limited in-house tech expertise to analyse, receive and process data.
Main strategies to adapt to the pandemic:	Adapting Play Lab for remote learning through radio and telecommunications.	Providing for children with limited internet access and access to phone and radio.	Tailor-made responses with country coordinators (e.g. more time to complete the programme).	Shifted support to helping educators and providing tips to families on engaged learning.	Prioritized children's well being and leverage the power of art and low tech platforms.
New tools developed or used	• Tele-counselling and tele-learning hotlines • SMS campaigns • Psychosocial support and guidance on play-based learning at home	Distance learning solutions including: • Phones and text • Radio • E-learning training for motorcycle couriers	Developed MyMachine DreamsDrop: an online (upload your dream machine idea to our world map of ideas-) tool.	Relied heavily on Zoom.	• WhatsApp • WhatsApp API chatbot
Other methods used	• Visiting households • Cash transfers, food assistance, and health services	All-girl listener groups as a way to create safe spaces at home for female learners.	Not in favour of online only solutions.	Created a new webinar series for parents and caregivers.	Deployed content in various formats like text, image, video, and voice notes. Currently exploring Radio and Television.
Funding changes	Impressed with Support from Funders to address COVID Challenges	A reduction in general funding opportunities.	No impact experienced so far.	Work with funders postponed. New funding opportunities to support and work with families.	Funders has shifted their focus towards responding to COVID's immediate challenges.
Biggest opportunities	Opportunity to test and scale education solutions	Encourage rethinking of traditional education on a global level, pushing it further into the 21st century and towards a more equitable future	Emphasising the need for in person human interaction.	Increased parent and educator edgagement.	Opportunity for learners to receive access to high-quality education resources within the safety of their own homes, and an increased focus on their physical, emotional and mental health.

* For an overview of each innovation, please read the Spotlight: Creativity report or click on the links below for each innovation.

Do you want to organize a HundrED Spotlight?

HundrED Spotlights are an opportunity to gain a thorough insight into the education innovations taking place in either a specific area of education, like literacy or sustainability, or within a certain geographic location, for example, India or London.

HundrED Spotlights are organized by HundrED and a Spotlight Partner. Together we select the location or theme of focus and the partner will encourage applications from innovators for this Spotlight. In-depth research will be conducted together into these innovations and 10 will be selected by HundrED and an advisory board. Spotlighted innovations will be filmed, packaged and shared on the HundrED platform.

HundrED Spotlights are non-profit but rely on funding from Spotlight Partners. If you are interested in becoming a HundrED Spotlight Partner please contact us.

We believe that these selected innovations deserve to be spread across the world. And there is a lot more good innovations just like them waiting to be discovered.

If you want to support further research in education, please contact us.

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