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Educational crisis – Summary note

Context

City / Country : Belgium
Structure : UNESCO
Area of activity : Education, educational mobility

Identified needs

The decision to adapt UNESCO resources into easy-to-read language stems from the need to address the challenges faced by individuals with low literacy levels, non-native speakers, or those with cognitive or developmental difficulties. These groups may struggle to access and understand critical information in complex formats, creating barriers to informed decision-making and participation in public discourse.

By simplifying the documents, we aim to ensure that:

- Information on global challenges is accessible to everyone.

- People can better understand the impacts of international crises and the initiatives addressing them.

- Organizations promote inclusivity and facilitate learning in a diverse audience.

For UNESCO and partnering organizations, adapting these documents into plain language:

- Broadens the reach and inclusivity of their educational campaigns.

- Strengthens their commitment to equality in access to information.

- Builds awareness among a wider demographic, which supports advocacy and funding efforts.

Objectives

The primary objective of the adapted document is to **inform and engage the public** about:

- Global educational crises, in this case with a focus on inequalities between the countries.

- The importance of the global access to education.

- The effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic on education.

- The urgency of investing in solutions to improve education and reduce inequalities.

The document highlights the global education crisis caused by school and university closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. A major issue that emerged was the **digital divide**, as many students lacked access to computers and the internet. Globally, 826 million students did not have a home computer, and 706 million lacked internet access. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 80% of young people had no internet at home. Moreover, many educators and parents were not equipped with the necessary digital skills.

To address this crisis, UNESCO launched the **Global Education Coalition**. Various initiatives were implemented worldwide, including:

- Providing digital educational content in Lebanon.
- Training teachers in online education in Pacific island nations and Gabon.
- Partnering with telecommunications companies like Vodafone and Orange to offer free internet access to educational platforms in several African and Middle Eastern countries.

The document shows some examples of actions that are already put in practice and highlights the urgent need for digital inclusion in education.

Target group

- **General:** Teachers, social and youth workers, activists, and other people interested in the global challenges in education.

- **Adapted documents**: Target groups include individuals with limited literacy, non-native speakers, and educators seeking accessible learning materials.

- **Organization**: UNESCO and its partners primarily address policymakers, educators, students, and marginalized communities worldwide.

Existing

The UNESCO Digital Library serves as the repository of UNESCO's institutional memory, offering a rich source of high-quality information about the organization's activities across education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture, and communication. With a collection exceeding 350,000 documents dating back to 1945, it encompasses materials from the UNESCO Library, various documentation centers in Field Offices and Institutes, and the UNESCO Archives. Its primary mission is to share knowledge and ensure its preservation for future generations. All the materials are shared on an open source licence, ensuring that they are available for all interested parties.

UNESCO already provides:

- Reports and statistics on global issues, including education and health crises (e.g., the "Educational Crisis" report highlighting the digital divide);

- Documents of its governing bodies and the speeches of the Director-General from 1970 to present;
- Advocacy materials on various topics.

These resources are comprehensive but often dense and technical, which limits their usability for the general public or less specialized audiences.

Proposal

To enhance or replace existing resources, the following improvements are proposed:

- **Further Simplification**: Continue simplifying technical data into visual infographics, charts, and bite-sized content for clarity. It is beneficial to use font size 12 or higher, spacing: 1,5. In order to fit the modified text in the materials, it might be needed to produce them in a bigger format or include more pages.

- **User Feedback**: Engage target groups in testing the usability of materials and adapt based on their needs.

- **Integration into Curricula**: Work with educators to include these simplified resources in teaching materials, ensuring they reach the intended beneficiaries directly.

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Adaptation process

Returns

Length and conciseness	Yes, the material is concise while retaining essential content. It avoids information overload by simplifying complex issues and using clear, accessible language. The focus is on key points, such as global educational crises, the impact of COVID-19, and the need for digital inclusion, without overwhelming the reader with excessive details. (SABA)
● Is the material appropriately concise while retaining essential content? ● Has excessive density or information overload been avoided?	The structure ensures that readers can quickly understand the severity of the educational crisis without being overwhelmed. (Studium) After the adaptation the text is more concise, all while conveying the main message. Changing the font-size (I think?) made the text a lot more readable, I also have the impression that it's not bold now (but maybe it's just the font-size question) and it just visually looks a lot better. Less text also gives an impression of a better visual structure, and adding even two bullet points makes the text more pleasant to

