



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



E-9 initiative: Scaling-up digital learning to accelerate progress towards SDG4

Summary of the Consultation meeting of Ministers of Education, 6 April 2021

Contents

Introduction	2
Ministerial segment.....	4
Opening and presentation	4
Ministerial roundtable	5
Partners’ roundtable	8
Conclusion and closing.....	10
Marketplace segment.....	11
Participation.....	11
Private partner exhibitors	11
Breakout room 1 - Age of Learning.....	11
Breakout room 2 - Blackboard.....	11
Breakout room 3 - Khan Academy.....	11
Breakout room 4 – LabXChange	11
Breakout room 5 – Learning Passport	12
Breakout room 6 – NYAS Launchpad	12
Breakout room 7 – Pix	12
Breakout room 8 – Profuturo	12
Breakout room 9 – Technovation	12
Breakout room 10 – Worldreader	12
Breakout room 11 - YOMA.....	12
Takeaways and key moments	13
Annex – Provisional agenda.....	14

Introduction

The massive [learning disruption](#) caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the weakness and unpreparedness of today's education systems worldwide. As schools and universities shut their doors, millions of learners were suddenly excluded from education because of the flagrant digital divide. Connectivity has now become a key factor to guarantee the right to education.

Approximately half of the world's population (some 3.6 billion people) still lack an internet connection. At least 463 million or nearly one-third of students globally cannot access remote learning, mainly due to a lack of online learning policies or lack of equipment needed to connect from home. Most students do not have the appropriate connectivity, device and digital skills required to find and use educational content dependent on technology.

At the [Global Education Meeting](#) convened by UNESCO in October 2020, governments and the international community identified five priorities for urgent action, including support to teachers as frontline workers, investment in skills and narrowing the digital divide. Scaling up digital skills and learning holds the potential to increase the reach and relevance of education systems and improve job prospects for youth in our fast-changing and digitalized economies.

This is why the United Nations is spearheading a new global initiative on digital learning and skills, targeting marginalized children and youth to close the digital divide and drive rapid change in education systems. Building on the established [partnership of E9 countries](#), which groups Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan, the initiative gives them the opportunity to collaborate and scale progress on digital learning and skills. This initiative is supported by UNESCO and its Global Education Coalition, UNICEF and [Generation Unlimited](#).

Focus on some of the world's most populous countries

Representing over half the global population and some of the largest education systems in the world, the group of E9 countries can strengthen political will and collective effort to ensure quality education and accelerate progress towards SDG4. This requires a targeted approach: the E9 countries offer an initial springboard to accelerate progress on digital learning and skills in the immediate term and ultimately on the SDG4 agenda in this Decade of Action leading up to 2030. Here are some reasons why:

1. These countries are among the world's most populous (4.1 of 7.9 billion) with large youth populations (1.6 billion by 2030) and with a high potential demographic dividend in low and low middle-income countries.
2. The education systems are among the largest in the world; representing 51.6 percent of all learners of the world at all levels. Most countries have federal, decentralized education systems for education delivery, with diverse and complex governance and finance structures.
3. They have an established history of cooperation through the E9 partnership including on ICT.
4. They have an enabling ecosystem involving governments, the private sector, youth and other key partners with potential to engage in a renewed social compact in support of digital learning, skilling and livelihoods.
5. Most learners in the nine countries still face disruption to learning either fully or partially and 11.3 million are at risk of not returning to education institutions. How these countries manage the transition phase to recovery, build resilience and reimagine education is crucial for global progress and development, along with efforts to ensure no one is left behind.
6. The success and lessons learned from high population countries will garner significant visibility and offer a blueprint for scaling progress in many countries across the world.

7. Their positions within global education and international cooperation fora, together with alignment of this initiative with the priorities of the G7 and G20, will ensure that lessons learned are cross fertilized and shared widely.

