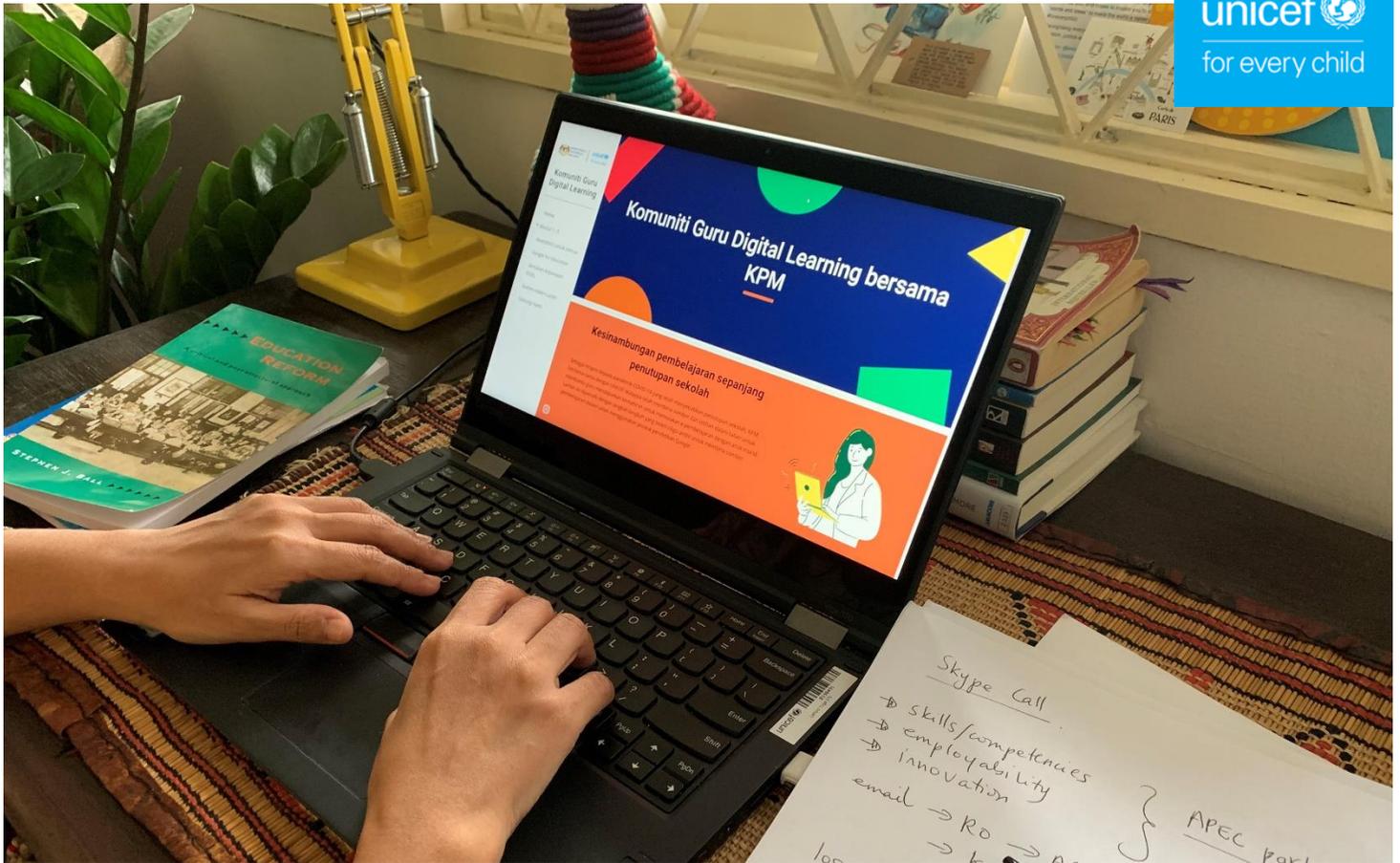


UNICEF Education COVID-19 Case Study

Malaysia – Empowering teachers to deliver blended learning after school reopening
8 July 2020

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In Malaysia, schools were closed on 18 March 2020, disrupting learning for five million students. To keep children learning, the Ministry of Education launched an [online teaching and learning platform](#) nationwide. The national platform has kept 3 million children learning during school closures and will continue to play an important role after gradual school reopening starting 24 June 2020 as part of the country's approach of blending face-to-face and online learning.

