

**Accessible Digital Textbooks for All:
Access to learning for children with disabilities through innovation and technology**

A presentation in the margins of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities*
December 3rd, 2019, from 3:00pm- 4:30pm, in Danny Kaye, UNICEF House, 3 UN Plaza, NYC
RSVP by December 2nd 2019

Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Julie de Barbeyrac:
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Accessible Digital Textbooks for All

UNICEF and its partners are driving an innovative solution called the **Accessible Digital Textbooks for All**, to make textbooks available, affordable and accessible for children with disabilities in all contexts. We cherish the printed word, but it isn't always accessible to everyone. Children with disabilities remain one of the most marginalized and excluded groups and, for them, gaining access to quality education can often be challenging. By adding specific features to digital formats like narration, sign language, interactivity, simplified language, audio-description of images, and following Universal Design for Learning principles, textbooks can be made accessible to students who are blind or have low vision, to those who are deaf or hard of hearing, and those who have intellectual, developmental or learning disabilities, among others. With this tool, children with disabilities will be able to access the same content, participate in the same textbook-based activities inside and outside the classroom along with their peers. And it doesn't stop there: these features can enrich the learning experience for all children.

UNICEF is currently piloting the Accessible Digital Textbooks for All initiative in Kenya, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Rwanda, Uganda and Uruguay, and findings from those pilots will strengthen this evolving initiative and inform future piloting countries, building on knowledge sharing and south-south cooperation. Initial experiences show tremendous potential for scale to address a major learning barrier and to improve the quality of learning for all children, to improve the quality of teaching, to address stigma and discrimination, and to generate new local service providers capable of producing universally designed digital learning materials which is the future of learning and an absolute imperative to ensure inclusive and equitable learning for all.

*Since 1992, the **International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD)** has been annually observed on 3 December around the world. The theme for this 2019 IDPD is 'Promoting the participation of persons with disabilities and their leadership: taking action on the 2030 Development Agenda'. The theme focuses on the empowerment of persons with disabilities for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development as envisaged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which pledges to 'leave no

one behind' and recognizes disability as a cross-cutting issues, to be considered in the implementation of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals.