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DIGITAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
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>> ANAMARIA MESHKURTI: Hello, everyone. Welcome back. I hope you had a good break and also a good lunch for those of you who had the time to have lunch. I am pleased now to move in to the next session. This session will be an in-focus session where we are going to be looking at the country assessment framework presentation. I am also pleased to welcome before the session starts the facilitators, Ms. Jorge Perez Martinez and Mr. Charles Glass who will be moderating the breakout sessions in our implementation laboratory. This afternoon is going to be running a little bit differently. We have with us Halima Letamo, who is the capacity and skills development officer at the ITU. And she will firstly give an in-depth presentation on the Digital Skills Assessment Guidebook of the ITU and followed by this we will have Annemijn and John who will be explaining to us what will happen in the breakout session after the presentation. And they will be facilitating these breakout sessions. So Halima, you have the floor.

>> HALIMA LETAMO: Thank you very much. Hello, colleagues. It is

a great pleasure for me to share this with you today. So if we can maybe have the presentation on the screen, AnaMaria, that will be lovely. Okay. I think I have already been introduced. So I won't take too much of your time with that. My name is Halima Letamo. And I work for the skills development division at ITU. And I'm going to be taking you through the Digital Skills Assessment Guidebook. This was developed for purposes of helping countries to undertake digital skills assessment. It is focused in country. And it is meant to help nations and states. It is not an international assessment guide. It is not a guide designed to help sectors within Governments. But it is aimed at assisting this work to be done at a national level. So I'm just going to share with you what is contained within this Digital Skills Assessment Guidebook. Next slide, please.

So for this presentation, I will look quickly at the objectives and their target audience and content of the guidebook. I will look at the review of existing frameworks. We will then look at how to implement national digital skills assessment as contained in the guidebook. Next slide, please.

The main objectives of this guidebook as I've already mentioned is to focus on a national level assessment. Most importantly to help Governments assess skills supply and demand and determine existing and future skills gap. And, of course, the whole idea of putting this guidebook up and the main objective even to put it that way is for Governments to use this guidebook to come up with meaningful skills assessment and appropriate policy interventions. Next slide, please.

The target audience for this guidebook is policymakers, private sector, academia and Nongovernmental Organizations, but the principle behind it is stakeholders work together to assess skills at a national level. This is not a one sector job. It is not a job that can be done by one group or one group of target audience. It is a job that requires multiple stakeholders working together to achieve a meaningful assessment. Next slide, please.

So within the guidebook we have about four main chapters. We have chapter 1 which looks at the reviews of existing skills, assessment frameworks and approaches. And chapter 2 which looks at assessment of current national skills levels. Chapter 3, assessment of skills, needs and gaps. And chapter 4 looks at forecasting future skills requirements. So this is quite extensive.

So I'm going to be doing an introduction of each of the chapters with the belief that the discussion will go in-depth when you go in to breakout groups and you have time to look through the guide yourselves and read a little bit more of what is contained within the guidebook. Next slide, please.

The review of existing digital skills framework begins maybe firstly with understanding the environment within skills assessment. And this is usually done by development of frameworks which could be international or regional. Some may even be national. So within the guidebook there is a discussion that focuses on these frameworks. And these frameworks are

generally designed to provide a means for categorizing and organizing the complexity and range of digital skill sets as we can appreciate. I think in one of the presentations this morning somebody reiterated the fact that digital skills can be categorized in to three level categories in terms of levels; the basic, the intermediate and the advanced. And, of course, if we go in to the skills themselves they are quite diverse. Frameworks are designed to help provide a means of categorizing this, but also to create a common language and sometimes to prescribe proficiency levels of these skills.

We have the digital competency framework for citizens which focuses on discussing five competency areas or provides guidance in five competency areas, basically provides frameworks. And then we have the digital literacy global framework. I don't know whether to call it an improvement or a framework that was based on the digital -- I don't want to say improvement because it hasn't changed anything in the digital com except to add to competency areas. Digital skills to tangible outcomes which organizes digital media skills around four domains. And there is the new essential digital skills framework which discusses five skills categories. So these are the mainframe works within which the work of assessing digital skills operates.