A global initiative to drive educational change

Through country-wide action plans, peer-learning and rallying a global coalition of partners, the initiative will focus on:

1. Expanding access to digital learning solutions that build a range of skills for all children and youth and ensures that teachers, parents and caregivers can offer the scaffolding that children need to learn.
2. Connecting schools, every child and every youth to the internet.
3. Providing children and youth with a range of devices (mobile, laptop, desktop) to access learning.
4. Ensuring that content and data are affordable for students, teachers and schools.
5. Investing in teacher training and scaling innovative practices to enable digital learning.
6. Addressing the barriers facing girls and young women to digital access, including social norms, online safety and privacy, skills and leadership to close the gender digital divides.
7. Investing in reskilling and up-skilling of youth to enable the school to work and life transition.
8. Engaging youth to achieve the ambition for digital learning and ensuring its relevance and protecting privacy and promoting safety.

The goal is ambitious: closing the digital divide means connecting every child and youth – some 3.5 billion by 2030 – to digital solutions that can offer personalized and relevant learning.

On 6 April 2021, UNESCO and the Government of Bangladesh convened a [consultation](#) with the Ministers of Education of the E9 countries to highlight progress, share lessons and explore opportunities for collaboration and scale-up to expand digital learning and skills. A Marketplace segment for public-private partnership showcased local and global solutions and opportunities for digital learning. The meeting features the participation of the UN Deputy Secretary-General, UNESCO, UNICEF, Generation Unlimited, the Malala Fund, the World Bank and other stakeholders including partners from the Global Education Coalition.

The following pages are a summary of the proceedings of the consultation.

Ministerial segment

Opening and presentation

H.E. Ms. Dipu Moni, Minister of Education and Chair of the National Commission for UNESCO, People's Republic of Bangladesh

After welcoming participants, H.E. Ms. Dipu Moni noted the disruptive nature of Covid-19 on education systems worldwide, noting the urgency of a strong political commitment to minimize the generational learning crisis. At this stage and moving forward, she noted that distance learning remains a key option, though not without various challenges. The widening of the digital divide, particularly between girls and boys and rural and urban, calls for coordination of scaled up efforts. To achieve SDG4 she noted the need to ensure investments, technological support, and innovation in education systems, highlighting the importance of strategic public-private partnerships to meet these generational challenges. This consultation is an important occasion to provide guiding inputs for the Heads of States Meeting that will launch this timely initiative.

Ms. Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations

Ms. Amina Mohammed stated “we are coming together at a difficult moment driven by a sense of urgency, necessity and opportunity”. She noted the challenging nature of the last year for learners, teachers, and parents, highlighting that there have been many efforts to ensure the continuity of learning. There is no going back to pre-pandemic education, where access to quality education was already profoundly unequal and financing gaps immense. Welcoming the participation of the Malala Fund in the consultation, she noted that no one symbolizes better the expectations of young people on education than Malala Yousafzai. She emphasized the importance of pursuing pandemic recovery efforts that transform education, noting that this co-creating initiative is key to doing just that by scaling up digital learning to narrow inequalities, reach the most marginalized, and to empower women and girls with digital skills. For this, she noted we need government leadership, engagement of young people, and to leverage innovation and private sector capacities. She noted that the history of cooperation among E-9 countries as well as their large national education systems can offer a blueprint to scale progress and get SDG4 back on track. She emphasized that the UN stands by in full support and looks forward to hearing key feedback on challenges, needs and opportunities for expanding digital skills for a reimagining of education.

Ms. Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director General for Education, UNESCO

Ms. Stefania Giannini noted the importance of this timely initiative. She referred to UNESCO's convening of a high-level ministerial meeting on prioritizing Covid-19 recovery to avoid a generation of catastrophe on 29 March, noting that digital transformation was one of its key themes. She highlighted that setbacks to SDG4 will be dramatic without innovative action to reach the most marginalized, and made three points: first, that digital learning skills require strong and enabling local ecosystems; second, that the Global Education Coalition and Generation Unlimited provide strategic alliances to support this; and third, not to underestimate that this is a steep learning curve requiring scaled up South-South cooperation. She encouraged ministers to sign up to a joint statement as a step towards the Heads of State meeting.

