



Our Education Our Future

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION IN AFRICA

FINAL REPORT



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 **OurEducationOurFuture**



Executive Summary

In the lead up to the Transforming Education Summit, UNICEF launched an initiative to hear directly from young people in Africa about their perceptions on education in their countries, and their priorities in order to achieve an education fit for every child and young person. Over the course of six weeks, U-report surveys and offline consultations were conducted to gather youth voices on the summit's five action tracks, and a Youth Ambassador challenge was launched through the Goodwall digital platform.

Nearly five million responses from over 600,000 young people across 13 countries in Africa were gathered through a simple SMS-based U-Report platform. Over 2,000 video messages from 34 countries were submitted to the Youth Ambassador challenge. The shared perspectives and experiences on issues such as inclusion, safety in school, teachers, digital transformation, education financing and skill-building, served to identify key recommendations for what must urgently be addressed to transform education in Africa.

U-REPORT SURVEY

HOW THE INFORMATION WAS GATHERED

To obtain a better understanding of the state of education in African countries as perceived by young people, UNICEF carried out a U-Report survey focusing on the changes needed to transform education on the continent.

The digital survey consisted of six modules: one gathering demographic information, and five focusing on the Transforming Education Summit's Action Tracks. These action tracks were as follows:

- Inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools.
- Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development.
- Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession.
- Digital learning and transformation.
- Financing of education.



The questions were designed to be accessible to all respondents regardless of their level of education. While the survey aimed to launch its standalone modules consecutively, each UNICEF Country Office was able to select and implement the modules deemed most relevant to their local contexts.

Geographical scope

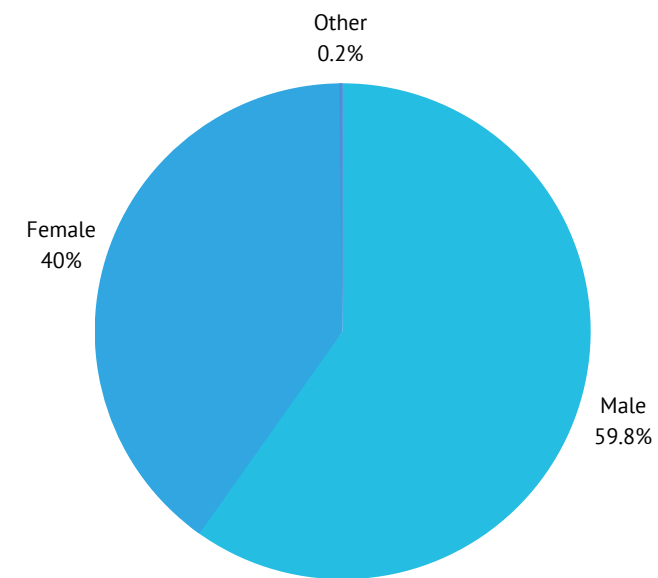
13 UNICEF Countries Offices in Africa carried out the U-Report survey, and Goodwall later analyzed the data.

General Data on Participation

	Total answers	Total participants	Unique Participants	Total countries	Avg. response rate	Avg. completion rate
Demographics	879,787	278,334	613,783	7	76%	66%
Module 1	1,434,820	356,912		11	75%	49%
Module 2	951,406	268,026		8	61%	29%
Module 3	542,787	169,758		9	52%	41%
Module 4	685,881	148,521		6	65%	54%
Module 5	319,477	70,475		7	54%	20%
Total	4,814,158	1,292,026	613,783	13	67%	43%