Next slide, please. In terms of the approaches there are different kinds of approaches and we can have assessment approach from the individual or participant's approach where the participants rate their own level of knowledge. Their performance based assessments or the approach which is performance based, which measures actual performance on digital skills and realistic scenarios. These are types of assessments that can be used within the framework of the guideline. As I mentioned the guidebook provides a step-by-step process to assessing skills and these types of assessments or these types of approaches can be used at different stages whether it is in assessing skills supply or assessing skills demand or forecasting future skills. These types of assessments can be used. Next slide, please.

The digital skills assessments can be done at international -- at an international level. So maybe before we get to the country level, it is important for us to just have a quick appreciation of what is happening at an international level. We have international assessments like program for international assessment of audit competency and technology rich environments. And it is being used in over 40 Developed Countries. And it is implemented at a country level. It is done every ten years. And it mainly targets audience.

There is the international computer and information literacy study and it is being used in 21 countries overall mostly in Developing Countries as well. And it is implemented at -- at the national level as by national education systems. And it's done every five years and it's targeting mostly 8th grade students.

There is also the program for international student assessment which

was developed by OECD as well. And it is used in and around 80 Developed and Developing Countries and in 82 languages. It's also implemented at international levels over three years. And it targets 15-year-olds. While this guidebook we are discussing today is focusing at the national level and there is work that's happening at the international level. So we have international assessments that are happening even though they are still implemented at the national level but the data is consolidated at an international level. Next slide, please.

There are different methods that can be used to assess current digital skills. And we will find some of them even recommended even within the guidebook and this includes focus table, employee/ employer skills and even trace studies. The guidebook recommends the use of some of these at different levels. So if you go through it, you will find some of these recommended for certain stages of the digital skills assessment process.

Next slide, please. So maybe we start by looking at what is contained within the second chapter of the guidebook which focuses on assessing available skills supply. Just to move a little bit now in to the G store, the step by step guide of what is contained within this guidebook. To assess available skills supply, the recommendation is to take or to use a four step approach. Here this four step approach begins with assembling the team and deciding what to assess, collecting and analyzing the data and disseminating the data.

Can we move to the next slide, please? Thank you. Under the assembling, the team, to be able to have a meaningful skills assessment, you know, and when we talk about the supply, maybe I should just mention that first it refers specifically to trying to answer the question of what skills do we currently have in the country. So the focusing is in the skills we have and to be able to do this adequately, we need to firstly choose a governance model. And there are three types of governance models that can be employed. This is the policy model where the assessment will be generally governed by those who will use the information for decision making.

There is the independent module, where the governance of the process would be governed by all or be led by agencies such as independent and does not necessarily to use the data itself or hybrid model where you have a combination of both beneficiaries of this data and nonbeneficiaries working together to guide the evolution of the skills assessment process. The second thing to consider under assembling the team is to engage stakeholders as we've mentioned earlier, this process requires all stakeholders to be involved. So we need to engage the stakeholders. So when we have the governance model and we have engaged the stakeholders, we can then sit together and decide what to assess. This requires us to undertake an inventory of existing data sources and decide who, what and how we are going to do the assessment. Not losing focus of the fact that at this stage we are just looking at what skills we have. We

are looking at the supply. What is existent. Where is the skills residing. Who has the skills. And what type of skills are they. What we can do to ensure that we find out or we get information on those skills that may be hidden or embedded in certain pockets of the economy that we may not easily have access to. Once we have done that we can then move on to collecting and analyzing the data. And we collect this data and we analyze it and then we decide who are we going to disseminate this data to. Next slide, please.