Ms. Henrietta Fore, Executive Director, UNICEF

Ms. Henrietta Fore stressed the need to act urgently to get all children back to school, noting strategies that are receiving a strong call in some countries like the U.S.A. to extend the school year over the

summer days to catch up with lost time. She praised the creativity of students, teachers, parents, schools, and education systems throughout the COVID crisis. The pandemic has shown the transformative potential of digital learning and noted that remote solutions can be deployed with speed and scale to reach students wherever they are, even in low-technology contexts. Ms. Fore emphasized the bold ambition to reach every child and youth with digital learning by the year 2030. Being home to an estimated 1.7 billion children and youth, the E-9 countries are key to achieving this goal and can motivate others. Noting that two thirds of the world's school-aged population lack internet connection, she emphasized the need for a diverse range of leadership in all countries, including public-private partnerships. She noted that the collective E-9 leadership offers a once in a lifetime opportunity to leapfrog children and youth into the future they want and deserve.

Ministerial roundtable

Chair H.E. Ms. Dipu Moni, Minister of Education and Chair of the National Commission for UNESCO, People's Republic of Bangladesh

H.E. Ms. Dipu Moni, Minister of Education and Chair of the National Commission for UNESCO, People's Republic of Bangladesh

- Students in Bangladesh have been out of school for more than one year, with girls at particular risk of dropping out, and students experiencing psychological and mental stress.
- Bangladesh was quick to respond to challenges, including with the launch of remote learning programs including via TV, radio, internet, and mobile phones to reach over 14 million learners; as well as the release of a policy document providing a framework strategy.
- Social media and other online platforms were used to support teacher learning.
- Commented on the persistence of the digital divide, emphasized the importance of strong political vision and alignment of the sectoral plan, as well as comprehensive assessment on how to reach all learners.
- Emphasized the need to continue exams for secondary and higher education and for young people (especially girls and women) to develop ICT skills.
- Global partnership is key to address issues of access, equity, inclusion, affordability, and life and livelihood skills.
- In the face of this crisis, strong political will in all E-9 countries will accelerate digital learning and through partnership ensure the attainment of SDG4.

H.E. Mr. Milton Ribeiro, Minister of Education, Brazil

- Noted challenges of expanding digital learning in Covid-19, but emphasized the country's response to disseminate modern digital technologies and provide the necessary support to impacted students.
- Brazil invests approximately 6% of GDP on education.
- A new national literacy policy developed in 2019 calls for aligning pedagogical methods with techniques recognized in the scientific community.
- Highlighted the role of families in education especially in the COVID-19 context, referring to a dedicated "Tell me a Story programme".
- Described several strategic initiatives: the Connected Education program supports the universalization of high speed internet access for students and the pedagogical use of digital technologies in basic education. The Ministry of Education has created a virtual learning environment called [AVAMEC](#) that brings together a series of courses and distance activities for the training and improvement of teachers. Finally, the Amazon Connected program brings connectivity to more than

50 municipalities that are difficult to access in the Amazon region, aiming to expand this to than 4.5 million Brazilians.

- While much remains to be done, Brazil stands ready to jointly invest in quality research, leading to actions to remedy educational imbalances in the E-9 countries.

H.E. Mr. Zhong Denghua, Vice Minister of Education, People's Republic of China (video)

- Emphasized the key role of ICT in education for leveraging education's modernisation in China, shared several key efforts, including strengthening of policy level design and planning (with series of documents including the China Education Modernization 2035 and AI Development Plan in the New Era); accelerating the promotion of online teaching environment (significant improvement of online teaching and ratio of internet connection in schools); establishment of investment mechanisms with multi-stakeholder involvement; and promotion of education innovation.
- In response to the pandemic China has conducted large scale online education, covering nearly 300 million students. The Government collaborated closely with the private sector and shared experiences and online resources with developing countries, including in Africa.
- With the rapid expansion of technology, education will undergo fundamental changes, noting that China has been working on innovative ways to enhance quality education for all.
- Covid-19 carries impact on all of humanity. He stated "We must join hands and meet together as E-9 countries, who make up more than half of the global population."
- Referred to the Qingdao Declaration on ICT in Education and the Beijing Consensus on AI and Education, as well as collaboration to enhance policy dialogue, promote mutual learning, develop MOOCS, share technology and teaching resources in order to build a community of digital education to close the digital gap and advance the 2030 education agenda.

