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Communication strategy

UNESCO guidance on communicating
on gender equality in and through education



UNESCO – a global leader in education

Education is UNESCO's top priority because it is a basic human right and the foundation for peace and sustainable development. UNESCO is the United Nations' specialized agency for education, providing global and regional leadership to drive progress, strengthening the resilience and capacity of national systems to serve all learners. UNESCO also leads efforts to respond to contemporary global challenges through transformative learning, with special focus on gender equality and Africa across all actions.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization

The Global Education 2030 Agenda

UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialized agency for education, is entrusted to lead and coordinate the Education 2030 Agenda, which is part of a global movement to eradicate poverty through 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Education, essential to achieve all of these goals, has its own dedicated Goal 4, which aims to “*ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.*” The Education 2030 Framework for Action provides guidance for the implementation of this ambitious goal and commitments.



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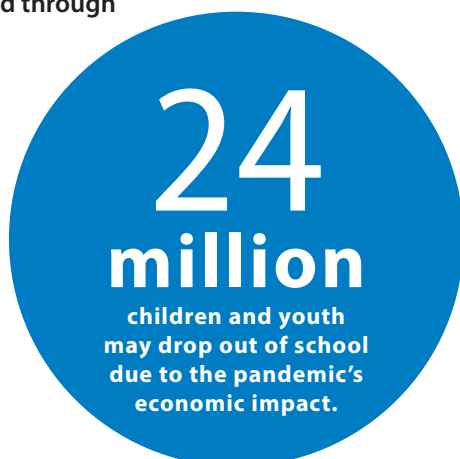
Ensuring that every learner benefits from a quality education remains a challenge worldwide. Entrusted to lead the *Education 2030 Agenda*, UNESCO is committed to ensuring that all learners – girls, boys, women and men, including excluded and marginalized groups – have equal educational opportunities and outcomes.

About 259 million children and youth are out of school according to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, including 127 million girls and 132 million boys. Two-thirds of the 750 million non-literate adults around the world are women. This gender disparity remains one of the persistent challenges in adult literacy and education.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing challenges, disrupting the education of over 1.5 billion learners. UNESCO estimates that close to 24 million children and youth, including over 11 million girls and 13 million boys, may drop out of school due to the pandemic's economic impact. A window of opportunity is now more than ever open to build back equal.

This communication strategy is designed to provide strategic guidance on communicating on gender equality in and through education.

While prepared for UNESCO Education Sector staff, including those at Headquarters, in Field/Regional/Cluster Offices and in Institutes as well as for implementing partners, a broader audience of gender focal points, partners, Member States and others with an interest in and commitment to gender equality in and through education may also find this strategy particularly useful.

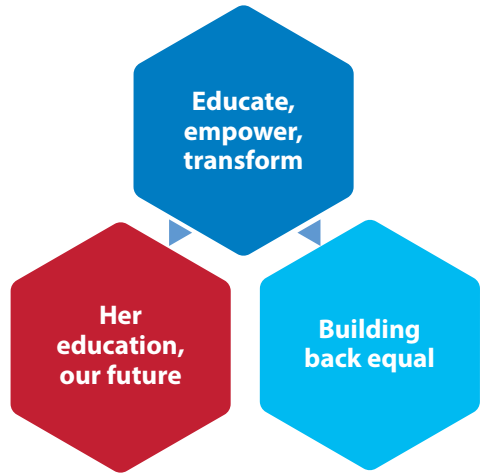


Vision

From access to empowerment: UNESCO strategy on gender equality in and through education

envisioning a world where gender equality in and through education is achieved, ensuring girls and boys, women and men have equal rights and opportunities for education and empowerment, and the agency to shape their lives and futures.

Supporting the strategy, the communication vision is centered around the concept **Educate, empower, transform**. This vision is closely linked to UNESCO's **Her education, our future** initiative accelerating action for girls' and women's education and the Global Education Coalition's work around **Building back equal** for inclusive, gender-transformative education systems and societies.



Strategic objectives

This communication strategy is designed to serve as a guidance to strategically advocate for gender equality in and through education. It seeks to achieve both internal (in red) and external (in blue) objectives, and expand good practices, partnerships and resource mobilization opportunities in this area of work.



Guiding principles

A set of principles is provided to ground the communication strategy and help achieve the strategic objectives and vision. These principles are meant to have a broad application throughout and shape communication efforts around gender equality in and through education.



