



Joint United Nations Ghana Statement on International Day of Education

Accra, 24 January 2022 – Today, January 24th is International Day of Education (IDE), proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in recognition of the central role of education in building sustainable, resilient societies and in the achievement of the SDGs. The UN thus invites all - Member States, international and regional organizations and civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders – ***“to continue to give consideration to enhancing international cooperation in support of the efforts of all Member States towards the realization of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4”***.

As detailed in UNESCO's global [Futures of Education report](#), (to which Patrick Awuah, Founder and President, Ashesi University, Ghana contributed) transforming the future requires an urgent rebalancing of our relationships with each other, with nature as well as with technology that permeates our lives, bearing breakthrough opportunities while raising serious concerns for equity, inclusion and democratic participation.

The theme for this year's IDE is **“Changing Course, Transforming Education”**. This is to facilitate and celebrate initiatives being led by governments, educators, organizations—from global to grassroots efforts—as well as partnerships demonstrating the potential to recommit education to the principles of equity and relevance; and highlight commitments and follow-up actions taken to protect education.

The Government of Ghana has so far demonstrated a strong determination to ensure that learners (particularly girls and learners with special educational needs) continue to learn in a safe environment. To ensure continuity of learning, the Government with the support of UN System (through UNICEF, UNESCO, UNHCR and ILO) and other development partners contributed to provide solutions at all levels of the education system. Specifically, public universities and Colleges of Education established Learning Management Systems (LMS), Senior High Schools (SHS) students have been given access to the ICAMPUSGH online platform and the IBOX offline learning platform and Ghana Learning TV and Radio programmes produced for basic school children. Further, learners at the basic level have also benefitted from national distance learning programmes via radio, which continues to help bridge the equity gaps. Through the [Global Education Coalition](#), several partners contributed also to support government effort (Equipment, Expertise, contents, open resources).

Despite some challenges that have been encountered by students in accessing and using some of these learning systems, it is obvious that Ghana is striving to change course to transform education, and the United Nations in Ghana is delighted to partner with the government in its mission.

Other notable initiatives that the UN is supporting the Government to implement to make education resilient include a Rapid Risk Assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the education sector and supporting in the design/implementation of interventions to mitigate the negative effects, ongoing capacity building for basic school teachers in Emergency Remote Teaching and ICT Essential skills, development of the Ghana Open Educational Resource Repository (OER), which will eventually host over 3,000 open-source Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) materials from the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). Similarly, the over 15,000 PDF, interactive videos, virtual laboratories, and other educational content currently hosted on the ICampus/IBox platform would be released as OER for use by learners and educators.

The policy environment is also being strengthened by the ongoing **review of Ghana's ICT in Education Policy** while the institutional capacity of the **Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling (CENDLOS)** is being strengthened with drafting of the CENDLOS Bill and capacity building for the CENDLOS staff to enable the institution to play its role effectively as the national entity responsible for integration of ICT into the education system. Additionally, to ensure the safe return of children to school, the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service have been supported to implement the back-to-school campaigns targeting vulnerable learners, including pregnant girls, young mothers, children with disability, among others, using the '*Guidelines on Prevention of Pregnancy Among School Girls and Re-Entry for Young Mothers After Childbirth*' and the '*Safe Schools Resource Pack*'. Further, the UN in Ghana has supported annual health and disability screening for early grade learners; implementation of Digital Literacy programmes and other initiatives including the Learning Passport, Differentiated Learning and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to bridge the equity gap and to promote continuous learning within a safe environment for all.

All these efforts have strengthened the education system with new approaches in transforming education in Ghana during the COVID 19 pandemic and beyond. This progress by Ghana needs to be supported in a coherent and coordinated manner by partners. The pandemic has revealed an opportunity to develop and enhance the digital space for continuous and increased learning for all. Accelerating work around this is critical to the achievement of the SDGs.

As we work together towards the realization of SDG4, the UN in Ghana remains committed to supporting the government to transform education, through innovative approaches, to benefit all, and to ensure no one is left behind.

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