H.E. Mr. Sanjay Dhotre, Minister of State for Education, India

- The pandemic has, impacted more than 330 million students in India. Despite this enormous challenge, digital TV and radio have been employed for learning continuity, to ensure that students did not lose an academic year.
- Digital tools are being used extensively in line with the vision of the Prime Minister to prioritize digitalization and access to information.
- A single digital platform, MOOCS, and radio broadcasting are among the tools to take education to remote parts of the country.
- The government is launching an initiative to improve multiple access to education, benefiting nearly 250 million school-going children across India.
- During the pandemic, the largest entrance exam in engineering and the medical forces was successfully conducted.
- India's National Education Policy 2020 aligns with SDG4.
- The pandemic has demonstrated the critical role of digital and multimodal education, highlighting need to strengthen digital infrastructures, skills, as well as teacher training, data security and privacy, funding and assessment tools.
- India is scaling up national digital architecture to support teaching and learning, sustainable development, and promoting a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship within education institutions.
- Proposed to work in collaboration and solidarity on this initiative.

Mr. Iwan Syarhil, Director General for Teachers and Education Personnel

On behalf of H.E. Mr. Nadiem Anwar Makarim, Minister of Education and Culture, Republic of Indonesia

- Mr. Iwan Syarhil shared the Minister's strong support for the co-creation on this initiative by the E-9 and UNESCO.
- "Before the pandemic we were already entering an era where disruption is the new normal, a process that has accelerated," he stated.
- Upon appointing the Minister in 2019, President Joko Widodo emphasized the use technology to innovate in addressing problems such as equity, highlighting its role for transformation. Digital platforms and Apps for education were developed.
- "Changing the mindset is the biggest challenge surrounding technology and Covid-19, rather than the technology itself." Teachers have become accustomed to experimenting and being 'comfortable with the uncomfortable' - a key ingredient for innovative cultures.
- An online teacher learning series launched in October 2020 has attracted more than 1 million teachers with a 70% completion rate. Crowd sourcing models for teachers to share lesson plans online are popular in Indonesia, allowing teachers to be connected with each other.
- A super App has been developed to minimize teachers' administrative work and routine tasks, and focus more on student learning.
- Referred to research by Brooking Institution on four intervention models to improve student learning: Scale up standardized instruction; Facilitate instruction; Expand opportunities of practice; and Improve learner engagement. All are potential areas of collaboration from the Indonesian perspective.

H.E. Mr. Malam Adamu Adamu, Minister of Education, Nigeria

- Nigeria was already home to a large number of out of school children before the pandemic, which has compounded divides.
- Education systems were not prepared but teachers have been heroes throughout the pandemic, innovating in many ways.
- Nigeria deployed distance learning through online, radio, and television, but large gaps remain including rural and urban divides with broadband penetration and affordability, as well as gender divides.
- The Nigerian government is now focusing on providing affordable digital devices to all teachers and learners.
- Stressed compelling need for collaboration to upgrade infrastructure facilities, invest in the digital skills of teachers, make affordable devices available to all and expand broadband access.
- Nigeria welcomes this initiative and sees it as an opportunity to ensure its commitment to the transformation of its education system and collaboration with all partners to achieve this objective.

H.E. Mr. Shafqat Mahmood, Federal Minister of Education, Islamic Republic of Pakistan

- Noted timeliness of this initiative. The pandemic has opened many unanticipated doors with unprecedented challenges that are also opportunities. The pandemic has transformed local education frameworks, creating links between online learning, digital literacy, and entrepreneurial skills, etc.
- Expanding access to digital learning in the E-9 will expand and unleash the potential of global youth.
- Pakistan has made significant digital learning strides during the pandemic, providing access to online resources through leveraging public-private partnerships, and launched a new TV and radio broadcast channel for education, and free internet access for the remotest areas.
- A key challenge is to overcome unequal access to digital devices and unavailability of internet and broadband coverage. We must focus on innovation, policy dialogue, pedagogies and platforms,

smooth transition to work and life, and digital learning opportunities across gender and social divides for all young women in Pakistan.

- Pakistan reiterated its commitment to an inclusive education in which no child is left behind, noting that digital learning is a necessity and it is a target to connect all to the internet.