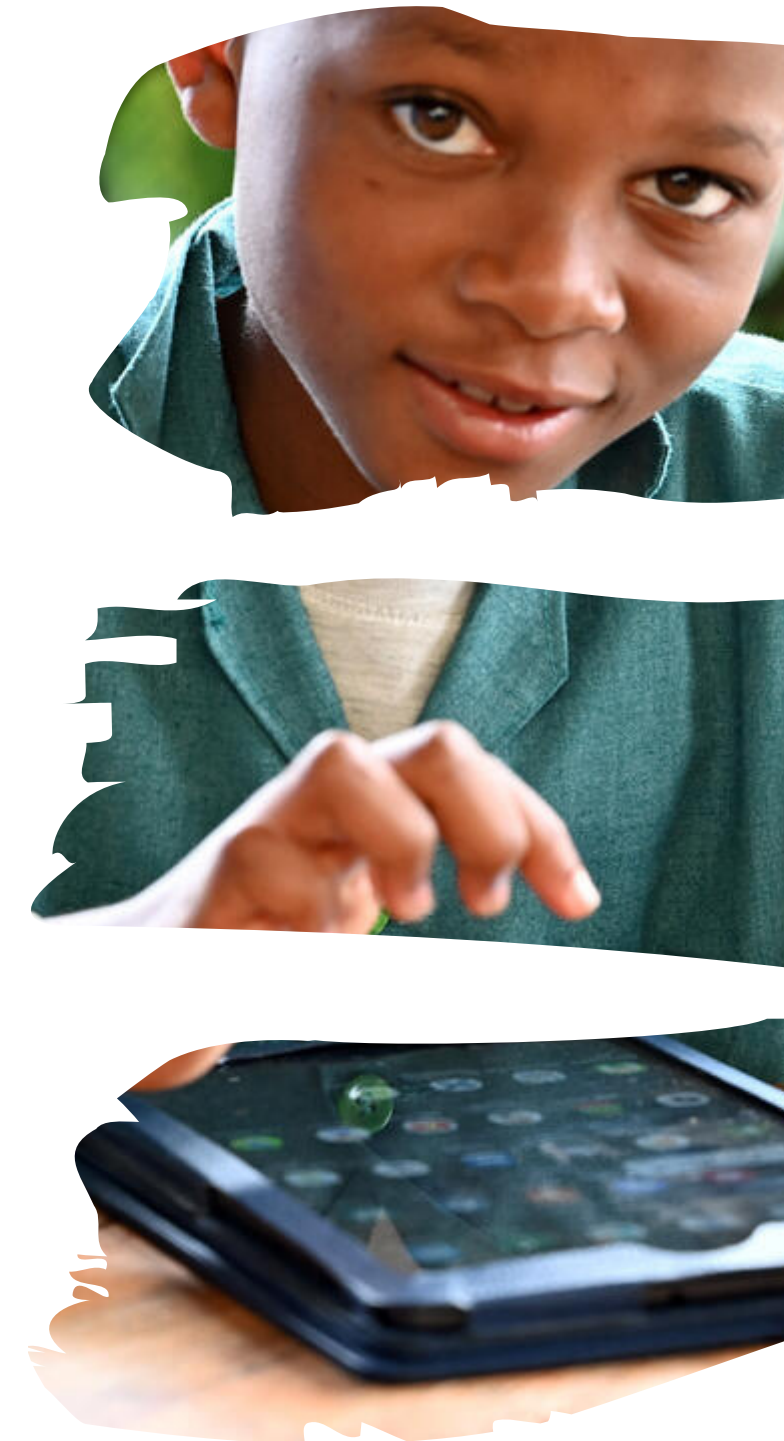
*The demographics data was only provided for 26% of respondents.

The insights gathered revealed 59.81 per cent of the respondents were female, 39.96 per cent were male and the remaining 0.23 per cent indicated 'other' as their gender.



Regarding age, the survey received responses from individuals ranging from <12 years old up to >25 years old. The exact percentage of each age bracket goes as follows:

- < 12 : 5.54%
- 12 - 17: 7.78%
- 18 - 25: 59.51%
- > 25: 27.14%





Survey Key Highlights

Module 1: My health and safety at School



1 in 5 young people stated that they do not have enough access to food and clean drinking water while at school.



1 in 4 young people perceive unfair treatment between girls and boys at school. 36 per cent responded that there was no inclusivity for classmates with disabilities in their schools, and female respondents were 25 per cent less positive about inclusivity.



Almost half of youth respondents do not feel safe at schools.

Survey Key Highlights

Module 2: Developing my future skills

1 in 4 young person is not currently studying, from which almost 20 per cent responded that they dropped studies before or during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Of the ones currently studying, 65 per cent felt like they were learning less during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Female respondents were 24 per cent more likely to drop out of school either before or during the pandemic, or to have never gone to school.
- Male respondents, on the other hand, were 31 per cent more likely to have finished their studies and had a 31 per cent higher share with tertiary education.



Females have 62 per cent more interest in prioritising "sexual health" and "mental health" education, while males are 19 per cent more inclined towards learning about the "environment" and "diversity and inclusion".



82 per cent of young people consider that the government should provide more support for learning basic reading and mathematics in primary school.



