

CREATING A LITERATE WORLD

Background

Basic literacy skills, comprising reading, writing and computing, are the foundation skills enabling people to function effectively in today's text-mediated knowledge societies and to make informed life choices. Literacy is transformative: it increases earning potential, decreases inequality, improves health outcomes and breaks the cycle of poverty. Yet there are 740 million illiterate people in the world and 250 million children who lack basic reading and writing skills. (UNESCO)

UNESCO has set as a target that by 2030, all youth reach a proficiency level in literacy and numeracy sufficient to fully participate in society, with particular attention paid to girls and women and the most marginalized.

We are currently seeing how the World Wide Web, invented by Tim Berners-Lee at CERN, is transforming education. In which ways can technology help in creating global literacy?

Challenge

How might we significantly reduce child and youth illiteracy *at scale* in developing countries, with the use of technology?

Resources

- UNESCO: www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/resources/
- UNESCO – ICT in Education:
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/themes/icts/m4ed/mobile-learning-resources/unescomobilelearningseries>
- UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning – Literacy and Basic Skills:
<http://uil.unesco.org/home/programme-areas/literacy-and-basic-skills/>
- Worldreader Research reports: www.worldreader.org/learnings/
- Worldbank Blog on Technology and Education: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/edutech/>
- Global Partnership for Education – Helen Abadzi:
<https://www.globalpartnership.org/users/habadzi>

For Inspiration

- School in the Cloud: www.theschoolinthecloud.org/
- One Laptop per Child: www.one.laptop.org/
- Khan Academy: <https://www.khanacademy.org/>
- EDX: <https://www.edx.org/>

Domain expert for learning challenges in developing countries:

- Worldreader, based in Barcelona
- A non-profit on a mission to bring digital books to every child and her family, so that they can improve their lives.
- www.worldreader.org
- Contact person:
 - Colin McElwee, co-founder
 - email: colin@worldreader.org
 - mobile: +34 629 739 850
 - skype: colinmcelwee
 - twitter: @colinmcelwee