Within the guidebook we provide a number of tools that help us with these processes. For example, the table you are seeing on or the template that you are seeing on the screen right now is meant to help us with answering -- with a couple of questions that we need to think about when we are planning for assessing the skills that we have internally within a country. And it gives us pointers, like under the who gives us an idea of who could be within this category. Is it adults that we want to assess? Is it students that we want to assess? Is it a sample of population at large? Are we focusing on a certain geographical area? When we are looking at data collection as an example this tool draws you to us asking yourself where will the data be collected and who is in charge and who will conduct the analysis. So these are some of the templates and tools you that will find within the guidebook to help you with this part of the exercise. Next slide, please.

Assessing skills needs and gaps, demand. So we have been talking about the part of the guidebook that talks about assessing skills supply. We now want to look at the demand. We have asked ourselves what do we have. We now want to ask ourselves what do we need. To be able to answer or to answer this question of demand, we need to ask two fundamental questions. What is the current demand for digital skills across the country? And where are the different types of skills requirements? What are the areas of shortage or mismatch of digital skills in the workforce? Next slide, please.

To help us answer these questions we looked at a couple of stages or there are a couple of things that we can do. Firstly, we can start by maybe administering a desk review. In this instance we just review available literature on on the demand of digital skills in the country. Secondly we choose the appropriate methods to respond to data gaps that are not covered like in the desk review. When we are reading the desk review that we have enough data on skills requirements in manufacturing industries. They have documented quite well what they need. When it comes to school we don't know what digital skills are required in schools. So then at this stage we can choose a method of how we will then find out what skills are missing in the education sector. So this is what this step is meant to do. It is meant to fill the gaps that we would have identified missing when we are doing the desk review. And then step three is to focus on key sectors.

Identify the sectors and focus on those. Remember this is a humongous task. It is quite huge to assess digital skills at a national level. And we cannot possibly be able to assess every single sector.

So to do a meaningful skills assessment, there is a need for a decision on the sectors that we'll focus on for this period. I mean if you are going to do a skills assessment every three years then you can focus on different sectors each of the three years. But if it is going to be a ten-year cycle then we need to prioritize and select the sectors that are quite critical for the nation at this stage at which we would be doing the skills assessment.

Then when we know the skills that we need, we have already under chapter 2 identified the skills we have. We now have information on the skills that we need. We can then compare the results of the two and identify the skills gaps. Identify where the gaps are. And once we have done that we can then communicate the results. It is very, very important to develop a communications and reporting strategy at every stage of the skills assessment process. Because this is what helps maintain the buy in and helps with the policy interventions that are going to be based on the results of this assessment.

Next slide, please. Some of the key questions that we want to answer when we are looking at assessing skills needs and -- when we are assessing demand, when we are data mining gaps is questions like how have technological changes affected the sector. I think this is based on the assumption that we would have selected the key sectors. And we would be speaking to the sectors to find their technological or their skills -- their digital skills needs. So we want to know how the technological changes has affected their sector. You could explore questions like what do they think the process of the skills gaps in the sector. What types of training they think they should provide to their employees. What they are currently supplying or providing their employees with. How frequently they are developing the skills among the employee team. And how the skills gaps affect, you know, the business. And probably even learn from them on how they data mine at the industry level and how they data mine what skills they need. And use that to incorporate or to strengthen the skills assessments or their assessment of skills demand process that you will be undertaking.

Next slide, please. Assessing skills needs and gaps we have already touched a little bit on this. Requires -- it is like a continuous process if we are to look at it that way. It's linear. You start by comparing the results of the skills supply which requires skills levels and you then compare skills mentioned and explaining why positions have gone unfilled, outcomes of supply side skills assessment and you compile information of sector studies about the difficulty of recruiting appropriate candidates, review employee service and find out if they fill over or under qualified jobs in what digital areas. And then you can assess graduation rates for special processes. It depends on whether the sectors that you have selected are specialized.

So if they are specialized then you can look at graduation rate for specialized skills fields. If they are not specialized you can look at overall graduation rates in general. You can look at growth rates in particular fields. You can do a study over a period of time, as compared for specialized digital skills fields. Next slide, please.

