

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



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Delivering quality education through DIGITAL FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, schoolchildren's in-person learning has suffered a loss of at least 1.8 trillion hours globally.¹ One billion children, or roughly half of the 2.2 billion worldwide, live in one of the 33 countries regarded as at extremely high risk. This makes them more vulnerable to the effects of climate change and risks their health, education, and safety.² Added to this, less than 40% of countries give girls equal access to education.³

OPPORTUNITY

Digital financial services can make education more affordable through tools to finance educational expenditure, and can improve the speed and efficiency of delivering wages to teachers.⁴ They also allow children to stay in school longer when a shock hits, through the resilience given by savings and insurance products.⁵

CHALLENGES

- **258 million children and young people lack access to education.** Poverty is the main obstacle to access.⁶
- When **teacher salaries and benefits are not paid on time**, it has a detrimental effect on educational quality and examination performance.⁸
- **Less than 40% of countries give girls equal access to education.**¹⁰ It is evident that keeping girls in school reduces gender-based violence, child marriage, and early pregnancy.¹¹

SOLUTIONS

- By **lowering costs and improving convenience**, digital savings, loans, and remittance products make it possible to accumulate funds for educational costs. Students may buy additional study materials through digital financial services in conjunction with e-learning platforms, such as pay-as-you-go fee plans. This reinforces classroom lessons while keeping the resources affordable.⁷
- Digital salary and per diem payments **save time and expense for teachers**, potentially reducing their absenteeism and improving their satisfaction.⁹
- When **women are empowered to have a say in household spending decisions**, they choose to invest in education, safe housing, and health care. These investments have an especially positive impact on women and children.¹² Education subsidies (G2P) delivered directly to mothers' mobile money accounts have also shown positive effects.^{13,14}



Photo: Sarah Farhat / World Bank



BANGLADESH

The direct transfer of educational stipends cut the administrative burden on teachers and lowered the risk of mismanagement allegations against school staff. Almost all—96%—of 25 school principals surveyed preferred transfers using mobile payments.¹⁵

UGANDA

By providing digital school fee loans to solar home system borrowers, ENGIE Energy Access's ReadyPay program resulted in a **50% drop in the number of children who were not enrolled** in school, and a 36% increase in spending on education-related costs,



such as school fees, supplies (uniforms, pens, pencils, notebooks, etc.), transportation, and school meals.¹⁶

EAST AFRICA

Kupaa, a digital school management platform, allows parents to pay school fees in installments, and schools to track payments and expenses. As of October 2019, 270,000 students were registered across more than 500 schools in Uganda.^{17, 18, 19}



LIBERIA

Digitizing teachers' wage payments resulted in a **92% decline in the cost of salary collection, from \$25 per paycheck to \$2**. Since they did not have to commute to collect their wages, teachers saved money on transportation and spent more time in classrooms.²⁰



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Through partnerships with mobile money providers, Eneza Foundation has enabled affordable access to digital educational content, especially for vulnerable and remote populations.²¹ By December 2021, the mobile education platform had reached 11.1 million people with over 2.5 billion messages exchanged on its SMS platform.^{22, 23}



1. UNICEF, 2021a. 2. UNICEF, 2021b. 3. UNGEI, 2018. 4. Ibid. 5. USAID, 2018. 6. UNESCO, 2020. 7. USAID, 2018. 8. Katete and Nyangarika, 2020. 9. Ibid. 10. UNGEI, 2018. 11. Rasmussen and Mattern, 2022. 12. Ibid. 13. Gelb et al., 2019. 14. Ministry of Education, Colombia, 2018. 15. Gelb et al., 2019. 16. Mattern and Garcia, 2021. 17. Rasmussen and Mattern, 2022. 18. Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth, 2019. 19. Miebach, 2019. 20. Dusza, 2016. 21. GSMA, 2020. 22. Rohatgi and Galdava, 2018. 23. Eneza Education, 2021.