Partners' roundtable

Moderator Maki Katsuno-Hayashikawa, Director, Division for Education 2030 (ED/E30) Education Sector, UNESCO

Mr. Jaime Saavedra, Global Director, Education, The World Bank

- Emphasized commitment to join efforts in this initiative and highlighted that while 2020 was a 'lost year' for many children, we cannot afford to also lose 2021, noting that a fast recovery of learning is key.
- Referred to the recent launch the [Mission: Recovering Education 2021](#) by UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank, is an effort for all institutions to work together on the ground to invest in remedial education, teachers, and technology.
- Stressed urgency to close the digital divide, build more resilient education systems, take into account role of parents, update teacher training and pedagogy and improve quality of learning data.
- While noting this collaboration is productive at the international level, emphasized that what matters is what happens on the ground in all countries and to learn collectively from their experiences.

Mr. Shankar Maruwada, CEO and co-founder, Ekstep Foundation, India

- Proposed to think in terms of a building blocks approach to digital learning.
- Referred to online learning platform, DIKSHA (diksha.gov.in) launched by the Government of India in 2017, which was created by using Sunbird's open-source software, modular building blocks. This platform has been used extensively throughout the pandemic, across 30 languages and in digitally training 3 million teachers across the country.
- Highlighted that Sunbird is free and that any country is free to use these building blocks, customize them and integrate them into existing technology in infrastructures and institutional mechanism, to enhance digital learning solutions.
- Highlighted importance of a cooperative approach to rapidly scale up digital learning by allowing countries to build on what is already usable and useful.

Mr. Nader Imani, Executive Vice-President Global Education, FESTO

- Festo is supporting the Sustainable Development Agenda, with a goal of maximizing productivity in the manufacturing sector.
- FESTO's contribution is focused on TVET and training in water technology (noting access to clean water and sanitation – SDG6).
- Highlighted the aim to contribute to access to quality of education for employability and focusing on future jobs such as water technicians
- Stressed importance of skills development and upscaling programs in digital and hybrid mode and expressed enthusiasm to cooperate in spirit of SDG17.

Mr. Kevin Frey, CEO, Generation Unlimited

- The global pandemic has deepened pre-existing learning crisis, and spotlighted the digital divide and skills gap.
- Noted that Generation Unlimited, along with its partners, have reached over 100 million young people across the world, including in 8 of the E-9 countries.
- Emphasized their mission is to ensure that all are connected to the internet, have relevant job and entrepreneurship skills and opportunities.
- Stressed the need to prioritize the upscaling of young people for the future of work as we build back better, noting that the future will be increasingly digital.
- Public-private partnership is key for this task. By coming together in this initiative, there is an opportunity to harness the power of technology to improve outcomes for young people and their futures.

Mr. Ziauddin Yousafzai, Co-Founder, Malala Fund

- Recalled that almost 258 million children and youth are out of school, a majority are girls.
- With Covid-19 we realized even further the power of information technology and the need for digital education. While Covid-19 has forced us to be locked down, technology has unlocked new avenues of communication, including for online education.
- Research from marginalized communities of Ethiopia, India, Nigeria and Pakistan shows that 20 million more secondary school aged girls will be out of school after the crisis, and noted that only 59% of girls compared to 62% of boys have access to education activities while staying home.
- Emphasized 3 targets to make this E-9 initiative successful:
 - Collaboration on scaling up and enhancement of digital education and skills (quality and quantity);
 - Collaboration and diminishing divides (gender, economic gap, and rural/urban gap);
 - Collaboration on making digital education effective, productive and safe.
- Noting the Malala Fund's dream to see every boy and girl in school achieving safe, quality, and free education, he expressed that this E-9 initiative's focus on digital learning will help to materialize this common dream.

Ms. Kate Behncken, Head of Philanthropies, Microsoft (video)

- In the pre-recorded video, she noted the importance of building and leveraging solutions for young people, and Microsoft's mission to empower every person and organization on the planet.
- Described the partnership with UNICEF that started back in 2018 applications of technology to solve priority challenges and how to ensure access to digital education, skills and tools.
- Noted the program's focus on displaced peoples and draws attention to challenges with infrastructure and connectivity that prevent access to world class education contents.
- Described the joint development of the Learning Passport platform that is now used in ten countries, providing students, young people etc. with critical skills to support their future, using technology as a bridge to reach those most at risk.
- Emphasized importance for all stakeholders weighing in (with funding, devices, connectivity, and expertise), and to look for opportunities to leverage technologies.