A critical part of the platform is the [Komuniti Guru Digital Learning](#) or Teacher Digital Learning Community, established with support from UNICEF, that aims to equip teachers with the skills and knowledge required to deliver distance classes effectively and efficiently through a five-module online teacher training course that includes notes, video tutorials, and quizzes on how to plan, build and launch digital content for remote teaching and learning. To date, around 2,400 teachers from over 1,600 schools all over the country have participated in the online teacher training.

KEY FEATURES

- **Prioritising consultation with teachers** – Before launching online classes, UNICEF helped the Ministry of Education (MoE) to consult teachers on their needs through a survey delivered through instant messenger applications. The vast majority – 86 per cent – indicated they needed support to deliver distance learning, which led to the creation of the teachers' digital learning community as an integral part of the national platform.

- **Leveraging social media to promote quick uptake** – The Ministry and UNICEF promoted the teacher digital learning community through their social media channels, including Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, and Instagram. As of late June 2020, UNICEF’s posts alone reached more than 100,000 people and were shared 10 per cent of the time, ensuring quick uptake.
- **Ensuring accessibility and inclusion** – The teacher digital learning community as well as the online learning platform possess accessibility features allowing teachers and children with hearing or visual impairments to participate fully in the training and learning programmes.
- **Prioritising scalability and sustainability** – UNICEF maximized the potential and reach of the digital learning community by building on existing systems, content, and communication channels. For example, the open online teacher training course is based on the same online platform utilized by the Ministry of Education for the distance learning programme for students.
- **Providing a menu of technologies** – The integration of multiple platforms and applications to the Teacher Digital Learning Community provides teachers the flexibility to select the most suitable solution for a given context and maximize the learning experience for all students. For example, the integration of widely used messenger apps allows teachers to support the learning of students in contexts, in which access to the online learning platform might not be available to all students due to economic or technical constraints.
- **Supporting national leadership** – UNICEF’s on-the-ground presence has cultivated a relationship of trust, enabling it to effectively support and contribute to the Ministry of Education’s COVID-19 response. This approach - to listen and follow the MoE's leadership - was key for the rapid launch of the digital learning community and broad uptake of the courses amongst teachers nationwide.
- **Building in flexible and interactive learning** – The UNICEF-supported digital learning community for teachers is interactive, using video tutorials and quizzes. It also provides teachers with the opportunities to connect, interact, and provide feedback, increasing their engagement and course completion. The learning programme is self-paced and allows teachers to select modules according to their needs and schedules.

EMERGENT LESSONS LEARNED

- **Leveraging partnerships and investments** - With a modest financial investment of US \$11,000, UNICEF Malaysia was able to leverage its technical expertise and communication channels, as well as its reputation and relationship with the MoE, education stakeholders and the private sector, to establish a training programme reaching more than 2,400 teachers with a prospect of being sustained into the regular pre- and in-service teacher training programmes.
- **Blending in-person and face-to-face learning as part of school reopening** – Online learning is here to stay. Teachers will be expected to complement in-person classes with online learning opportunities when schools reopen to keep children’s learning at the centre, requiring them to navigate seamlessly between the two. Tailored support that helps them to adapt to this quickly evolving role is important to keep learning at the centre.
- **Investing in people as well as technology to keep learning at the centre** – Technology can be a game changer, but only if designed and used skilfully. Establishing digital learning communities alongside platforms will maximise their successful and sustained use.

- **Seizing the opportunity to be inclusive** – Online teaching and learning platforms that incorporate accessibility features can be important ways to make education systems more inclusive, overcoming barriers for teachers and students with disabilities.
- **Narrowing the digital divide** – Online learning can exacerbate previously existent learning inequalities if not accessible to all teachers and learners. From the start, UNICEF adapted an equity approach striving to extend access to the Teacher Digital Learning Community to all teachers. As a result of these efforts, almost half of the teachers participating in the learning community are now serving children in rural communities.

OTHER RESOURCES

For other resources, including more case studies, please click [here](#) and filter by “Area of Work” (Education).

For more information, please contact:

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