**HARMONIZED
& COHERENT**



HUMAN-FOCUSED



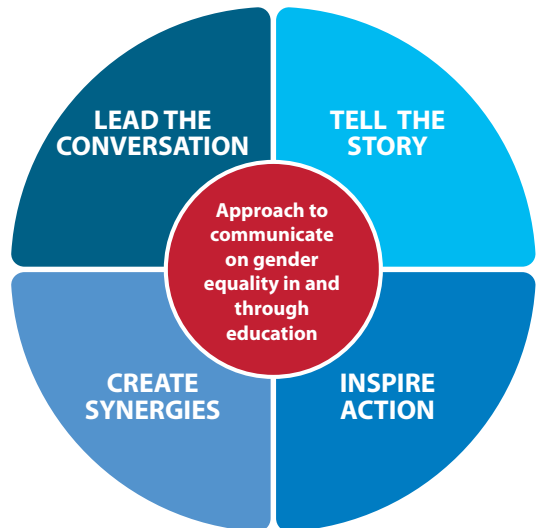
**INCLUSIVE
& EQUITABLE**



**INSPIRING
& ENGAGING**

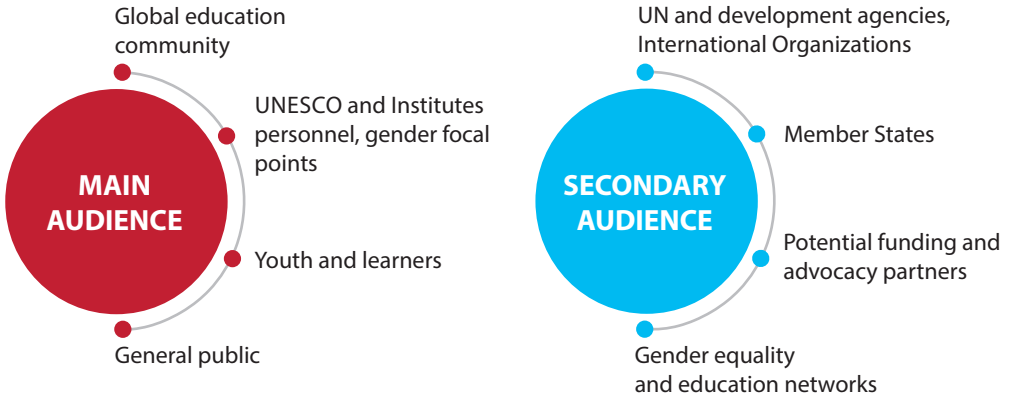
Approach

The communication strategy is based on a flexible approach. Choose and apply the approach most relevant and aligned to your specific communication objectives. This can include one or more of four components: Lead the conversation on gender equality in and through education; Tell the story showcasing impact; Inspire action in favour of gender equality in and through education; Create synergies with targeted partners and gender and education networks to advocate for gender equality in and through education. Each component employs selected channels and targets a particular audience.



Audience

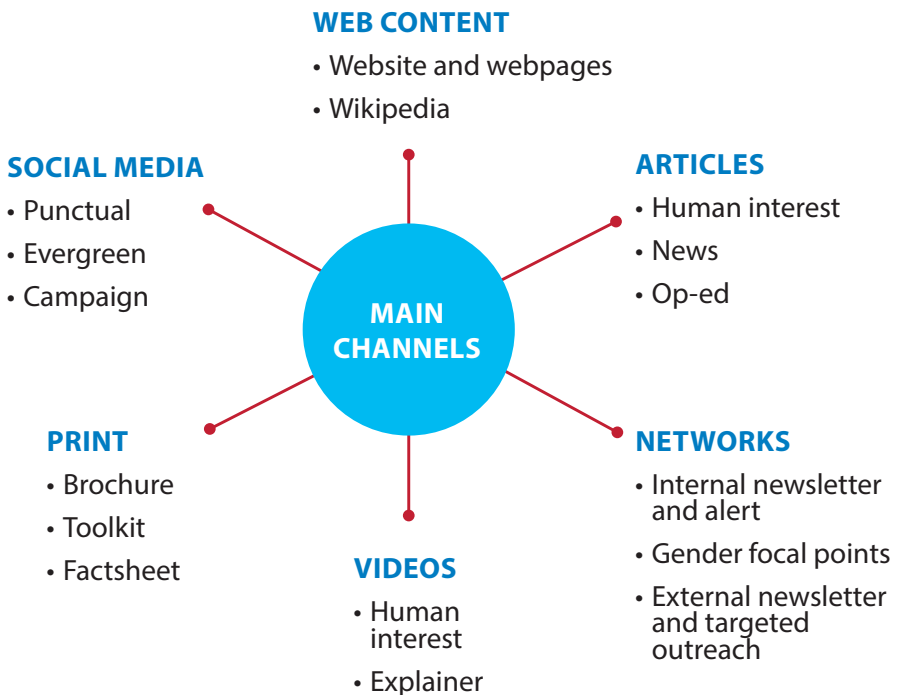
Aligned with the targets of UNESCO's Education Sector, the audience includes gender equality considerations and particular groups working on gender equality and education. Note that the audience may vary and must be adapted based on the specific opportunity to leverage.