Survey Key Highlights

Module 3: My teachers



Almost **half of young** respondents consider that their teachers need more teaching material. **1 out of 5** young person thinks that teachers need more training, and female respondents are **56 per cent** more inclined to think that teachers teach them well.



Almost **3 out of 5** young people consider that schools should use their financial resources to hire more teachers or pay them better.



Survey Key Highlights

Module 4: My digital future



More than half of youth respondents expressed having no knowledge of online safety, despite a high percentage of them having access to the internet.



Female respondents seem to have 21 per cent less knowledge about online safety than their male counterparts.

Survey Key Highlights

Module 5: My school's resources



27 per cent of respondents do not have access to the internet at school. Outside of school, more than half of youth respondents expressed that internet access is costly in their community and 13 per cent stated that it is not affordable at all.



40 per cent of young people expressed that education is not affordable or that it is costly for them.



2 out of 3 respondents think that their schools need more desks and chairs. 1 out of 3 participants wants more classrooms at schools, and 1 in 4 wants working toilets (with female respondents 27 per cent more interested than males).



When asked how their schools should use their funds, male respondents prioritised 'having more teachers or paying teachers better' 40 per cent more than female respondents. Female respondents are also 133 per cent more interested in school activities than male.





The Youth Ambassador Challenge

Goodwall leveraged its platform and community to select 20 Youth Ambassadors (4 per Transforming Education Summit Action Track) to represent young people in youth engagement activities in the lead-up to and after the Transforming Education Summit. Young people in Africa were asked to choose and respond to one of the below questions:

- ① How can schools be safer and more inclusive for students?
- ② What skills should students learn in school to help them find a job?
- ③ How could your teachers make their classes better?
- ④ Which digital skills are you interested in learning?
- ⑤ If your school were to get some funding, how should it be spent?

At the end of the six-week online challenge, there were a total of 2,384 entries and 1,096 participants. Participation was encouraged through a series of rewards including a cash pool and digital scholarships.

The challenge also led to the creation of exclusive group chats through which participants shared their opinions regarding the future of education and how to implement their ideas. In total, 4,287 young people used the chat to advocate for social causes like a free education for all children in Africa.

Youth Ambassadors – Module 1



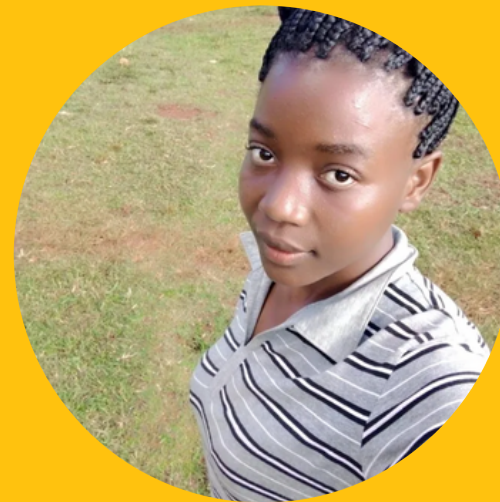
Zinhle Mahlangu
South Africa



Castello Zodo
Benin



Obiechina Omeje
Nigeria



Velma Ayuma
Kenya



Youth Ambassadors - Module 2



Clemence Batcho
Benin



Ojumah Jerry
Nigeria



Narcisse Zoo Evina
Cameroon



Bagu Paul
Uganda

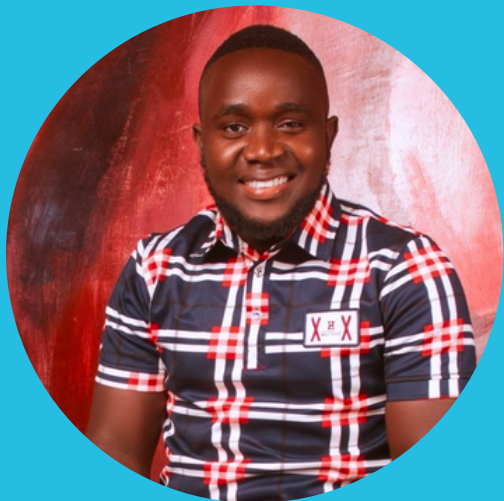
Youth Ambassadors – Module 3



Lionceau Clovis Agre
Benin



Wasila Sanusi
Nigeria



Rifore Belief
Côte d'Ivoire



Laurent N'wole
Côte d'Ivoire



Youth Ambassadors – Module 4



Mary Omadiku
Nigeria



Ben Johns
Ghana



Order Sophia
Nigeria



Clifford Payne
Liberia

Youth Ambassadors – Module 5



Traore Abiba
Côte d'Ivoire



Isra Boucetta
Algeria



Nijimbere Cynthia
Burundi



Habiba Erinfolami
Nigeria



Participants' Remarks

If your school were to get some funding, how should it be spent?

