reimagine
education

Summary Case for Investment

unicef ✿
for every child

GENERATION UNLIMITED

giga

The Vision

To end the learning crisis by enabling every child and young person – <mark>3.5 billion by 2030</mark> – to access world-class digital learning solutions which builds the skills they need to leapfrog to a brighter future.

The Challenge

The world is facing a learning crisis. More children and young people than ever before are enrolled in school – but **250 million remain out of school**. Half of all children in low- and middle-income countries are unable to read and write a simple sentence by age 10. Quality of and access to education and skills-development opportunities are limited – especially for the most marginalized children and young people, including girls, children with disabilities, and children impacted by emergencies.

Despite the global growth of technology, more than half of the world's children and young people are on the wrong side of the digital divide, losing out on an opportunity to build better futures for themselves.

An estimated 3.6 billion people in the world do not have access to the Internet. The lack of access to the Internet means exclusion, marked by the lack of access to the wealth of information available online, fewer resources to learn and to grow, and limited opportunities for the most vulnerable children and youth to fulfil their potential. The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown the learning crisis into sharp relief. Global school closures due to the crisis have exacerbated the already challenging realities for children and young people.

The cost of inaction: The World Bank estimates that there will be **US$10 trillion** in lost earnings for the current cohort of young people if learning loss is not addressed.[1]

The Opportunity

The pandemic crisis has shown us that we have the tools we need to craft a modern education. Millions of children and young people can continue their education online but even though the potential is exciting, these children and young people are in a minority.

With countries looking for ways to get children learning again, there is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for public and private sector leaders to reimagine education. A modern education should build and accredit basic skills – reading, writing and math – as well as skills in problem-solving, creativity and critical thinking that young people need for work, to start a business and to engage productively in their communities.

Digital learning could be the great equalizer in education. That is why **UNICEF**, **Generation Unlimited** and **Giga** are coming together under the Reimagine Education umbrella initiative to radically scale-up digital learning solutions which work for the most marginalized children and young people.

Our goal is ambitious and will not be achieved through traditional development programming. Reimagining education is possible, but only if the public and private come together, each working to address the constraints which hamper access to digital learning. With ambitious vision, commitment and investment, digital learning solutions can be rapidly developed, adapted and deployed at scale and reach the most marginalized learners.

1   **World Bank**, Simulating the Potential Impacts of the COVID-19 School Closures on Schooling and Learning Outcomes: A set of Global Estimates, 2020.

What needs to be done?

Reimagine Education will drive change in five key areas that together will unlock opportunity, choice and learning for every child and young person.

1. World-class digital learning solutions

Hundreds of millions of children and young people whose education has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic need to be able to access learning opportunities that meet their needs. The best digital learning solutions focus on enhancing teaching and learning that build foundational, transferable, digital and job-specific skills. Children and young people need these skills for work, to start a business and to engage productively in their communities.

Emerging technologies – such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning – are opening up radical new opportunities to personalize learning. Digital learning platforms can disseminate and collect information to and from learners and adapt teaching based on progress. Digital learning solutions can embed skills accreditation so that children and young people have proof of their learning accomplishments. They should also be inclusive and can open the

door to learning for the most marginalized. For example, through Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approaches, deaf children and young people can learn through accessible e-books with sign language.

UNICEF collaborates with Microsoft on the Learning Passport, which is a flexible learning platform, with both online and offline models. It has been scaled-up in Timor-Leste, Puntland, Somalia and Jordan to ensure children can continue to learn when schools are closed. The **Learning Passport** has a further eight countries in the pipeline, serving diverse learning needs, from early childhood education to digital and skill-based content for adolescents and targeted support to teachers.

To **Reimagine Education** <u>using digital solutions</u>, UNICEF and partners will:

- Scale-up digital learning solutions. We will identify, curate and scale-up digital learning solutions that meet every child and every young person's unique learning needs and context. This includes ensuring that digital content is age appropriate, in languages children can understand and will build the broadest range of skills.

- Upskill teachers and facilitators in digital learning and pedagogies. This will be vital to ensure teachers and facilitators can benefit from and support the learning of every child and young person.

- Carry out large-scale information campaigns highlighting the modalities available to children, mobilizing users, parents, caregivers and teachers.

- Build policy and institutional capacity to ensure digital learning approaches are sustainable. Evidence-based approaches need to be included in Education Sector Plans and budgets.

- Support data and analytics. Having timely data and analytics will be essential to planning and sustainability. This includes information on which children are learning digitally, what they are learning, where they are and gaps. Disaggregated data will be critical to help all stakeholders understand the needs of children marginalized by gender, geography, disability and ethnicity.

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> **The growth of technology, and the increasingly broad range of partners providing learning opportunities, bring the potential to deliver learning opportunities anywhere, to anyone, at any time.**
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> Page 5, Every Child Learns, UNICEF Education Strategy (2019-2030)

2. Connectivity

The school of the future will use technology to enable children and young people to learn anywhere and anytime. Teachers will be able to deliver individualized instruction. Governments will be able to deliver practical teachers' training at scale. It will also be able to improve management of the education system by collecting and sharing better data more quickly.

