Smart Education for Transforming Lifelong Learning

Prof. Asha Kanwar
President and CEO
Commonwealth of Learning, Canada
August 18, 2023. Beijing
‘The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.’
- Alvin Toffler
Plan

• Perspectives on Lifelong Learning
• Understanding SMART Education
• SMART Education for Transforming Lifelong Learning
Perspectives on lifelong learning
GOAL 4

ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

More at sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsproposal
Ensure the right to quality education throughout life….embrace the concept of lifelong learning with more flexible pathways and financial policy incentives to allow people to re-engage with education systems several times throughout their lives….calls for qualifications that recognize skills, work experiences and knowledge throughout life, and beyond formal education….

Vision Statement of Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Transforming Education
‘A lifelong learning system must reach large segments of the population, including people with diverse learning needs. It must be competency driven rather than age related…. The lifelong learning model enables learners to acquire more of the new skills demanded by the knowledge economy as well as more of the traditional academic skills.

LLL in the global Knowledge Economy, pp28-29
…individual workers will have to engage in life-long learning if they are to achieve fulfilling and rewarding careers. For companies, reskilling and upskilling strategies will be critical…to contribute to socially responsible approaches to the future of work. For policy-makers, reskilling and retraining the existing workforce are essential levers to fuel future economic growth....

Towards a Reskilling Revolution (January 2018)
https://www.weforum.org/reports/towards-a-reskilling-revolution
Two competing versions of lifelong learning

‘the one visionary and all-encompassing, the other driven by narrower interests related to training, competency and the world of work’.

Aitchison (2004, p.2)
Understanding Smart Education
What is Smart Education?

‘heightened learning experience, continuous learning content adaptation and teaching efficiency’. (Huang, 2014)

‘...application of latest or smart technologies in collaboration with advanced pedagogical practices, tools and techniques’ (Gabriela et al, 2018)

‘smart education goes beyond the use of new technologies and involves the adoption of new teaching and learning approaches, with students being autonomous...and teachers becoming facilitators’ (Maria Jose Sa et al, 2022)
Smart Education is

• **enjoyable**, leading to the retention and transfer of knowledge to long-term memory;

• **engaging**, with innovative application of technologies;

• **efficient**, in terms of just-in-time learning and availability for right resources;

• **effective**, in leading to the earning livelihoods and development of responsible citizenship; and

• **ethical**, to address issues of privacy, cybersecurity and equity.

(Kanwar, 2021)
SMART Education for Transformation

Sustainable
Meaningful
Accessible
Resilient
Transformative
# Sustainable: Impact of Education on Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIRECT</th>
<th>INDIRECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Emissions from construction of schools/infrastructure</td>
<td>• Emissions from ‘development’ and economic growth associated with higher levels of education in a country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emissions from energy use in schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learner emissions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Five biggest emitters of carbon

- **Construction: Cement, steel plastic**: 31%
- **Electricity**: 27%
- **Farming**: plants and animals. 19%
- **Travel and transport**: 16%
- **Airconditioning**: 7%
Research on Emissions and ODL/ICT

3x less carbon emissions
Travel – greatest contributor
Mode of delivery - determinant

Recommendations
• Resilient infrastructure
• Skills for the blue and green economies
• Promote climate justice
Meaningful: ICTs for poverty alleviation

• Targeted to 50,000 rural villagers

• Evidence of increase in income, enterprise profit, employment opportunities
Every $1 invested resulted in $8 worth of income and assets
3 Accessible: Leaving no one behind

- For persons with disabilities
- Women and disadvantaged groups
- People in remote areas
ODL for Persons with Disabilities

CONVENIENT
• Study at your own pace, place, time
• Don’t require to travel to campus or accommodation

FLEXIBLE
• Option to listen, watch or read lecture in different formats

AFFORDABLE
• Costs less than F2F

ANONYMOUS
• Engage with professors and classmates without feeling discriminated
4 Resilience: Parents as co-educators

- **Ghana**: Family and intergenerational learning
- **Liberia and Sierra Leone**: A hotline number for parental feedback
- **Rwanda**: Radio lessons supported by parents
Social Emotional Learning

• Teachers social and emotional skills are key
• Years after students participated in SEL, their academic performance was an average of 13 percentile points higher than students who didn’t participate.

Source: https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-does-the-research-say/, retrieved on 1 June 2023
Transformative Learning

“to make our own interpretations rather than act on the purposes, beliefs, judgements, and feelings of others. ... Transformative learning develops autonomous thinking.”

Mezirow

Integration of Three Approaches

SMART education is

A broader concept than online learning

A comprehensive approach that integrates technology, data analytics, innovative teaching, social inclusion and environmental conservation for a more effective and engaging experience

Goes beyond formal learning to include non-formal and informal learning
SMART Education for Transforming Lifelong Learning
Present Approach to Lifelong Learning

• Focused more on acquiring skills and competencies
• Helping to adapt to changing circumstances
• Emphasis on formal learning
SMART Approach to Lifelong Learning

• Move beyond acquiring skills and competencies and focus on Transformative Learning
• Not just adapting to changing circumstances but acquiring ability to change circumstances
Lifelong Learning

Should not be perceived as a mere course or a programme

It is a culture which needs to be integrated in every aspect of life

Lifelong learning means different things to different stakeholders

Policies and programmes should focus on promoting a ‘learning culture’.
# 1. Sustainable: Green learning agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills for green jobs</th>
<th>Green life skills</th>
<th>Skills for a green transformation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills aimed at fulfilling the requirements of green jobs and supporting the transition to a low-carbon green economy</td>
<td>Cross-cutting skills that serve both technical, instrumental, and adaptive, transformative ends</td>
<td>Adaptive skills aimed at transforming unjust social and economic structures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Meaningful: Real, World-Improving Projects

"Projects that produce actual...changes in our kids' local and global communities"

- Marc Prensky

3. Accessible: **MOOC4D**

Use technologies that are appropriate and affordable

Content designed for delivery in low bandwidth situations

Open Content in local languages ie. OER

Social media integration

**REACHING THE BOTTOM BILLION**
4. Resilient: *Strengthening capacity*

- Building capacities of policy-makers
- Developing capacity of teachers
- Preparing learners
5. Transformative pedagogy

Typical Approach:

• Skills / Competencies
• Employability and Entrepreneurship
• Achievement

Transformative Approach:

• Empowerment for Change
• Environmental Conservation and Global Citizenship
• Accomplishment
Intergovernmental Agencies

- Advocacy for integrating Smart Education into LLL policies
- Frameworks for implementing and monitoring progress
- Share best practices
- Promote regional and global partnerships
Governments

• Implement and monitor lifelong learning policies with a focus on transformative learning
• Accreditation mechanisms for recognition and mobility
• ICT infrastructure and governance for SMART Education
Educational Institutions

- Provide seamless pathways between formal, non-formal, informal learning
- Adopt SMART Education framework
- Innovations for recognition and credentialing
- Use ODL, OER and TEL
Thank you