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	look at and the information a lot easier to find. (Les Apprimeurs)
Language complexity and clarity ● Is the language clear, accessible, and free from unnecessary technical terms, jargon, or overly complex structures (e.g., passive voice, long sentences)? ● Does the text align with relevant linguistic criteria (e.g., CEFR levels A1, A2, etc.)?	Yes, the language is clear, accessible, and free from unnecessary technical terms, jargon, or overly complex structures. It is simplified to ensure that it is easy to understand, particularly for audiences with limited literacy or non-native speakers. The text aligns with CEFR A1-A2 levels, focusing on straightforward language that facilitates comprehension. (SABA) While the content is in French, the improved structure and readability suggest a more inclusive and user-friendly adaptation. (Studium) I appreciate that you made the sentences shorter – this makes them a lot easier to digest. Also, now that the mong/complicated words have been deleted or replaced by the easier ones, reading the text os less of an effort. Would say that level-wise, its between A2 and B1. (Les Apprimeurs)
Purpose and effectiveness ● Is the goal of the material (e.g., to inform, instruct, persuade) clearly conveyed and maintained in the adaptation?	Yes, the goal of the material is clearly conveyed and maintained in the adaptation. The purpose of informing the public about global educational crises, especially focusing on inequalities and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education, is

	evident. The material effectively highlights the urgency of addressing these issues and the importance of digital inclusion in education. (SABA) The adapted document maintains its core objective of highlighting the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global education. (Studium) Absolutely, the message has been maintained all while simplifying the form 🙌 (Les Apprimeurs)
Audience suitability ● Is the material appropriate for the intended audience in terms of reading level, language, and needs?	Yes, the material is appropriate for the intended audience. It is simplified to address the needs of individuals with low literacy, non-native speakers, and those with cognitive difficulties, using clear and accessible language. (SABA) The document remains relevant for UNESCO's broader target audience, including students, educators, and global decision-makers. (Studium) I think so – not only is the material still appropriate for the intended audience, but now that it's been simplified, I think it could also be appropriate for readers whose language level is a little bit lower. (Les Apprimeurs)

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Structure and readability	Yes, the content is well-organized with a logical flow, clear headings, bullet points, and simplified sections that enhance comprehension and readability. (SABA)
• Is the content well-organised, with logical flow, clear headings, bullet points, and other structural elements that enhance comprehension?	Key statistics are prominently displayed, allowing readers to quickly grasp the scale of the crisis. The structured layout ensures that the document is easy to navigate and understand. (Studium)
	As mentioned before, I think adding the bullet points was a good move – even this small simplification makes a big visual difference. (Les Apprimeurs)
Visual elements	There were no specific visuals mentioned in the provided summary. However, if included, simplifying visuals like infographics and charts would likely improve clarity and usability for the target audience. (SABA)
• Are visuals (charts, diagrams, etc.) clear, relevant, and effectively aligned with the text? • Have visual adjustments improved clarity and usability?	Document includes visuals and statistics that reinforce key messages and make the data more engaging. Inclusion of maps and real-world case studies helps illustrate the impact of school closures. Adapted format effectively balances text and visuals to

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	maintain clarity and engagement. (Studium) Yes, I think putting the text in the infographic on a blue background is a very good idea – it makes the text easier to localise and to read! I think not much more could have been siplified without completely changing the layout, and I think this modification was sifficient. (Les Apprimeurs)
Educational and practical value ● Does the material maintain its usefulness and accuracy despite any simplifications or modifications?	Yes, the material maintains its usefulness and accuracy. The simplifications and modifications focus on making the content more accessible without compromising essential information, ensuring it remains relevant for the target audience. (SABA) Document serves as an effective awareness tool, helping stakeholders understand the digital divide and its impact on education. Adapted content remains informative while making it easier for educators and policymakers to use in discussions and decision-making. (Studium) Yes, totally, as all the modifications were subtle, the usefulness and the

	accuracy were not hurt in the process. (Les Apprimeurs)
Accessibility and usability ● Is the format user-friendly, avoiding design issues (e.g., small fonts, poor layout) that could hinder accessibility? ● Is the material easy to understand and implement for the target audience?	Yes, the format is user-friendly, with clear design elements that avoid issues like small fonts or poor layout. The material is easy to understand and implement, especially with the simplified content and accessible structure for the target audience. (SABA) Document follows plain-language principles, improving accessibility for a diverse audience. Adaptation ensures that key information is highlighted and easily accessible. (Studium) Yes (Les Apprimeurs)