

OPPORTUNITY #14

WHAT IF THERE WAS A GLOBAL CURRICULUM?

WHOLE-EARTH EDUCATION

A common curriculum implemented around the world with millions learning the same skills, creating a shared global understanding and improving employment prospects

 **1 in 5**

children are not in school

WHY IT MATTERS TODAY

There are 773 million people around the world who are still illiterate, most of whom are women.¹³⁴

An estimated 617 million children around the world are unable to reach minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics due to lack of trained teachers and insufficient learning materials, along with other city or country-specific reasons from poverty and gender to ethnic divisions and conflict.¹³⁵

One in five adults in OECD countries have not attained upper secondary education, and in 2019 at least 10% of school-aged young people in around a quarter of OECD countries were not in school.¹³⁶

In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), around 200 million people, nearly half of the total population, are under 24 and one in every five children are not in school.¹³⁷ In the 2021 Arab Youth Survey, 87% of young Arab people (18–24) were concerned about the quality of education in a region where youth unemployment, at 25%, far exceeds the global average of 13.5% and, according to the World Bank, educational standards are widely perceived as being at the root of the problem.¹³⁸

A third of young people in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), would consider emigrating for economic reasons and educational opportunities.¹³⁹



THE OPPORTUNITY TOMORROW

Countries can collaborate to create a globally recognised, core curriculum of high and consistent quality from kindergarten up to age 18.

This effort can be enabled by new technologies that support both remote and in-person learning, a market projected to be worth \$350 billion by 2025.¹⁴⁰ These new technologies also offer the option for remotely administered computer-based assessments to level up the efficiency of examinations and certification processes across all schools.

This global curriculum provides an agreed base for children's personal growth and prosperity, with countries augmenting it according to their national or cultural preferences or means. The central organisation which administers this common core curriculum would provide a standard, globally recognised certification of skills attained at each grade level. A student could be confident that they have received an equivalent education as students studying in any other school across the world as long as they followed the same path through the internationally recognised curriculum.

BENEFITS

Scalable teaching solutions and materials can bring down the costs of education at the same time as levelling up educational attainments around the world. The global curriculum promotes intercultural understanding and bonds between people by creating a shared experience from childhood. This leads to greater transferability of skills and mobility for people, which boosts individuals' life chances and well-being while creating social and economic value for local and national communities.

RISKS

Risks include poor execution of the curriculum because of local limitations in technological infrastructure and resistance from conventional education providers. Young people's skillsets may not align with local or regional skill demands, or they may feel disconnected from local values or norms if the core curriculum is not complemented with culturally or nationally significant subjects.