The next stage that we want to look at is forecasting future skills requirements, how to forecast future skills and this begins with a three-step process. It understands trends that involves reviewing resources. Identifying impact of these trends. There is a lot of information that is available all over that talks about how technology trends are evolving. And it is important that when you are doing or you want to forecast future skills you look at where the technology is headed. What are we expecting to happen in the technology field in the next ten years? And once you have explored this it becomes easier and you can see where you may have skills needs. Once you have understood the trends or data mined the trends you can conduct what is called anticipation exercises where we conduct desk reviews of development trends. And this can be done by looking at things like national development plans where you look at the development plans and see if they are responsive or how they are responding to the direction in which the technologies is heading. We've already done that in chapter 1 or in step 1 to identify where the technology is heading.

We now have the national development plans in our hands. We can look at it and see if they are responsive to these. And then we also need to gather data to understand existing industries at the national level. And then make strategic decisions, through comparing our development plans and the technology trends we can then make strategic decisions and review other factors that may influence requirements for future skills and make decisions on further action.

Next slide, please. A couple of questions, this you will find in the guidebook to help us think around forecasting trends and their impacts and these questions include questions like how do you expect technological changes to affect your sector in the coming five to ten years. What impact might these technologies have on each of the sectors you are investigating. What digital skills could be added to the education system to ensure the pipeline is well prepared for these changes. And how might you consider retraining or upscaling current employees for these changes.

Next slide, please. Like in any of the three chapters that we have talked about in this chapter you will also find tools that are designed to help you with this stage of the exercise. If you are forecasting trends you will then have the table that you see on the screen right now to use. And it asks you to just speak to the trend that has been forecasted, what have you identified when assessing the international technology trends and then speak to assessment of impact on country. For example, how population growth would impact the -- would impact the economy. How emerging technology

will be adopted. And then answer the next question which speaks to sectors likely to be affected by the trend when you -- when you are assessing it, what ideas came to mind. What sectors can you anticipate will be affected by this new trend that you have just observed. And what new sectors might emerge from the trend. As you can see when you answer these three or four questions speaking to one trend that you have identified, it already starts introducing ideas even before any intensive assessment of what are the likely skills that may be required. If this sector is going to be affected by this trend then you can already think what type of skills will then this sector need if it is affected. If this new sectors are going to emerge, what kind of skills could they need when they are set up. So all this helps us to think around the future demands of our country for digital skills.

Next slide, please. Thank you very much. We skipped the other slide. But it is okay. It is just another tool which is meant to help us guide or do anticipation exercises. The first table that we were looking at was speaking to questions that will help us do a review of trends. The next is just the table that helps to think around anticipation exercises. And the third slide, next slide, please, this slide that's in front of us, is talking to us a little bit about some of the factors that may affect digital skills demand. We are still trying to work around forecasting future skills. And here we need to be looking at the demographic trends, things like retirement, and replacement, youth employment, technological changes, like what levels of automation that may emerge. We are looking at business trends, economic expansion, how would this affect technological changes and impact on the skills. All these factors that you see in front of you are just examples of what -- some of the factors that can affect digital skills demand and help us to forecast future skills requirements of our countries. Next slide, please.

In conclusion, this guidebook is designed to provide flexibility and as much as possible it was designed with the understanding that every country has different requirements for digital skills. And each country is at -- may be guided, not even made, let's say it has to be guided by the level of technological development and its economic sectors. So what one country needs right now may not necessarily be what the other country needs. Most importantly some countries may already have a lot of comprehensive data on skills supply. But they may need to just start on skills demand. Therefore they don't necessarily need to repeat the whole process of assessing skills suppliers, assessing demand and forecasting.

