Back to UNICEF.org

English | Español | Français | عربى | 中文 | Support UNICEF

unicef ✿ | for every child

Introduction | for every child, a digital bridge | for every child, digital parity | for every child, digital safety | for every child, digital care | Take action

The State of the World's Children 2017
CHILDREN IN A DIGITAL WORLD

© UNICEF/UN036675/Sharma

Download the report   Get the data

Do you remember the first time you went online?

Chances are you knew life before the internet. But for children growing up online, life is unimaginable without it.

Digital technology has transformed the world we live in – disrupting entire industries and changing the social landscape.

Childhood is no exception. One in three internet users worldwide is a child, and young people are now the most connected of all age groups.

From photos posted online to medical records stored in the cloud, many children have a digital footprint before they can even walk or talk.

Digital technology can be a game changer for disadvantaged children, offering them new opportunities to learn, socialize and make their voices heard – or it can be yet another dividing line. Millions of children are left out of an increasingly connected world.

Worldwide, **346 million** youth are not connected to the internet

Around **3 out of 5** youth in Africa are offline, compared to just **1 in 25** in Europe

And the online gender gap is growing: Globally there are 12 per cent more men than women online, and the gap is greatest in low-income countries.

And as digital technology rapidly evolves, so can the risks children face online – from cyberbullying to misuse of their private information to online sexual abuse and exploitation.

For better *and* for worse, digital technology is an irreversible fact of our lives. How we minimize the risks while maximizing access to the benefits will help shape the lives and futures of a new generation of digital natives.

UNICEF set out to uncover how the internet and digital technology are helping and hindering children's learning, well-being and social relationships.

Explore these stories and learn about the urgent need to make the internet safer for children while increasing access to digital technology for every child, especially the most disadvantaged.

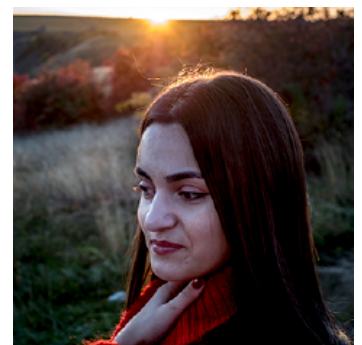## The digital challenges and opportunities facing young people

In Cameroon, Waibai is expanding her world with the help of technology

Learn how the internet has opened new opportunities in both work and play for Vikas in India

In Malaysia, an undercover exposé on online grooming inspires Angeline to take action

Find out how technology is strengthening Gabi's relationship with her mother in Moldova

Perspectives

Rachel Botsman

Hey, Alexa, should I wear the pink or the sparkly dress today?

Niels B. Christiansen

Empowering children to engage in the digital world

Juan Enriquez

Are you tattooed … yet?

Anab Jain

Look, Mum, no data!

Kartik Sawhney

Realizing limitless possibilities: Technology empowers people with disabilities

Karim Sy and Laura Maclet

How digital technologies herald a bright future

Pony Ma

A vision for the future: Reflections on children's rights in the digital age

UNICEF and...

Early Moments Matter

Breastfeeding

Immunization

Equity

UNICEF channels

Facebook   f

Twitter

Instagram

YouTube

Donate now   ›

Blogs

Voices of Youth

UNICEF Connect

Back to UNICEF.org   Legal
Privacy Policy (Petitions)