

Recovery, resilience and reimagining education in Africa

The Global Education Coalition in action





Launched at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Global Education Coalition (GEC) has become a force for change. The Coalition, an international multisectoral partnership, was established to meet the urgent and unprecedented need for continuity of learning as the pandemic disrupted education systems across the world.

The unique partnerships forged from the Coalition have yielded impactful results for learners, teachers, and educational systems. Since its inception, the GEC has prioritized Africa in its operations. Today, the Coalition is working in 39 countries in Africa with a wide range of support and actions.

**Global Education Coalition
working in**

39

countries in Africa

66

projects in Africa

38

**additional projects
in discussion in Africa**

"Today's spirit of celebration and innovation across Africa must continue to be harnessed to support the continuity of learning with investments in our youth, technologies and educational actors to build a better future for the continent."

**Mr Firmin Matoko, Assistant Director-General for
Priority Africa and External relations, UNESCO**

GEC Actions in Africa – Supporting Continuity of Learning

**Francophone Countries in West Africa
— Improving the quality of distance
education for 6.6 million students and
200,000 teachers**



The French-speaking African regional online learning platform [Imaginecole.africa](https://imaginecole.africa) was launched on 21 December 2020 as a key component of a Global Partnership for Education (GPE) funded project to improve the quality of distance education in ten countries: Benin, Burkina, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Chad and Togo. Imaginecole offers a large-scale learning platform for distance education for 6.6 million students and professional development support for 200,000 teachers with over 600 educational resources. Imaginecole will be enriched in the coming months with locally produced content by teams working with UNESCO and GEC partners to improve their skills. Resources range from high-quality educational videos and interactive lessons to downloadable printouts. It covers a comprehensive emergency response for learning both in connected and disconnected locations.

**Senegal — Expanding access to distance
learning platforms**



The Ministry of Education of Senegal, UNESCO, Microsoft, Huawei and Orange have joined forces to support tens of thousands of teachers and students in an effort to continue learning during the COVID-19 crisis. The Ministry's Distance Learning Platform has enrolled 82,000 teachers and 500,000 learners, who have started learning. With support from Microsoft, 1.5 million learners and teachers benefited from this action. UNESCO is supporting training for 200 teachers to become "master trainers." A Training-of-Trainers approach, in which teachers train other teachers, will soon be adopted. Devices to improve connectivity of the 200 master trainers were distributed by Huawei in June 2020. Orange offered zero rating for access to education data.

South Africa — Providing live education and health support for all teachers



A WhatsApp-based support service for South Africa's teachers was launched in September 2020 by Praekelt.org, a Business Solution Providers of GEC partner Facebook, the South Africa Department of Basic Education (DBE) and local implementation partner E-Cubed. TeacherConnect is a real-time chat-based learning and mentorship platform for education, available 24/7 to all teachers. To help ensure the wellness and safety of educators and staff, TeacherConnect has integrated HealthCheck, a National Department of Health self-screening initiative, to ensure effective management of COVID-19 in the educational system. This digital risk assessment and mapping tool allows for early detection, mapping, management and pre-screening of COVID-19 cases. TeacherConnect also integrates vaccine support for teachers. Through the application, teachers are informed, can register or screen for vaccination eligibility, and book appointments for vaccination. To date, TeacherConnect has had 146,801 users in South Africa comprised of principals, teachers, teaching assistants, school management and school assistants, parents and learners with plans to reach out to entire 440,000 teacher community.

Free access to data and Internet for education



In response to the COVID 19 crisis, Orange created the [Orange Campus Africa](#) that provides hundreds of thousands of free educational and cultural content, in French, English and Arabic. It represents 1 Terabyte of content that has been installed on the Orange Africa data center in order to be promoted and easily accessible via free or very cheap mobile access in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

Supporting teacher training and learning continuity



ProFuturo intensified its support for education in Africa in 2020, where, despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, it managed to train more than 22,000 teachers. A strong impulse came from a teacher professional development project implemented in partnership with Empieza por Educar Foundation and several members of the international Teach for All network that trained 15,504 teachers in Nigeria, Liberia and United Republic of Tanzania. This project will continue during 2021 in 6 African countries: Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Zimbabwe, with the goal of reaching 13,627 new teachers.

Smart Classrooms



Since the beginning of the pandemic, Weidong Cloud Education Group has worked closely as part of the Global Education Coalition. Weidong has implemented projects at the country level together with UNESCO in Mauritius, Rwanda, Djibouti, Comoros, and other countries and has provided package solutions including Smart Classrooms, training resources in English and French and Learning Management Systems. CreateView is providing a Smart Classroom for 2 universities in Ghana and Namibia and planning to extend this support to 2 other universities in Nigeria and Senegal in 2021.