Another country may have supply skills data which is comprehensive enough and they want to focus on forecasting future skills. So the guidebook was designed in such a way that countries can just choose from the menu that suits them. Even the step by step guide within each of the chapters is not fixed. The intention is for it to provide a guide that countries can use to do that which is necessary and what they need depending on their unique positioning at the time that they decide to undertake a digital

skills assessment exercise. And as we have already emphasized it is important to remember, while this policy book is designed for policymakers it is important that they engage with other partners and ensure that all stakeholders are involved in undertaking this process.

Thank you very much.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Thank you very much for the introduction. My name is Annemijn Perrin. I am your Moderator together with John Glassy today for the breakout sessions. As we have seen for the whole day that digital skills is the key to development at the moment and to make sure that it is part of your basic skills for everyone, like numeracy and literacy because today the skills gap is going to create an even bigger gap than what we have today. Governments will be focusing on -- on various levels. So what we are going to do we are going to be splitting in to two breakout sessions. We will have mainly Government people actually attending today for the sessions. So there is two government areas. John, will you be so kind to do the introduction and the housekeeping rules?

>> JOHN GLASSY: Thank you very much and a big thank you to Halima as well for presenting the digital guidebook and that also comes alongside the digital toolkit of the ITU. The purpose of these breakout sessions is for all of you who are participating is to have your voice -- everyone can share the thoughts and their recommendations. And we would very much -- we have one hour and that one hour will fly by very quickly. We would like to hear your policy recommendations and your thoughts on what's been said. And I think before we go in to the breakouts, just a little reminder of some of the key points that were raised before lunch. We have an -- Halima has just told us fresh in our minds. Before lunch we had a number of keynote speakers. And, of course, here we are, kind of COVID cannot be ignored. We are a year on since many countries in Europe started going in to lockdown. And we're still on Zoom in our homes. So I think firstly to everyone which will be thank you for welcoming us in to your homes.

But all of the digital skills strategies, the policies, the frameworks may have been before the pandemic but certainly we have seen the consequences of this accelerated. And if there is to be a silver lining from our experiences over the last 12 months is how the digital sector has been accelerated.

And just sort of reminding on some of the key points made this morning gender equality was strongly raised. I'll give a quick example, yesterday in the UK a very well-known chocolate retailer called Thornton's said it is closing all of its shops and will become an online retailer. And that's 630 jobs lost right away. And three quarters of its staff in its shops is women. That's 430 jobs lost. The replacements, the staff will have to have the necessary digital skills. Will three-quarters of their employees still be women when they become a purely online retailer? And then the question

of young people in that age group of 15 to 25 they may be digital natives, but are they digitally literate? We had a report from the British University in Cairo that said as high as 95, even as high as 98% of screen time is devoted to young people to social media or gaming or watching videos, which means a whole universe of knowledge and information it is not being accessed.

So the young digital natives suddenly need digital mentors as well. And what also was raised this morning was the concern over the digital divide. Those areas, remote areas which maybe don't have as good of an infrastructure and those who don't have devices or equipment at home. And there is a real concern that this digital divide is exacerbated by what we experienced with the pandemic. And this impacts education where we have seen a lot more need for online learning. And not a single country in the world has a fully formed online learning policy. A policy that brings in the pedagogy. They may take little bits of policy from here but from a GDPR data protection but no fully formed policy. So this has really come out. And another thing that was raised this morning was the rescaling. And before the pandemic rescaling the World Economic Forum reported on how many jobs of the future are unknown. Even more so now. We are all rescaling. We are all learning now new aspects to our jobs. So there is just a few reminders of some of the points that we touched on this morning.

As I say thank you very much to Halima. What we are going to do in these breakout groups and everyone will introduce themselves. And as I say we will be having an open discussion. And then if you could all make your own thoughts and policy recommendations and your feedback on the ITU's digital skills toolkit and framework for assessment. So that's my introduction. We will split in to the breakout groups. I'm going to hand over I think to someone in the ITU presses the magic button.

>> ANAMARIA MESHKURTI: Yes, I have the honor to press the magic button. I'm going to open all the rooms and you should get a little popup window that says you can go to those rooms. So here it goes. And you are invited to join this room. If you could please click on join. Thank you.

