

National Statement of Commitment - Republic of Kazakhstan

This National Statement has been developed following National consultations on June 14th, 2022, held by UNICEF Kazakhstan and UNESCO Almaty Cluster for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan government, schools, universities, and NGOs. This National Statement aims to build a stronger and more resilient educational system.

The National Consultations took place in recognition of the important role that education plays as a fundamental human right and foundation for peace and sustainable development. The consultations took place in the anticipation of a Transforming Education Summit in September 2022 to be convened by the UN Secretary General.

The discussions during the National Consultations have happened across five thematic action tracks and all identified as priorities, including:

PRIORITY 1: Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools

PRIORITY 2. Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development

PRIORITY 3: Teachers and teaching, and teaching profession

PRIORITY 4. Digital learning and transformation

PRIORITY 5. Financing of education

1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools

- a. *Creating Inclusive Schools*: It is important to understand the extent of learning losses (by subject and age of children) because of school closures during the Covid-19 pandemic. To compensate for learning losses, the schools should focus on providing additional opportunities for learning (online and/or offline) to all children, including children with special educational needs.
- b. *Making inclusiveness truly inclusive* implies ensuring access to education for all, regardless of their gender, age, socio-economic conditions, or other characteristics. Providing additional training and development opportunities for teachers to meet the needs of children with special educational needs seems increasingly important. The government and other stakeholders should work with school leaders to facilitate access to education for the most vulnerable children.
- c. *Creating Safe and Healthy Schools*: When various emergencies happen at school, teachers, administration, and students should be prepared to address and recover from them. Schools need tools to use assessments of social and emotional knowledge, skills, and abilities to understand the development of individual students. Schools and education institutions at all levels need intervention programs to reduce school bullying, to provide psychology services and to encourage peer to peer support to contribute in increasing the psychological well-being of students. Anonymity and confidentiality of students are central to ethical provision of psychological assistance.

2. Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development

- a. *A curriculum that develops and improves skills for life, work and sustainable development*. The rise of disinformation, quickly evolving labour market demands and other uncertainties require new curriculum that focuses on developing transversal and life skills, including global citizenship competencies, healthy lifestyles and media and information literacy. This demand for transformation of learning and teaching using effective teaching methods such as experiential learning, peer learning, project-based learning, etc.

- b. *Ensure that learners, especially from vulnerable groups, acquire knowledge, skills, values and competencies needed for future and lifelong learning.* This also requires changes and transformation of the education system that ensures individual educational trajectories and career counselling at all levels of education to enhance employability and enable sustainable transition throughout life. The transformed education system should enable all students, including vulnerable groups, asylum seekers and refugees to receive and analyse information and knowledge and apply it in different contexts. Provide refugees with access to higher education on equal basis with other citizens. Ensure development of the education institutions in rural and remote areas to allow skills development throughout life for rural communities, especially using ICTs.

3. Teachers, teaching, and the teaching profession

- a. *Solving the challenge of teacher shortage and quality.* The educational system should allow young professionals to enter the field of education avoiding unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles. The government will consider the best national and international practices that allow recruiting, developing and retaining effective teachers. Entrance examinations that allow to start initial training require revisions to attract the best school graduates in the profession.
- b. *Providing quality initial teacher education and continuing training.* Teacher professional development needs new standards and approaches to teacher training and retraining focusing on active, learner-centred pedagogy, practice-oriented classes to develop skills of new teachers and promote continuous professional development.
- c. *Teaching profession and leadership.* There is a political will to raise the status of teacher in society and improve the attitude of students, parents, and school leadership towards teachers.

4. Digital learning and transformation

- a. *Digital divide and learning losses.* It is important to assess learning losses of students (especially vulnerable learners, including in rural areas and children with special needs) who have been affected the most by the digital divide.
- b. *Digital skills development and sustainable access to digital technologies.* This requires ensuring ICT infrastructure and additional learning opportunities for both teachers and learners to access digital learning, development of digital skills and quality digital content. Government needs to support the development of open educational resources and digital tools to enhance pedagogical innovation and improve digital learning spaces.
- c. *E-safety for learners.* Schools and educational institutions at all levels need risk assessment, policies, and procedures to keep their students safe online.

5. Financing of education

- a. *Education finance: using money effectively.* The financing of education system is vital for the future of education in the country. There is a need for developing effective mechanisms to allocate public funding and attract private funds. It is critical to consider various innovative approaches to funding in education and to implement the most effective ones, while ensuring education's quality, equity and inclusion.