Rollout of the Building Back Equal: Girls Back to School Guide in Africa



Following the release of the [Building back equal: Girls back to school guide](#) developed by Global Education Coalition partners Malala Fund, Plan International, UNESCO and UNICEF in August 2020, partners have been supporting its roll-out in different



contexts. This includes the Pan-African launch of the Guide undertaken with the African Union (AU) on 9 December 2020 which reached representatives of ministries of education across the 55 AU Member States. Funds have been secured from government partners to integrate the guide into professional development programmes in Africa and Asia on gender-responsive education sector planning (GRESF) in the context of COVID-19. Ministry of education officials, school administration officials, Local Education Groups and other key stakeholders involved in education, protection and health will be trained in 2021-2022 with an initial pilot in Mali and Mauritania followed by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. Course content will be integrated into UNGEI's GRESF trainings and UNESCO IIEP's sector planning work will ensure a wide and sustainable reach beyond these initial contexts.

Digital inclusion



Under the UNESCO-Huawei Funds-in-Trust project on [Technology-enabled Open Schools for All](#) (USD 3M funded by Huawei for 3 years), UNESCO is providing financial and technical support to Egypt, Ethiopia, and Ghana on the planning and building of technology-enabled crisis resilient learning systems. Drawing lessons from the education response to COVID-19 disruption, the project activities cover the enhancement of national distance or online learning platforms, development of distance learning courses and digital resources, and training of teachers students on digital skills as well as on the effective use of distance learning. Countries will also be supported to develop national policies on digital learning with a vision of advancing the digital transformation of the learning systems.

Democratic Republic of the Congo — Remote learning via radio



In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Education Cannot Wait and [UNESCO's Capacity Development for Education Programme \(Cap-ED\)](#) are co-financing COVID-19 education response activities. With the country's Internet coverage estimated to be less than 20 per cent, these joint interventions focus on remote learning via radio, especially community radio, with the aim of reaching over four million learners. UNESCO and Education Cannot Wait are adapting the primary education curriculum, as well as year 8, into radio lessons. The programme is also helping strengthen the capacities of 120 community radio stations and 240 community radio staff to broadcast the lessons.

Interactive storybooks



Curious Learning, together with Ubongo, published a series of interactive storybooks in English and Kiswahili aimed at giving children the opportunity to learn to read on mobile devices.

A Curious Reader book is an eBook augmented with additional features to make the story more engaging and educational. This type of content has become particularly relevant over the last year when access to school has been limited. Together with the support of UNESCO, the apps have been translated into French, with Portuguese and Malgache versions coming out in 2021. So far, over 100,000 learners have come online, with installs (and learning) increasing daily. Multiple partners are using the apps with dedicated devices in schools and learning centres.

West African Anglophone learning platform



To improve the quality of distance education in five West African Anglophone countries - Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone - the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) funded project will develop a sub-regional learning platform, with specific focus on offline and printed learning materials, as well as teacher-training for the development and monitoring of distance education, including through radio and TV in cooperation with Coalition media partners as well as with ECOWAS.

Keeping Girls in the Picture campaign



Launched on 31 August 2020, a "campaign" - Keeping Girls in the Picture campaign calls for efforts to safeguard progress on girls' education, ensure girls continue to learn during school closures, and promote girls' safe return once schools reopen. The campaign's focus on sub-Saharan Africa included campaign materials and [website](#); human interest videos profiling girls' experience in [Kenya](#) and [Somalia](#); toolkits for [youth-led advocacy](#) and [community radios](#); [Facebook Live interview](#) with high-profile women including former President of Malawi Joyce Banda, 7 influencers from Africa engaged to expand advocacy messages including in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria and United Republic of Tanzania. GEC partner All-African Student Union used materials to train members from 54 African countries to support youth advocacy and the campaign. In 2021, UNESCO, Save the Children, and UNFPA, SAFAIDS and other regional civil society organizations are linking the Keeping Girls in the Picture campaign with the Let's Talk campaign on early and unintended pregnancy through social media, video and audio story content. This joint effort will be rolled out to SADC countries: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe. In addition, UNESCO, with funding support from Wallonie-Bruxelles, will be rolling out the Keeping Girls in the Picture campaign in Benin, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal with similar attention to gender-based violence, and early and unintended pregnancy.

"I wish to congratulate student unions for the direct interventions they have contributed to their government's efforts to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. I hope that when the pandemic passes, we will remember what the students and young people of the African Continent did to alleviate the toll of the COVID-19 Pandemic, sometimes at the peril of their lives."

Mr Peter Kwasi Kodjie, Secretary-General, All-Africa Students Union (AASU)

Mission approach

The GEC is using a mission approach to achieve large-scale targets and as a way to operationalize actions around the flagships. In the second half of 2020, the GEC launched three missions each aiming to reach one million beneficiaries.

The Global Skills Academy

The [Global Skills Academy](#) aims to help one million youth and adults build skills for employability and resilience. Today, this pilot project is accelerating its implementation phase and planning to go beyond the originally urgent response to the pandemic.

In Africa, Dior's and PIX's contributions, focusing on leadership and digital skills respectively, are currently being implemented targeting nearly 67,000 young people and adults from 41 distinct Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions across 10 countries.

