DIGITAL LEARNING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN AFRICA
PROBLEMS, EFFECTS, SOLUTIONS

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24 June 2020
Webinar: Distance learning in early grade levels
The ultimate aim of any EARLY EDUCATION SYSTEM is to equip young children with the numeracy, learning to read, literacy and wider skills that they need to realise their potential - individual and public good.
Effect of Covid-19 – Locking learning in the home

SURVIVAL MODE

- Wellbeing & Safety – basic necessities in life

THRIVE MODE

- Remote/Digital Learning - more seamless transitions

- Disparities between families impacts on support children receive for early learning.
- Young children living in poverty, girls and those with special needs are particularly vulnerable.
  Digital learning - limited access, functionalities & resources

PARENTS ARE NOT TEACHERS. TEACHERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN NEED TO SUPPORT PARENTS TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN
Promising practices so far

Bridging the digital divide – early schooling without walls

- **Dedicated Education Clouds**
  - e.g. African Storybooks, epubs, visual and audio resources

- **Learning Applications**
  - e.g. Google classroom, whatsapp, skype, teams

- **Radio**
  - Rwanda – literacy and numeracy content adapted to school curriculum

- **Print-based materials**
  - SA accompanying food parcels – all languages

- **MOOCs and Virtual university platforms**
  - e.g. Tunisia – education resources, tools and education frameworks

**Partnerships**
- supply of devices and data packages – mobile buses supply connectivity to poor communities

**Mauritius**
- beginning with the most vulnerable – plans to provide free internet package to vulnerable households on the social register - children from the poorer households to continue learning.
Solutions for the future: “build back better” (World Bank, 2020) “education reimagined” (Fullan et al 2020)

**Education System for Early Learning**
- Funding – staking a claim, priority to most vulnerable – no fee paying quintiles
- Holistic child development, play-based learning, 6 Cs
- Remote to hybrid model - best of in-school and remote learning, with digital engagement that is appropriate for young children – M&E
- Data generation – what works

**Teacher Capacity**
- Professional development (AAU) – psychosocial support, digital skills, assessment of learning loss and learning recovery strategies, pedagogies of engagement, at risk children, caregivers as partners

**Parent Support**
- Home-school transitions
- Learning support – learning lifelines

**Partnerships for Joint Actions**
- AU, ADEA, UNESCO, UNICEF with tech giants, telecommunications, medical and health coalitions