“Firstly, it should build new schools to unclog classrooms which are packed. Secondly, it should procure teaching manuals for students and teachers. Thirdly, it should buy new benches and desks for students and other required school materials.”
- Nijimbere Cynthia (Bujumbura, Burundi)

“Schools should prioritize practical lessons instead of theoretical ones through the development of experience laboratories. Teachers should be better supported and more trained in making their lessons more practical.” - Clemence Batcho (Atlantique, Benin)

What skills should students learn in school to help them find a job?

Participants' Remarks

How could your teachers make their classes better?

“A teacher can make their classes better by being practical. The result of being practical is good memory and productivity. When a teacher teaches students in a practical term, [students] tend to remember what has been taught for a very long period of time.” – Wasila Sanusi (Bauchi, Nigeria)

How can schools be safer and more inclusive for students?

“Provide more resources that speak on the issues of differences between cultures, races and disabilities.”
– Zinhle Mahlangu (Soweto, South Africa)

What digital skills are you interested in learning?

“Search engine marketing. It is one of the most influential disciplines that marketers have come to rely on.” – Ben Johns (Accra, Ghana)



Recommendations



Make resources available to improve access to food and clean water at school to create a healthier environment.



Train educators on how to create an inclusive classroom environment and support the agency of future generations by recognising individual's worth.



Improve school infrastructure and security protocols such as fences, drills, and ensuring each individual has a safe commute to school, which are key to improving school safety.



Implement teen pregnancy prevention and sexual and reproductive health programmes to help reduce school dropout among adolescent girls.



Reinforce primary school curricula to enhance basic skills and foundational learning such as basic literacy and numeracy.



Critical thinking, goal setting and teamwork skills have become essential in navigating today's employment market, hence everyday classes should prepare young people and inculcate such life skills.



Teacher preparedness is a concern for youth, hence reinforcing teacher training programmes and providing teachers with the necessary teaching tools and materials to create an optimal teaching and learning environment, are critical.



As youth become more interested in utilizing the internet as a tool to acquire high quality information, online safety knowledge becomes essential and should be provided to young people.



Build infrastructure that improves connectivity and internet access both inside and outside schools to help prepare youth for their future and to support community development.



Reallocate government resources to implement public education programmes to ensure all young people have the opportunity to access and complete education and training independently of their household's income.



Revisit proposed education budgets to ensure teachers are receiving fair and appropriate salaries, while schools receive funds for school-based activities that enrich students' school life.

Acknowledgements

Thank you!

This report was made possible thanks to the thousands of children and young people across Africa who participated in the Youth Ambassador challenge, the U-Report survey and the offline consultations, actively engaging with UNICEF as U-Reporters. They helped us better understand their concerns and opinions.



This report was developed by Goodwall for UNICEF. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of UNICEF.

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About



UNICEF promotes the rights and wellbeing of every child, in everything we do. Together with our partners, we work in more than 190 countries and territories to translate that commitment into practical action, focusing special effort on reaching the most vulnerable and excluded children, to the benefit of all children, everywhere.

U-Report is UNICEF's flagship digital platform started in 2011, to engage young people in programme priorities, emergency response and advocacy actions. It supports adolescent, youth, and community participation; and works as a tool to share information, raise awareness, and collect quantifiable data on specific areas that impact children, including the most vulnerable. The received responses are analyzed in real-time, mapped, and displayed on a public dashboard, ensuring the young people's feedback can be actioned by local and national decision-makers.

Goodwall is a mobile-first personal and professional development platform with 2.1 M members across 150+ countries that guides 16 to 24 year olds through the world of education and work, offering them access to equitable and inclusive opportunities. Our mission is to level the playing field for Gen Z, to help them maximise their potential and have a positive impact on society.

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For enquiries or further information on this report, please contact:

UNICEF

United Nations Children's Fund
Regional Office for West and Central
Africa
Education Section
Route des Almadies, Immeuble
Madjiguène
B.P. 29720, Dakar-Yoff, Senegal
www.unicef.org/wca



@UNICEFAfrica