(Breakout Session 1)

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: What kind of policies, challenges, successes at the moment you have had and that you can share with others. As we said in the previous sessions there is no point in reinventing the wheel every time. We might as well learn from each other and see how we can move forward together. So my name is Annemijn Perrin. And I run the digital skills foundation. We provide digital literacy for all. We provide digital inclusion based on courses for everyone and focused on teachers. I have put within the chat earlier on a link to a manual which might be actually helpful for which is a manual that we use for teachers to go from face-to-face learning to blended learning, which is just for free of charge. You can just go on the website and download it for everyone if you would want. I would like you all to do a quick introduction of which countries you

are from. And then we will go straight in to the topic and say start with policy recommendation of what is happening in your country and what should be done. Can I give the floor to Nina?

>> I'm Nina. I am a senior advisor of issues of adolescent development and participation. For me this discussion is essential because I have a feeling there is a lot of emphasis put on what skills are missing and what concerns me frankly is that we end up discussing a lot about what the adolescents are missing or young people or kids and somehow we are creating an illusion if they had the skills they would have the jobs. You just need the skills. You need the skills. So I think to me that's a challenge that I would love to discuss about how does one make sure that once the skills are acquired, that there would be enough work opportunities. So and not -- and, you know, work opportunities in the environments rather than somewhere abroad where they would need to migrate.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: So what you are basically saying is assignment of industry with skills that are coming up and how you create jobs around that, am I correct?

>> And local jobs. The issue of local jobs.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Yeah. That's what I mean local jobs.

>> Yes. Yes. Because it is one thing -- it is one thing -- what our colleague was talking about was the Artificial Intelligence about this morning he was saying it's an issue of unprecedented scale and space and you lose the jobs in France. It is good for Tajikistan. How does one keep society that has a certain amount of opportunities for everyone. So that's the thing. Over.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Okay. Jelena. We can't hear you.

>> Sorry, I was muted. Hello from Montenegro. My name is Jelena and I'm coming from the Ministry of Education. I'm coming from the department for ICT. I didn't know where to start because today I was an observer because I'm -- I'm for the first time involved in this initiative. And something that no one mentioned maybe it is not just about digital skills. It is more about this Corona situation. Is that we should pay more attention to vulnerable groups. So I mean on children with disabilities in Montenegro and the outcome that also members of the Roma population. And, of course, children from economically disadvantaged families. So in this period in Montenegro we did a lot about online education, trainings for teachers, et cetera. We had great support from UNICEF, from UNDP, from telecommunications and Microsoft. But these groups are in some way excluded from everything.

So we did many online services. I think we did a great job in last one year. But these vulnerable groups are really in a bad position.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Okay. So you mean that you would like to see a policy or something or maybe others can actually share on that. Are there policies in place for other countries when you are presenting yourself

of explaining what's going on in your country and what you have done to get digital inclusion for vulnerables which is women, which in this case is the Romas. But it's also older people who haven't got today any skills of online and are very isolated.

>> I'm talking from the education sector. So I forgot that.

>> The positions and work jobs that are coming that are being invented I would like to say that to repeat one statement that I have heard some while ago in TEDx event, what is the difference between great and excellent teachers. The great teachers are using their students, their students about the job to work the jobs that will be invented in the future. While the excellent teachers are teaching their students to invent the jobs of the future. So that would be different.

So I don't know which kind of teachers now we have at the moment, at the moment in Macedonia. But regarding the digital skills, what we can do as a Ministry of Information Society is we have put it on a priority top list long term national ICT strategy. And we would like to have different approaches towards the administration, towards the citizens in general. And ICT experts, ICT specialists and the students, the peoples and so on in two layers, both in rural and urban areas. So we would like to cover all those things in the -- I think it's fifth or sixth part of the national ICT strategy that should be adopted, I don't know in -- I think in the following quarter of this year. So we would like to have three different approaches towards the digital to the upscaling of digital skills. One is to create like a base of digital skilled citizens, then to build digital users that are more skilled like professionals, like administration, like users, workers and so on. But we would also like to take care about the ones that are creators and authors of the new things.