Conclusion and closing

Ms. Henrietta Fore, Executive Director, UNICEF

On behalf of Ms. Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations

She thanked Minister Moni, and all institutions and organising team for convening the meeting. She commended all ministers for their insightful and encouraging contributions, as well as their positive feedback on the initiative, of which good notes have been taken on ideas and best practices. She underscored the importance of seeing digital learning with strong links with personal wellbeing (education, personal health, etc.). She noted the need to engage key constituencies more directly on the experience with digital or distanced learning, since this has not always been positive for students, teachers and parents. She thanked all partners and collaborating institutions, and noted that the headquarters and offices of UN agencies in each country are available to support the E-9 governments in preparing for the Head of State Level Meeting, expected to occur this summer. To close, she reiterated that this initiative is an opportunity for E-9 countries to show the world how digital learning can help to close learning and digital divides, improve learning outcomes, and accelerate implementation of SDG4. As a personal note, she also emphasized that this initiative is being moved through various high-level meetings (i.e., WB, IMF, G7/G20), noting that the entire UN family is appreciative of this initiative and looks forward to its continued development.

H.E. Ms. Dipu Moni, Minister of Education and Chair of the National Commission for UNESCO, People's Republic of Bangladesh

She thanked all Ministers and key stakeholders and institutions collaborating in the organization of the meeting, and noted that it was a great opportunity to share experiences and reinforce commitment to education. She noted that the learning curve has been steep during the crisis and that there seems to be a common understanding and belief in the drive of the transformative ability of learning. She encouraged all to work collectively and garner partnership to ensure inclusive education for all and closing digital access and skills gaps, to get SDG4 back on track during this decade of action. She encouraged Ministers to endorse the joint statement that was shared just prior to the meeting.

Marketplace segment

Following the Ministerial segment ensued the Marketplace segment. This Marketplace for public-private partnerships showcased eleven local and global solutions and opportunities from the Global Coalition for Education, Generation Unlimited and beyond. The eleven different breakout rooms, designed as virtual exhibition booths, provided space for the presentation of diverse learning solutions and Q&As. Each breakout room, consisted of two, back-to-back sessions allowing the audience to switch booths in between according to their interest and pre-selected choice.

Participation

Over 500 participants from around the world joined the meeting, with a large portion of participants remaining for the Marketplace segment.

Private partner exhibitors

Breakout room 1 - Age of Learning

Presented by: Zac Katz - EVP Partnerships & Corporate Affairs, Keri Baughman, Manager, Social Impact
Showcased "ABCmouse English; ReadingIQ; My Math Academy" and provided information on the requirements to deploy these digital learning solutions for children.

Breakout room 2 - Blackboard

Presented by: Joel Armando

Introduced their teaching and learning portfolio including solutions for learning management, virtual classrooms, accessibility, data, and analytics. They also shared how they partner with the global education community to make quality education accessible to all learners.

Breakout room 3 - Khan Academy

Presented by: Carina Rodrigues, Sidnei Shibata, Mathu Shalini, Amanda Campos, Anna Berns,
International Content Program Manager

Showcased their suite of free online lessons and practice in math and science covering kindergarten through early college. These lessons and practices offer exercises, quizzes, and challenges with immediate feedback and encouragement, so students can practice and master skills, as well as instructional videos to help students learn or review material. Khan Academy also showcased their library of remote learning and training resources for teachers, and free tools to track student progress. Khan Academy's educational content is available in 50 languages, and aligned to the national curricula of over 10 countries.

Breakout room 4 – LabXChange

Presented by: Gaurav Vazirani, Managing Director

Demonstrated their free solution for distance and hybrid learning, shared resources for supporting the professional development of teachers, and opportunities to collaborate and scale up high-quality digital STEM education opportunities.

Breakout room 5 – Learning Passport

Presented by: Mac Glovinsky, Learning Passport Manager, UNICEF

Demonstrated how the “Learning Passport” supports learners and teachers, and how it allows for monitoring of learning. They provided examples of country engagement and also discussed the steps of roll-out and requirements.

Breakout room 6 – NYAS Launchpad

Presented by: Hank Nourse, Chief Learning Officer

Showcased “Launchpad,” a cloud-based platform where young people build skills and solve real-world problems with support from STEM professionals who serve as mentors.

