

High quality digital content must be made available to ensure that adequate teaching and learning materials are in place for all students to engage in and learn from their relevant curriculums. Digital education platforms with high quality digital learning content can transform learning for children, youth and adults. The experience of the COVID-19 educational disruption revealed that large numbers of students do not know where to go or have nowhere to go to access digital education resources to pursue their studies needs and interests. In many instances, the content that does exist has not been quality assured, is poorly organized, resides behind paywalls and/or in virtual spaces that inappropriately capture and sell student data, while exposing learners to advertising.

: Digital capacities must be strengthened to ensure education stakeholders have the digital skills and knowledge needed to leverage digital tools for learning by using evidence-based approaches. Capacity development is needed to enable effective digital teaching and learning which will provide benefits well beyond academic outcomes. Moreover, special attention must be directed to close the gender gap in digital skills. Women and girls are 25 per cent less likely than boys and men to know how to leverage digital technology for basic purposes and four times less likely to know how to write simple computer programs.

We must re-affirm commitments to ensure that all schools and individuals can benefit from the educational advantages that come with good-quality internet connections. Affordable connectivity provides a vital pathway to digital learning. Globally however, 2.9 billion people are still offline, 90 percent of whom live in developing countries. In addition, there are significant differences in internet affordability worldwide such that the poorest people often have the most expensive mobile data fees. Due largely to access and cost differentials, people in wealthy countries use, on average, 35 times more digital data than people in poorer countries. This inequity in access to affordable connectivity narrows opportunities for far too many young people and adults to learn and fulfil their potential.

The Spotlight Session is an opportunity to mobilize strong political commitment and leadership for action to ensure that every learner can find a public space for public education on the internet. The session will call upon the Head of States to endorse a ***Call to Action*** and commit to advance work in three specific areas of implementation -- content, capacity and connectivity -- to make digital teaching and learning a universally accessible and reliable pillar of holistic educational experiences. The session will also launch ***the Gateways to Public Digital Learning*** to support an international movement to ensure that every learner,





UNESCO and UNICEF are launching a Global Initiative on Public Digital Learning to create and strengthen inclusive digital learning resources and platforms that would be available as public goods. The segment will feature champion countries who will share their experiences.

Ms. Catherine Russell, Executive Director, UNICEF

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

and