Giga is a UNICEF-ITU global initiative to connect every school to the Internet and every young person to information, opportunity and choice. Launched in 2019, Giga aims to provide connectivity to every school in the world by 2030. Giga is currently active in 13 countries, and more than 30 additional countries have expressed an interest in joining. Giga serves as a platform that brings together investors, funders and solution providers to work with governments to achieve the Giga mission.

To **Reimagine Education** by **connecting every child,** UNICEF will join Giga and other partners to:

- Map connectivity demand, using schools as a base point, and identifying where connectivity gaps lie. This information, combined with existing ITU mapping data, allows countries to take stock of their existing infrastructure and assess appropriate solutions for connecting schools.

- Explore finance structures with governments, advising them on building affordable and sustainable country-specific models for finance and delivery, subsidizing market creation costs and incentivizing private sector investment.

- Connect schools, in partnership with industry, and based on the mapping results. Giga will advise on the best possible technical solutions to provide schools with connectivity, and countries with safe, secure, reliable, fit-for-purpose infrastructure to support future digital development needs.

- Equip national partners to sustain digital learning. Through its engagement with countries, Giga can support needs assessments and support to deploy digital solutions. Giga can provide connections to partners, resources, capacity building and financing to scale learning solutions. In partnership with the **Digital Public Goods Alliance**, Giga can help identify and scale Digital Public Goods and the role of the local ecosystem in developing, scaling and maintaining open source solutions.

3. Devices

Access to connectivity will be meaningful for the most marginalized children and young people only if they have access to devices, especially smartphones, tablets, laptops and desktop computers which would allow them to learn anywhere, and any time.

To **Reimagine Education** through **enabling access to devices**, UNICEF and partners are:

- Identifying device needs and specifications, according to what is needed to improve learning in any context, what devices can meet that need devices and what support is required to make learning happen.

- Radically reducing the cost of devices and find low-cost solutions by exploring partnership opportunities at local and global levels so that every child and young person can access digital learning.

- Building capacity of teachers, facilitators and learners themselves to effectively use devices for learning.

4. Affordable content and data

Zero rating digital educational content is one way to decrease barriers of entry to digital learning content and applications. This means that Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) will not charge for the use of specific educational web sites or applications. Depending on the regulatory framework, zero rating can be either mandated or agreed to between the government and MNOs. in some cases MNOs implement it as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility activities.

To **Reimagine Education** by making **digital learning content more affordable**, UNICEF will:

- Partner with Mobile Network Operators to zero rate content for learners, parents and teachers.

UNICEF has signed agreements with Millicom, Safaricom, Vodafone and Zain and is finalizing agreements with Liquid, MTN, Orange, Ooredoo and Telefonica/Profuturo, whilst working closely with Global System for Mobile communications Association (the GSMA, an industry organization that represents the interests of mobile network operators worldwide). Together these agreements will span 94 countries and 1.8 billion subscribers, reaching huge numbers of children and young people.

Through these partnerships UNICEF aims to accelerate the provision of accessible high-quality learning opportunities to all children everywhere.

5. Young People's Engagement

Youth-led movements have been a crucial resource for change towards a more equal and sustainable world, but often young people are not heard. The ambition of **Reimagine Education** calls for a strong strategy to engage young people to tap on their energy, creativity and unique understanding the needs of young people. Young people will be instrumental in bringing the initiative to scale, making it relevant for users, and ensuring that it reaches the most marginalized.

To **Reimagine Education** through the eyes of and with young people, UNICEF and partners will work on:

- **Access**: young people/volunteers will help remove access barriers for the most vulnerable by serving as mentors, tutors and facilitating peer-to-peer support. Examples of engagement may include managing learning groups who share limited number of devices, creating safe space for learning, bringing the devices to the "most remote students", providing remedial and extracurricular learning and coaching teachers on digital literacy.

- **Reach**: young people will support taking **Reimagine Education** to scale especially amongst the most vulnerable through a youth-led marketing campaign to get interest, buy-in and demand among young populations and their communities. Young volunteers will also deploy digital solutions as the human face that connects technology to children at scale.

- **Advocacy & resource mobilization**: young leaders will be advocating with providers, policy makers and local communities to mobilize commitment, action and resources for Reimagine Education. For example, they will advocate with providers for universal access, with the private sector for funding and technical assistance, with the governmental authorities for relevant policy support and with the local authority to support digital learning.

- **Content**: young people will co-create the design of relevant and contextualized digital solutions in both content and delivery methods for formal and non-formal learning. They will support production of learning material, translation in local languages or in formats accessible to people with disabilities.

- **Voice & Accountability**: young people will be part of the decision-making processes of the initiative (at national and local level) with platforms created for young people to share their views and opinions. Feedback mechanisms will be created to enhance accountability, hear the voice of young people and take it into consideration by doing course correction as needed.