Breakout room 7 – Pix

Presented by: Marie BANCAL, Head of Partnerships and Development Department

Showcased the Pix platform, a tool to assess, develop and certify digital skills, and also “Pix Orga,” a dedicated dashboard for teachers. It discussed Pix’s outreach in France and beyond, as well as its positioning as a future global common good.

Breakout room 8 – Profuturo

Presented by: Leticia de Rato Salazar-Simpson, Head of Global Partnerships

Showcased their digital learning platform and the wealth of educational resources, that can support teachers’ skills and professional development through off-line and on-line environments.

Breakout room 9 – Technovation

Presented by: Tara Chklovski, Founder, CEO

Showcased the “Technovation Girls’ programme,” shared experiences and lessons learnt, and explored opportunities for collaboration in future editions.

Breakout room 10 – Worldreader

Presented by: Rebecca Leege, Chief Impact Officer; Bhanu Potta, Deborah Backu

Showcased the “BookSmart” digital learning solution, showcased how it supports teachers, caregivers/parents and children, in addition to its real-time assessment features.

Breakout room 11 - YOMA

Presented by: Wesley Furrow, GenU YOMA Innovation Manager and Franziska Seiffarth, GiZ Global Programme and Digital Transformation Adviser and YOMA Adviser

Explained the digital marketplace for youth, developed by young Africans, across the world to build and transform their futures by actively engaging in social impact tasks, learning and earning opportunities. It is an ecosystem solution that links young people with opportunities, provided by a range of partners, such as private enterprises, social impact organizations and future employers. Using ethical and privacy-preserving machine learning algorithms, AI and psychometric tools, Yoma identifies, nurtures and connects hidden talents and provides them with individualized learning-to-earning pathways. Yoma’s Founding Partners include GenU, UNICEF, GiZ, Goodwall, and Fondation Botnar. They highlighted how organizations and governments can contribute to the initiative as funders, opportunity providers, providers of technical expertise, and/or support with outreach and promotion.

Takeaways and key moments

The discussions amongst the various Marketplace breakout sessions proved extremely fruitful and provided a unique opportunity for government and public officials to interact directly and personally with tech sector partners. These partners could potentially collaborate with E-9 education systems, including adaptation of solutions and provision of services to advance the new initiative on digital learning and skills in E-9 countries and beyond. While each presentation and discussion varied, recurring themes were:

- Tailored, flexible learning: in order for digital learning to be effective, it must be tailored to its respective audience- be it age group, language, or geographic region. Many platforms now provide materials in multiple languages and allow for the user or instructor to compose their own material according to their needs.
- Teacher training: the best technology alone is not sufficient to ensure quality education. While these platforms do provide extensive resources for students, it is critical that these platforms include training for teachers for ultimate impact.
- Partnership: ensuring digital learning and bridging the digital divide cannot be accomplished by solely the public nor private sector but, rather, through intertwined partnership. These platforms provide unique, advanced methods to access education, however, they cannot be fully utilized to reach all students without financial and philanthropic partnerships as well as government engagement. The pursuit of education for all requires the cooperation and engagement of all sectors.

While each Marketplace breakout session was engaging, some of the following quotes rang particularly true for the future of digital learning:

- Blackboard: “As a company, we connect the understanding of education with the power of technology to continuously push the boundaries of learning.”
- Khan Academy: “Khan Academy is a non-profit organization with the mission to provide a free, world class education to anyone, anywhere. And everything we do is rooted in that mission because we see education as a fundamental human right.”
- Worldreader: “Building reading culture is the foundation of learning; it preserves culture and nation building. Digital reading has the power to reach millions, and support nations and the global community in accelerating sustainable development goals.”
- YOMA: “YOMA seeks to identify, nurture and connect hidden talents and provide them with individualized learning-to-earning digital pathways”
- Launchpad supports collaborative project-based learning supported by STEM professionals and is working with students from 100+ countries, expert mentors across STEM disciplines to address challenges linked to UN Sustainable Development Goals.

These types of interactions between tech partners and public officials are the beginning of a new future: even beyond the extreme difficulties experienced in the face of COVID-19 and school closures, implementing digital learning solutions will help ensure the right to education for all for the generations to come.