Main channels

The way a message is disseminated is as important as what is communicated, especially when communicating on gender equality. The use of channels should be strategic: consider the message (what), the audience (who), and the objectives (why) thoughtfully. Are the channels selected accessible to and used by various genders? Using a thoughtful blend of channels can help ensure and maximize reach to all.

Six main groups of channels have been provided here as examples based on UNESCO and its Education Sector's resources. These are non-exhaustive and may vary depending on the context at hand. Other channels may include media (e.g. press release, media advisory), local or community networks, and events/webinars. The choice of channels must be adapted based on the audience targeted.



Key messages

Education empowers girls and boys, women and men, and all learners to lead the lives they dream about.

Gender equality in and through education is a fundamental human right and a prerequisite to build inclusive and equitable societies.

Adolescent girls face a distinctive set of challenges that may impede on their learning or lead to dropouts. We must ensure girls and women access, participate and complete a quality education in safe and inclusive learning environments.

The global number of out-of-school children, adolescent and youth of primary and secondary school age is higher for boys at 132 million than girls at 127 million. Boys face disadvantages in education in high- or upper-middle-income countries, and also now in several low- and lower middle-income countries, while girls are more at risk in low- and lower-middle income countries.

Improving education outcomes for boys helps build a more equal society.

Too many girls and women are held back by biases, social norms and expectations influencing the education they receive and the subjects they study. Girls can do sciences, maths, engineering and everything they wish to do as well as boys.

Access to digital technologies is a major barrier for girls and women especially, with 2 million women offline worldwide. We must empower girls and women to acquire digital skills so that they can take their place in the increasingly digitalized world of work as creators, innovators and leaders.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the education of 1.5 billion learners, putting millions of girls and boys, and young women and men, at risk of not returning to school. We must build back equal and ensure every girl and boy continues learning.

Roadmap: Bringing it all together

VISION: EDUCATE, EMPOWER, TRANSFORM

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



HARMONIZED
& COHERENT



HUMAN-
FOCUSED



INCLUSIVE
& EQUITABLE



INSPIRING
& ENGAGING

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Establish a common and coherent communication vision on gender equality in and through education

2. Strengthen knowledge on gender equality in and through education and UNESCO's work in this area

3. Showcase good practice and evidence on what works to advance gender equality in and through education

4. Raise awareness, galvanise action, and influence policy, practice and public opinion

5. Position UNESCO as a leader on gender equality in and through education

APPROACH

LEAD THE CONVERSATION

- Craft harmonized messages
- Inform and educate on gender and education
- Facilitate knowledge sharing

TELL THE STORY

- Use storytelling to bring the vision to life
- Showcase impact of gender equality in education on human lives
- Speak to emotions and draw in the audience

INSPIRE ACTION

- Create a sense of collective responsibility for gender in education
- Stimulate good practice adaption and replication
- Build a culture of empowerment to transform

CREATE SYNERGIES

- Foster collaboration to amplify messages and reach
- Identify opportunities for synergies on gender and education
- Expand good practices

AUDIENCE

- Global education community
- UNESCO and Institutes personnel
- General public
- Gender equality networks

- Global education community
- Member States
- Partners
- General public

- Global education community
- Youth and learners
- Partners
- UN and development agencies, organizations
- General public

- Partners
- Member States
- UN and development agencies, organizations
- UNESCO and Institutes personnel
- Gender equality networks

CHANNEL

Web, print, media, events, social media

Articles, audio-visual, social media

Articles, audio-visual, print, gender/local networks, social media

Articles, gender networks, peer meetings, events

Tools: Putting it into practice



A set of tools have been developed to support the implementation of the communication strategy, strengthen capacity to communicate on gender equality in and through education and enhance the strategic value and quality of the communication and materials produced. They include a **glossary**, guidance on **communicating on gender and education**, **developing a communication plan** geared to gender and education, **writing engaging gender and education content** for the web, choosing powerful and unbiased photographs, and more.

These tools provide a gender equality and education lens and are a complement to any general communication tools and guidelines you may use in your work. In the context of UNESCO, these include information notes prepared by the Knowledge Management Service unit of the Education Sector.

Colleagues and readers committed to gender equality in and through education are invited to use these tools to strengthen communication efforts around this topic.

Contact

Peer learning and exchange is most welcome. If you have any questions or suggestions, contact Elodie Khavarani at e.khavarani@unesco.org.





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