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Price of inaction (statistics)- 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.

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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 the economical cost of the lacking access to education;

- The statistical consequences of children and young people being excluded from the education system;

- The importance of the global access to education to prevent unemployment, early pregnancies, and engagement of young people in crime.

The document highlights the critical consequences of failing to prioritize education, shown by the fact that 128 million boys and 122 million girls are out of school, and 57% of students do not possess essential academic and socio-emotional skills. Without urgent intervention, the economic and social repercussions will be severe by 2030.

The main risks of inaction include:

- Significant global economic losses due to skill shortages.
- Rising school dropout rates, leading to unemployment and instability.
- Increases in early pregnancies, violent crime, and disengaged youth, exacerbating social issues.

On the other hand, investing in education brings measurable benefits:

- Reducing school dropouts and improving basic skills by just 10% can boost annual GDP growth by 1 to 2 percentage points.
- Even a 1% decrease in the number of out-of-school children leads to substantial global economic gains.

The publication includes summarised information from the "Price of inaction" report, and has an additional aim of providing a more concise and focused on the statistics version of it, enabling it to reach more people.

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 ● Is the material appropriately concise while retaining essential content? ● Has excessive density or information overload been avoided?	Yes, the material is concise, retaining essential information while avoiding excessive detail. (SABA) Adapted version significantly condenses the content while keeping essential statistics and key takeaways. Clear numerical breakdown makes the document more concise and easier to scan. (Studium) Quite radical simplification!!! The message is conveyed and maintained just like in the original 🙌 (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.)?	The language is clear and accessible, avoiding technical jargon, with a focus on being easily understood by a broad audience. (SABA) While the content is in French, the structural improvements suggest better clarity and ease of comprehension. (Studium)

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	I really like that you've drastically shortened the first paragraph – it's easier to read the info now. Jargon-wise, as the text is scarce, it's a bit hard to evaluate it, but in general the text is easy to read and the message easy to understand. (Les Apprimeurs)
Purpose and effectiveness ● Is the goal of the material (e.g., to inform, instruct, persuade) clearly conveyed and maintained in the adaptation?	The goal is clearly conveyed: to inform and engage the public about global educational crises and the importance of investing in education. (SABA) The document maintains its focus on the economic and social consequences of inadequate education. Restructured format allows for a clearer understanding of cause-and-effect relationships (e.g., how lack of education contributes to crime and unemployment). Adaptation enhances the impact of the message by making the statistics more prominent and understandable. (Studium) Yes ✅ (LAPP)
Audience suitability ● Is the material appropriate for the intended audience in terms of	The material is suitable for the target audience, including individuals with limited literacy, non-native speakers, and educators.(SABA)

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reading level, language, and needs?	Simplified structure makes the document accessible to policymakers, educators, and the general public. Adaptation specifically caters to individuals with lower literacy levels and cognitive challenges, ensuring they can engage with the material. (Studium) ✅ (LAPP)
Structure and readability ● Is the content well-organised, with logical flow, clear headings, bullet points, and other structural elements that enhance comprehension?	The content is well-organized, with clear headings and bullet points for easy comprehension. (SABA) Use of bold text, bullet points, and section headers improves readability. Important figures and percentages are highlighted, allowing for quick reference and better retention of information. Layout is structured to allow readers to absorb content efficiently, without overwhelming them with dense paragraphs. (Studium) Yes! Adding bullet points and putting the most important elements in bold really makes the document easier to skim-read (LAPP)
Visual elements ● Are visuals (charts, diagrams, etc.) clear, relevant, and effectively aligned with the text?	Visuals such as infographics and charts are clear, relevant, and aligned with the text, improving clarity and usability. (SABA)

● Have visual adjustments improved clarity and usability?	Key numbers and statistics are prominently displayed, making complex information more digestible. Simplified graphs and text structure enhance visual appeal and accessibility. Adaptation avoids text overload, ensuring that visuals support rather than overwhelm the message. (Studium) Yes, although radical as mentioned before, this adaptation really makes the information visible. I like that you left the 2-column format used in the original, I think that the light-blue background makes the text easier to understand. **I would add a mini-image or an icon next to the partagraph "conséquences pour les filles".** I really like that you've included a graph at the end. (LAPP)
Educational and practical value ● Does the material maintain its usefulness and accuracy despite any simplifications or modifications?	Despite simplifications, the material maintains its educational and practical value, effectively conveying key statistics and the need for action. (SABA) The simplified format ensures that key messages are retained while making the content more actionable. (Studium)

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	Yes (LAPP)
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?	The format is user-friendly, with clear design and easy-to-understand content for the target audience. (SABA) Document follows plain-language principles, improving accessibility for a wider range of readers. (Studium) The layout is good, user-friendly, the text easy to uderstand (LAPP)