Annex – Provisional agenda

E9 initiative: Scaling-up digital learning to accelerate progress towards SDG4

Consultation meeting of Ministers of Education

Tuesday, 6 April 2021 17:45 Dhaka UTC+6 (13:45 Paris UTC+2 / 07:45 New York UTC-4)

Virtual by Zoom

Provisional agenda

Ministerial segment

Time (ref. Dhaka UTC+6)	Agenda item
17:45 - 18:00	<p>Opening</p> <p>H.E. Ms. Dipu Moni, Minister of Education and Chair of the National Commission for UNESCO, People’s Republic of Bangladesh</p> <p>Ms. Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>General presentation on the new initiative by</p> <p>Ms. Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director General for Education, UNESCO</p> <p>Ms. Henrietta Fore, Executive Director, UNICEF</p>
18:00 - 18:40	<p>Ministerial roundtable (4 minutes each)</p> <p>Chair: H.E. Ms. Dipu Moni, Minister of Education and Chair of the National Commission for UNESCO, People’s Republic of Bangladesh</p> <p>What did we learn from the COVID-19 in light of governments’ efforts to ensure digital learning, including for marginalized children and youth, especially girls, and what are the gaps?</p> <p>What needs to be done to accelerate progress on digital learning and close the digital divide in terms of support, collaboration and knowledge sharing?</p> <p>How can international partners support this acceleration?</p> <p>Statements by Ministers:</p> <p>H.E. Ms. Dipu Moni, Minister of Education and Chair of the National Commission for UNESCO, People’s Republic of Bangladesh</p> <p>H.E. Mr. Milton Ribeiro, Minister of Education, Brazil</p> <p>H.E. Mr. Chen Baosheng, Minister of Education, People’s Republic of China</p> <p>H.E. Mr. Tarek Shawki, Minister of Education, Arab Republic of Egypt</p> <p>H.E. Mr. Sanjay Dhotre, Minister of State for Education, India</p> <p>H.E. Mr. Nadiem Anwar Makarim, Minister of Education and Culture, Republic of Indonesia</p> <p>H.Exc. Ms. Delfina Gomez Alvarez, Minister of Public Education, Mexico</p> <p>H.E. Mr. Malam Adamu Adamu, Minister of Education, Nigeria</p> <p>H.E. Mr. Shafqat Mahmood, Federal Minister of Education, Islamic Republic of Pakistan</p>

18:40 - 18:55	<p>Partners' roundtable (2 minutes each)</p> <p>What can partners contribute? How will partners coordinate and collaborate?</p> <p>Responses by:</p> <p>Mr. Jaime Saavedra, Global Director, Education, The World Bank Mr. Shankar Maruwada, CEO and co-founder, Ekstep Foundation, India Mr. Nader Imani, Executive Vice-President Global Education, FESTO Mr. Kevin Frey, CEO, Generation Unlimited Mr. Ziauddin Yousafzai, Co-Founder, Malala Fund Ms. Kate Behncken, Head of Philanthropies, Microsoft (video) Mr. Borhene Chakroun, Director, Division for Policy and Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO and Global Education Coalition Coordinator Mr. Robert Jenkins, Chief of Education and Associate Director, UNICEF</p>
18:55 - 19:10	<p>Open discussion</p> <p>Further questions from Ministers and partners</p> <p>Chair: H.E. Ms. Dipu Moni, Minister of Education and Chair of the National Commission for UNESCO, People's Republic of Bangladesh</p>
19:10 - 19:15	<p>Conclusion and closing</p> <p>Ms. Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations H.E. Ms. Dipu Moni, Minister of Education and Chair of National Commission for UNESCO, People's Republic of Bangladesh</p>

Marketplace segment

19:15 – 20:00	<p>Marketplace</p> <p>11 breakout sessions (run twice)</p> <p>Promising local and global solutions and opportunities to strengthen local ecosystems for digital learning, focusing on three dimensions:</p> <p>Matching demand and global supply (sharing global solutions) Matching demand and E9 supply (sharing local solutions and South-South cooperation) B2B: connecting global and local solutions (for example value chain opportunities, exchanges, etc.)</p> <p>NB: 2 x 21 min repeat sessions with a mix of presentation and Q&A including chat and live.</p>
---------------	--

For more details, please visit the [webpage](#)

For enquiries, please contact e9Secretariat@unesco.org