So all these things are something that we would like to shape like a pyramid of digital users and what will be the main responsibility for these digitalization of upscaling of digitalization would be mainly on the Ministry of Education and Science to some extent to the state employment agency and other agencies while we should take care about is digital -- about the training and upscaling of the cybersecurity, and all these ICT expert topics that we should cover as topics. And we have made some small flyers for the cybersecurity of the students and employees so far. But how we will proceed it will remain as let's say a decision of the situation that we are in now with all these COVID situation.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Okay. Thank you very much. Tina. Tina? Not sure if that's going to work. Okay. George.

>> I'm here. But I speak very bad English.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: That's okay. We will cope with that.

>> Okay. I'm from Mayenne in France. It's a Council in France. I saw another people from France who is --

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: I don't know who this is actually. I don't

know. There is no name there. But that's okay.

>> It would be good -- if you want to speak with me it will be good. No?

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: No. In the meantime could you --

>> In France we have a problem of electronics people, from 14 people or from far away from digital. And these people less poor people, but young peoples, too. The problem is not it is the job but also not -- people who have some --

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Rights.

>> Some rights but they don't --

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: They cannot have them.

>> They cannot have them.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: I will translate. That's okay.

>> Because in 2022 there are full digital administration. Okay?

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Yeah.

>> And there are some platforms to evaluate our digital skills. There are two platforms. One are national by the Government. It's pics and another is by a non-profit organization. The approach or not unless level our studies but our capacity to do something when you are in the platform. You understand?

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Uh-huh. Okay. The pics initiative from the French government is very much focused on practical. So kids actually go on to that system but also older people can go on to the system and click and go through exercises. The Lebon click is more of a course which is done actually or it is not even a course. It is little courses bit by bit where you can do exercises how do you use your mouse. How do you click and it is amazing to see today that a lot of people don't know how to use a mouse. Even children, right? Who are used to iPads and everything else have never seen a mouse. So what do you do with a mouse when you have a computer because you always work on a tablet. There are different areas. Have we got anyone else who would like to introduce themselves? I think there was Tina. Or maybe -- Hajar. I have got Hajar here. And if not we are going to go to the next question because time is running. The idea actually is to kind of share practices. So what we have seen with this fourth revolution that's well on the way and the alignment of competency development for economic growth that's crucial for anyone at this stage, is that every country is at a different stage of implementation. So what we just said is Macedonia is looking for -- is working on this ICT policy. Montenegro has already a thing in place but very much focusing on teachers at this stage because teachers do have a real need to be upscaled in this case because they are actually preparing our next workforce or next stage of workforce.

So what are the -- what are the positive points at the moment that you have seen out of COVID, right? Because it is not only negatives. So what have you seen in terms of upscaling but also in terms of policies that have

been put in place that have been very practical because a lot of the countries have been focusing in a very practical way because it has been urgent and we needed to get everything in place. So what has been done in your countries? And what can you share with the others to move things forward? And I'm going to start -- let's start again at the top.

Maybe not Nina in this case because UNICEF is a bit larger than that. But maybe Montenegro.

>> Okay. I'm not muted now. So where to start? So in COVID-19 positive things that we established some system very short time. So before I want to start we have for more than ten years we have Office 365 in every schools. We have all packets and ten years almost no one of them didn't use it.

So maybe some of them use it in e-mails and I think more on administrations, not pictures. And now suddenly in seven days everything alive. So many teachers were so much motivated to go to trainings, to use whatever they know in the first time. So that they use it also, Teams and Zoom and some of them only wider. But now there are so much motivated, we train -- in Montenegro we have around less than 800 teachers from me primary to secondary schools. And we train in some project with UNICEF half of them to use platform Teams, to use Office 365. Also this year we made three -- we made online enrollment to preprimary, to primary and secondary schools. Because in Montenegro we have also more than ten years, we have central information systems for educations. So we really have a lot of data, everything is there. It is central. It is on a base of any student. So it was easy to make these services. So they are fully implemented.