- Pix, the French online platform to assess, develop and certify digital skills has been made available free of cost to several TVET institutions in Benin, Madagascar, Morocco, Togo and Tunisia. Through an interactive platform, Pix ensures that learners receive a tailor-made training based on previously assessed digital skills. Pix provides key insight on the strengths and weaknesses of their trainees to help them adapt their teaching and target the areas where their learners need to improve
- The Women@DIOR mentorship programme aims to empower young female students around the world by developing their leadership skills so that they can be agents of change. Previously only available in a handful of countries, DIOR has geographically expanded its talent pool to provide even the most disadvantaged female students an opportunity to receive courses on leadership and inclusion. Beneficiaries are based in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania, among other countries.



Global Skills Academy



Global Learning House



Global Teacher Campus

Global Teacher Campus

The [Global Teacher Campus](#) aims to provide 1 million teachers with training opportunities on the pedagogical use of ICTs, to conduct remote teaching as well as to carry out formative assessment and curricular adaptations to better support at-risk students and those who have fallen behind due to schools closures and educational disruptions.

In Africa, discussions are in progress with the following partners:

- Profuturo is offering to deploy its teacher training programmes in the following countries: Liberia, Namibia, Zambia, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Togo.
- Blackboard is offering to support Ethiopia as a pilot country with infrastructure and Learning Management System platform; industry recognized faculty development in teaching and learning online, 3rd party integration on content, student digital exams and an online Software as a service (SaaS) based learning system. The offer may be extended to other countries across Africa. In addition, Blackboard will be supporting teacher training on the pedagogical use of ICT in Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Gambia.
- Teach For All: A global organization of teachers delivering education through a network of 59 independent partner affiliates focuses on social inclusion, supporting talented teachers, and placing them in disadvantaged schools.
- Curious Learning: aims to localise and distribute high impact early literacy mobile apps (free and open source) into African languages, and find ways to get this content to those that need it most.
- Imagine Worldwide: provides high-quality learning solutions on a portable tablet that allow children to gain literacy and numeracy skills in schools, communities or homes without required access to grid power or internet.
- Siemens Stiftung: provides resources and expertise to enable remote- and self-learning and support in teacher capacity building with their Media Portal for STEM. With over 4,000 open educational STEM resources, they help teachers to present a diverse, real-world-oriented classroom experience. The Resources can also be adapted to the cultural and educational needs of various regions and to the individual requirements of the students.
- Video Games Without Borders (VGWB): develops video games with educational themes, focuses on primary education and basic literacy. These games let children learn autonomously without an internet connection, as games are on the app. The literacy games are cheap, quick to produce and easy to adapt to new languages.

Global Learning House

The [Global Learning House](#) aims to provide quality, cost-free online and offline lessons and tutoring to one million learners to master foundational skills, initially those related to STEM areas. The Global Learning House will be entering its pilot phase in the following African countries: Nigeria, Kenya, Morocco, Senegal and Uganda.

In Africa, discussions are in progress with the following partners:

- LabXchange: curates and creates world-class digital content, delivered on a free, online platform that allows students to integrate learning and research experiences. Learning is self-directed and revolves around solving real-world problems as a community.

Recovery, resilience and reimagining education in Africa

Proven innovative solutions like those highlighted above must be expanded and harnessed to support national efforts and nurture local ecosystems to advance education systems' resilience and transformation. The increased interest in investment in leveraging technology to support education systems is an opportunity to create diverse cross-sectoral partnerships to build a new future of education for the continent building on goals as stipulated in the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016-2025), the Africa Union Agenda 2063 and the Incheon Declaration, and the Education 2030 agenda toward SDG4.

As we move toward Recovery in 2021, there is an opportunity to focus on ensuring safe, gender-responsive and child-friendly school reopenings that meet the needs of the most marginalized. Focusing on Recovery will also ensure that actions target teachers being supported as frontline workers; investment in skills; and narrowing the digital divide and ensuring the gender

dimensions of school closures and addressed in recovery efforts. Recovery should also focus on addressing inequalities that were exposed during the pandemic, including through policies and programmes to prevent dropout and learning losses, and facilitate school to work transitions – particularly among the most vulnerable groups.

The Global Education Coalition is committed to working to not only respond and recover from educational challenges but is poised to help reimagine and transform education systems across Africa.

For more information - or should you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please reach out via email to the [Global Education Coalition team](#). For additional news, you may also refer to the [Global Education Coalition website](#).

UNESCO – a global leader in education

Education is UNESCO's top priority because it is a basic human right and the foundation for peace and sustainable development. UNESCO is the United Nations' specialized agency for education, providing global and regional leadership to drive progress, strengthening the resilience and capacity of national systems to serve all learners and responding to contemporary global challenges through transformative learning, with special focus on gender equality and Africa across all actions.



UNESCO Global Education Coalition

The Global Education Coalition launched by UNESCO is a platform for collaboration and exchange to protect the right to education during this unprecedented disruption and beyond. It brings together 175 members from the UN family, civil society, academia and the private sector to ensure that #LearningNeverStops.

In support of
COVID-19
Global Education Coalition
Launched by UNESCO



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