GenU Global Volunteer Initiative (GVI) helps countries start, scale and innovate volunteer programmes to accelerate results for children. The motivation for the initiative was a widely held recognition that UNICEF needs to tap into the power of people in new ways as a strategy for reaching its ambitious goals for children. The Volunteer Initiative now supports more than 35 UNICEF Country Offices and 1.3 million volunteers (more than half of whom are young people) across the globe are being deployed across a range of issues – from education, to COVID-19 prevention to clean air.

What will this cost?

Realizing this vision will cost approximately **$474.5 billion by 2030** but there is tremendous opportunity to lower costs as technology develops and if implementation is at scale. This global costs across **Reimagine Education** pillars include:

- **$7.1 billion for digital learning** - this includes $524 million for immediate catalytic investment at the country level to kick-start the agenda. Investment will be spent on digital content development and curation, upskilling of teachers and facilitators, communications campaigns to mobilize users, institutional capacity building and support for data and analytics. The majority of this financing will come from domestic budgets with a focus on more effective targeting of education spending towards evidence-based approaches and through ODA.

- **$428 billion for connecting every school to the internet** – this includes $3 billion in initial public financing for the Giga initiative that will catalyze billions in private and institutional finance over the next decade for connectivity.

- **$38 billion for devices** – this figure is likely to decrease significantly if our focus on market shaping succeeds in radically reducing the costs of devices.

- **$1.4 billion for engagement of young people** – including costs for mobilizing young people to proactively engage on the Reimagine Education agenda.

With a committed, global coalition of partners, this is achievable. Overall, the cost translates into a per learner investment of $26 per year by 2030 and is a cost-effective approach to mitigating against the impact of learning loss.

By intentionally providing opportunities for learning which radically improve skills of children and young people, **Reimagine Education** could result in a significant reduction in the global loss of earnings estimated to be $10 trillion if learning loss is not addressed now. Countries with larger cohorts of children and young people are likely to see benefits for entire economies if they invest now.

In addition, **Reimagine Education**'s focus on connecting every school to the internet, and every child and young person to opportunity and choice, will likely multiply economic and social benefits for individuals, families and countries by opening up new opportunities for remote working and basic services that can support well-being including tele-medicine.

UNICEF Education Funding

UNICEF's Education thematic funding pools at global, regional and country levels offer opportunities for strategic partnership with UNICEF on **Reimagine Education** objectives. Thematic funding supports the achievement of education results with a low cost recovery rate and reduces transaction costs for partners. Donors and partners can contribute to thematic funds at global, regional and country level. Supporting thematic funding at UNICEF allows flexibility to allocate funds across regions to individual country programmes according to priority needs in education, including critically under-funded country programme areas and humanitarian response activities.

How will we measure success?

Ultimately, the **Reimagine Education** initiative will measure success through progress made to end the learning crisis. Regular monitoring will allow UNICEF and partners to share knowledge and to learn from examples. Some results the initiative will deliver and track include:

- Number of additional children and young people accessing world-class digital learning solutions to build skills
- Number of partners engaged to advance digital learning with UNICEF
- Number of digital learning items developed

- Funding mobilized for digital learning
- Funding mobilized for the giga initiative
- Number of schools mapped for connectivity
- Number of schools connected to the internet
- Number of partners mobilized to support the devices agenda
- Number of learning devices procured to support country learning objectives
- Number of partnerships formed with Mobile Network Operators for affordable access
- Number of countries with a UNICEF Volunteering initiative in place and supporting Reimagine Education objectives

Initial Roll-Out

To deliver on the vision of Reimagine Education through 2021, UNICEF and partners will immediately focus on supporting Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cote d'Ivoire, countries belonging to the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo[2], Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

Why partner with UNICEF

UNICEF is uniquely placed to work with partners from the public and private sectors to **Reimagine Education:**

- **Learning at the centre:** UNICEF's Education Strategy, Every Child Learns, marks a shift towards doing everything we can to end the learning crisis including a focus on three key transitions such that at the age of 5, every child is developmentally on track, at age 10, every child is able to read, write and do basic math, and at age 18, every young person has the foundational, transferable, entrepreneurial and job-specific skills they need to succeed.

- **A laser focus on the most marginalized:** Reimagine Education hardwires a focus on the most marginalized children and young people including girls and young women, children with disabilities, the poorest and minorities. This means proactively developing approaches and solutions so that the most marginalized disproportionately benefit.

- **Partnerships: Reimagine Education** is supported by Generation Unlimited (GenU), a global partnership created by UNICEF to help young people become productive and engaged members of society. GenU creates country and global coalitions with a shared agenda to attract and pool investment; scale up solutions and innovation for young people. GenU brings together public-private partnerships to help connect every school and learner to the Internet, scale up digital learning, skilling and livelihoods platforms, encourage entrepreneurship skills and opportunities and engage youth as changemakers.

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2   All references to Kosovo shall be understood in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)

For every child

Whoever she is.

Wherever he lives.

Every child deserves a childhood.

A future.

A fair chance.

That's why UNICEF is there.

For each and every child.

Working day in and day out.

In more than 190 countries and territories.

Reaching the hardest to reach.

The furthest from help.

The most excluded.

It's why we stay to the end.

And never give up.

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