



## Knowledge hub - Collection of best practices

### Summary of the best practice

1. Title of the best practice (e.g. name of policy, programme, project, etc.) \*

Regional Learning Hub

2. Country or countries where the practice is implemented \*

Kenya, Somalia, South Africa and South Sudan

3. Please select the **most relevant** Action Track(s) the best practice applies to \*

- Action Track 1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools
- Action Track 2. Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development
- Action Track 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession
- Action Track 4. Digital learning and transformation
- Action Track 5. Financing of education

4. Implementation lead/partner organization(s) \*

UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO), UNESCO, UNHCR, the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), EdTech Hub

5. Key words (5-15 words): Please add key descriptive words around aims, modalities, target groups etc. \*

Teaching and learning platform, digital learning curricula, Open Educational Resources

6. What makes it a best practice? \*

The Regional Learning Hub (RLH) is designed to be a platform where digital learning content has been pre-aligned with curriculum frameworks. The need for this platform was pinpointed during the Covid-19 pandemic, when governments in sub-Saharan Africa and other regions were required to shift to remote education but had limited means to do so. This submission reflects the development of a proof of concept for the RLH.

## Description of the best practice

### 7. Introduction (350-400 words)

This section should ideally provide the context of, and justification for, the practice and address the following issues:

- i) Which population was affected?
- ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed?
- iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? \*

As the Covid-19 crisis led to school closures in March 2020, governments all over the world scrambled to move to remote teaching. But many countries struggled to find enough content to cover large parts of their curricula. Especially in Eastern and Southern Africa, fragile school systems that rely heavily on in-school activity needed to start using some form of remote education. Several challenges that emerged in response to this shift to remote teaching and learning included:

- 1/ Ministries of education struggle to curate and offer a coherent set of context-appropriate digital learning materials that cover substantial parts of the curriculum.
- 2/ The quality of learning resources available can be low.
- 3/ Curriculum departments can localise materials to an extent but require training to develop digital materials.
- 4/ Some geographical areas are underserved by public education resources.
- 5/ Organisations supplementing public services could benefit from access to higher-quality content.

The aim of the RLH was to create a platform to provide teaching and learning content aligned to curricula that is appropriate to local contexts. The RLH was envisaged as a platform that will enable governments and education stakeholders to facilitate quick selection of content for educational use in their regions. The target audience of the RLH includes ministries of education, education providers or similar, and non-governmental bodies in the region.

## 8. Implementation (350-450 words)

Please describe the implementation modalities or processes, where possible in relation to:

- i) What are the main activities carried out?
- ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)?
- iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)?
- iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation?

\*

In 2021, the UNICEF ESARO, UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa, UNHCR, INEE and EdTech Hub came together to collaborate and develop a proof of concept of the RLH. The proof of concept is the first version in the design of the RLH (and thus limited in scope). It delivers a usable, basic RLH and aims to test a number of assumptions.

The proof of concept of the RLH was developed in several stages.

1/ The inception phase defined the problem, set the scope, and articulated expectations for the proof of concept. It included timelines and roles and responsibilities for the process.

2/ User research tested assumptions on the need for an RLH and the likelihood of adoption of an RLH.

3/ The skills taxonomy identified overlapping skills or curriculum standards and identified what content was needed.

4/ During the content curation process, content was sourced to match relevant skills and for different modalities (TV, radio, feature phone, or digital platforms) and purposes.

5/ The publication process published the RLH as an MVP on UNICEF's Learning Passport platform and as a database in AirTable.

## 9. Results – outputs and outcomes (250-350 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the questions below:

- i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.);
- ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes?
- iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the results? \*

The proof of concept requires further analysis and assessment, which will inform next steps for the RLH. Overall, this RLH is being created to make remedial, catch-up, accelerated, lifewide, and lifelong education accessible and ready to deploy by governments across eastern and southern Africa and potentially other regions at a later stage, transforming remote teaching and learning around the world.

## 10. Lessons learnt (300 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the following questions:

- i) What were the key triggers for transformation?
- ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this?
- iii) What did not work – why did it not work? \*

The process of creating this proof of concept and the challenges encountered produced the following lessons learned:

1/ Involve governments where appropriate: Instead of working with governments from the onset, involving them in improving the MVP incrementally into a usable product may be a more effective approach. This co-design approach sees the current MVP as a starting point for development, not a final product, and requires quick iterations and frequent and structural inputs from the intended audience(s). It is also important to manage expectations and usage scenarios surrounding the RLH.

2/ Find more content or create capacity to build it: Except for digital learning content for biology, content designed for the local context, for other modalities and for other purposes was lacking. To address this need, one may consider building capacity among target countries to curate and create content or purchasing and openly licensing existing proprietary content.

3/ Create and foster a culture of open licensing: Content created through programmes and projects paid for by donors or taxpayers usually is proprietary and cannot be reused by third parties or even other governmental bodies. Once content is proprietary, obtaining permission for reuse or changing the licence rarely happens. Instead, donors and NGOs could create and foster a culture of open licensing.

4/ Plan for the RLH to be sustainable: For the RLH to remain usable, it needs long-term and clear ownership. Multilateral players could have this ownership and turn a mature version of the RLH into a long-term offering.

## 11. Conclusions (250 words)

Please describe why may this intervention be considered a “best practice”.

What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the documented “best practice” or how can it help people working on the same issue(s)? \*

Though the RLH is still in a nascent stage of development, its overarching aim is to enable governments to quickly select, approve, and reuse existing Open Educational Resources. However, throughout the process of developing a proof of concept, it became clear that there are not enough Open Educational Resources for the modalities and purposes that were intended. Satisfying the expressed need for locally relevant, appropriate, and contextual content is a significant challenge, but one that must be addressed. While exact next steps for the proof of concept are still being determined, a focus on continuity, sustainability and government partnership will be key.

## 12. Further reading

Please provide a list and URLs of key reference documents for additional information on the “best practice” for those who may be interested in knowing how the results benefited the beneficiary group/s. \*

Inception report: <https://docs.edtechhub.org/lib/EW94QPAA>

User research: <https://docs.edtechhub.org/lib/CI5UZ5R4>

Skills taxonomy: <https://docs.edtechhub.org/lib/VFV5SG9H>

Content curation: <https://docs.edtechhub.org/lib/9VKXVKGI>

Final report: <https://docs.edtechhub.org/lib/5XBMPDX6>