



SUMMARY

Every Child Learns

UNICEF Education Strategy 2019–2030

Every child has the right to learn. Although more children than ever before are enrolled in school, the duty-bearers obligated to realize this right for every child are collectively failing to improve learning, and this failure is deep and broad, and has significant consequences. Many children lack the knowledge and skills to realize their full potential and maximize their contribution to their communities.

The gap between the levels of learning that education systems are providing and what children, communities and economies need, is growing. The breadth and depth of this learning crisis provides the greatest global challenge to preparing children and adolescents for life, work and active citizenship.

At the current rate, by 2030, of the

1.4

billion

school-age children, in low- and middle-income countries

420

million

will not learn the most basic skills in childhood

825

million

will not acquire basic secondary-level skills

The lesson of the learning crisis is clear: the conventional assembly of education inputs is not improving learning outcomes. This presents a fundamental challenge to the way that governments, development partners and communities are managing and supporting education systems. A new, more radical approach that focusses on enhancing learning outcomes is long overdue and forms the basis for this Strategy.

The vision of the Strategy is that **'every child learns'**. In support of this vision, the Strategy adopts the following three goals: (1) equitable access to learning opportunities; (2) improved learning and skills for all; and (3) improved learning and protection for children in emergency and fragile contexts. The Strategy outlines the shift towards a greater focus on improving learning outcomes, including supporting the development of the breadth of skills that allow young people to become agile, adaptive learners and citizens, equipped to navigate personal, social, academic, economic and environmental challenges.

For **"every"** child to learn, UNICEF will increasingly promote equity and inclusion. This will include focussing particularly on children excluded on the basis of gender, children with disabilities, the poorest, ethnic and linguistic minorities, and children affected by emergencies. There will also be a shift in focus to expand support for reaching children during their early years (3–5 years old) and during adolescence (10–19 years old). Increased work on pre-primary education will enable countries to benefit from the unparalleled positive return from investing in this area. Providing multiple learning pathways, particularly for adolescents, by introducing and scaling up innovative approaches will enable UNICEF to respond to the increasingly important and critical period in which children transition to adulthood.

UNICEF will also shift emphasis in implementation, on the basis of lessons learned and the organization's comparative advantage, as outlined in the Strategy's programmatic

approaches. First, systems strengthening will be (further) enhanced in partnership with governments, non-governmental organizations and other non-state providers. This will include enhanced support to sector-wide analysis, planning, implementation and accountability, with a clear focus on promoting learning and greater equity. Education systems will be supported to further promote and realize their potential as a tool for transforming societies and economies – challenging, rather than replicating, harmful gender and social norms.

Second, the generation and use of data and evidence will be (further) enhanced, particularly related to levels of learning, to generate a better understanding of the children being left behind, and the effectiveness of education systems in meeting the learning needs of every child. Greater and more effective investment will be accorded to strengthening the systematic measurement of learning outcomes for all learners (regardless of pathway). Mobilizing and enabling the wide range of duty-bearers to act on the data and evidence on learning at all levels will be central to the Strategy.

Third, scalable and sustainable innovation will be a key and expanded programmatic approach in the Strategy, including promoting new ways to accelerate learning for vulnerable children and transforming the effectiveness of education systems at scale.

This shift in emphasis will enable UNICEF to leverage significant opportunities over the next decade. With more data and awareness than ever before on the depth of the learning crisis, there is a growing consensus on the urgency for coordinated action, as outlined by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which place learning and equity centre stage. There is also more evidence on the effectiveness of approaches to transforming education systems to improve learning. 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.

This strategy confirms the importance that UNICEF accords to education and a commitment to deliver, along with partners, the SDGs for education and the realization of the Convention on the Rights of the Child – so that **"Every Child Learns"**.