



case study

## How Zoom Has Helped Teach for India Reach the Most Underprivileged Communities & Maintain the Student-Teacher Connection

Teach for India, part of the Teach for All network, provides opportunities for students in some of India's lowest-income communities to learn from the brightest minds drawn from the nation's best universities and workplaces.

The teachers, known as Fellows, get firsthand experience and knowledge that helps them earn future leadership positions in the education system and other sectors. At the same time, students in some of India's most under-resourced schools get access to enriching education opportunities with eager, passionate, and creative teachers.

By partnering directly with teachers, principals, and students at the grassroots, Teach for India is helping Indian children reach their full potential and serves as a catalyst for lasting change within India's education system.

### Challenge

Teaching in under-resourced schools already presents a number of unique challenges to educators, but when COVID-19 spread across India, educators had to resolve an entirely new set of challenges.

"During those first two months of lockdown in India, everyone was confined to their homes," said Anissha Aggarwal, a Fellow for Teach for India. "The average child I teach lives in a one-room apartment with six or seven other people, and if you can imagine, that creates a situation where it's difficult to deliver education effectively. More well-off children have laptops and dedicated areas to study in their homes, but these children don't have that. Phone and data availability too are scarce."

Like much of the world, Aggarwal turned to video conferencing to recreate school for her students directly into their homes. However, Aggarwal and her colleagues had two very specific requirements for a video conferencing platform — it had to be simple to learn, easy to use and it had to be sensitive to the economics of their students.

TEACHFORINDIA

### Teach for India

**Location:** Mumbai, Maharashtra

**Industry:** Education

**Challenges:** Delivering online education to students in low-income areas with limited technology, bandwidth

**Solutions:** Zoom Meetings

**Business Benefits:** Effective delivery of online education, more unique learning opportunities, flexibility and reliability to operate on any device anywhere

*"As teachers, we often feel as though the thing that stops us from recreating that classroom feeling during online learning is that disconnect between the teacher and the student. We don't know if they've understood the lesson, we don't know if they have any questions or whether they are zoning out completely. With Zoom, I have always felt that connection to my students."*

– Anissha Aggarwal

Teach for India Fellow

“Many of the students have mobile phones to use for video conferencing, but the majority of these devices are smaller, low-end devices without a lot of storage, so the application itself can’t take up a lot of space,” Aggarwal said. “These students are getting by on a daily data allowance, so bandwidth was another concern. These children aren’t digital natives either, so the application needed to be intuitive enough for them to use.”

## Solution

In her search for a video conferencing solution that could meet her needs and the needs of her students, Aggarwal found that Zoom offered the ease of use, flexibility, and reliability that students needed to attend virtual classes and the functionality Aggarwal needed to deliver the curriculum effectively.

“I evaluated Google Meet and Hangouts, GoToMeeting, Webex, and Skype; I even evaluated WhatsApp because it’s the most widely available app for my students and Microsoft Teams from a platform perspective,” Aggarwal said. “But the interface for Zoom is so amazing, it’s so easy to use even for people who aren’t digital natives. Zoom was also the only solution where I could see all my students at the same time, and Zoom made it extremely easy for us to get immediate access to the product. Some products have more functions for the classroom, but none of them were available for us at the time when we needed it most.”

Aggarwal was also able to support her students mentally and emotionally during a particularly challenging time in their lives.

“During lockdown, my students had a million questions that could have adversely affected their mental health, such as wondering when things will get back to normal,” Aggarwal said. “We’ve been able to tackle those issues through social-emotional learning, sharing spaces and different experiences. We have role models within India join Zoom lessons to interact with the students. For example, we had a chef from Taj Hotels (a luxury hotel chain) teach our class how to bake a cake over Zoom, right from the hotel kitchens.”

Aggarwal added: “School is more than curriculum. So we’ve been teaching hobbies like art, poetry writing, theatre, dance, and more over Zoom as well.”

Using Zoom, Aggarwal was able to recreate the feeling of being in the classroom. With the ability to see her students and ensure they are getting their questions answered, Aggarwal feels as though her connection with her students is just as strong as it is in the classroom.

“As teachers, we often feel that we cannot recreate that ‘classroom feeling’ during online learning because of the supposed disconnect between the teacher and the student,” she said. “We don’t know if they’ve understood the lesson, we don’t know if they have any questions or whether they are zoning out completely. With Zoom, I have always felt that connection to my students.”

## Results

Zoom helped Aggarwal provide her students with an intuitive remote learning solution no matter the devices they were using. It also gave Aggarwal a platform she could leverage to enrich her students’ lives during lockdown and effectively deliver valuable academic and life lessons.

Aggarwal believes that Zoom will still play an active role in coordinating the education of her students well after the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Teachers at the school have said that they will continue using Zoom for their staff meetings,” Aggarwal said. “It gives them the opportunity to hold their staff meetings right in their classroom without having to miss class or leave their students unattended. It also helps them focus on the purpose of the meeting and use the 15 minutes in the meeting to be more productive.”

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Zoom helps businesses and organizations bring their teams together in a frictionless cloud environment to get more done. Our easy, reliable, video- first unified communications platform for video, voice, content sharing, and chat runs across mobile devices, desktops, telephones, and room systems. Founded in 2011, Zoom is a publicly traded company on Nasdaq (ticker: ZM) and headquartered in San Jose, California.

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