And what is the good part? The good part very high percentage of using it. So around 85% of children enrolled to primary schools using that service. We didn't think that it would be so high. We thought that the parents maybe will not accept it. But it was very high in secondary schools, peoples from their homes just using their I.D. did everything. Because their marks is our -- in our information systems. We are connected with other government institutions for the other data. And that was a big success.

Also we did a lot of -- it is not easy to tell everything about digital strategy in education. We don't have it for now. Strictly in education. And we are planning to make it -- until the end of the year. So that would be in line with the action plan of the digital education of European Commission. So something like that.

And things that we need to do.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Okay. Thank you very much for that. Josh, can you explain what's going on in France in terms of education? And what has been done for the last year?

>> In France we have pedagogical continuity. And it will -- it will be for all the young people. But there are many problems -- programs

on -- people don't have connection. Before they go to to McDonald's, to other free WiFi or -- or will be closed and new WiFi first problem. Second problem, many young people have a smart device, a Smartphone and they can't read and make words, and make a lot -- it will be one of the most problems. The other problem was free of the infrastructure. There are many, many dependents, lockdown of the infrastructure. And I think the most problem was not the students, was the teacher. It will translate from physical to digital or lesson. It is a beginning of the lockdown. The young people are many, many years and is very difficult for them to follow the study.

And we have a little problem. It is not a problem. But the pedagogy for the states and a little council asked us only help from the device or the connected. They are not to tell about the pedagogy and it will be -- it is not a problem. But in fact, in France we -- it seems that ten young people were about -- but I think it would be much important.

After the lockdown they are -- from education. Digital education. Think about after. But it will be better now. That's all.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Basically the big issues have been devices, connectivity and teacher training?

>> Yes.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Okay. Rosalinda, from your perspective.

>> Okay.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Because on top of that you are a teacher. From an authority perspective you know what is going on with connectivity and everything. From a teacher's perspective it becomes a whole different ball game because it is not easy to shift from a face-to-face area where we always liked having kids in the room and teach your kids to a digital area where these kids are all up in the air and we don't know where they are and on top of that teachers need to manage parents.

>> Well, you know, it's not an easy shift. Definitely. But according to what my experience is although I have -- I have stopped being a teacher, I don't know, 17 years ago maybe. So it's -- it's a long time. But yet I am in touch with teachers and parents. So the -- you know, I think that now it has kind of shifted to a positive -- 0 means 1 and 1 means 0 because the ones that were more extrovert and to shame the teacher's approaches and now using these tools like Zoom and vibr they are more expressing their feelings and ideas and thoughts. They are more open. Unlike the others who want auditorium and wants to be the first in the room, you know, to tell everything loudly and to be first one in the group, now they are kind of, you know, struggling in this era of digital communication. But there are pros and cons. It can also be applied to the students. The students that were more like not ashamed but afraid to step up and to come forward to the teachers now they are more open because, you know, the baseline for running is the same for everyone. And they are more let's say more

engaged in all these activities. And they can contact the teachers whenever they want. I don't know from my personal experience, my kids are very old now. I mean they are not students or pupils. But I know this because I was engaged in other activities within the country.

So that's why I know. And maybe from my friends and what -- ex-teachers that I have worked with. So and also what I would like to say regarding the digital skills overall, especially in administration, the institutions that were like, I don't know, very hard and very difficult to move in a digital era in general now they are the ones who are approaching us to make something. To make the step forward. To make -- and now there is no problem. They know everything now. Maybe one year ago they didn't know about the -- I don't know, the portals. They didn't know about the electronic identification. They didn't know about the electronic signatures. They didn't know anything. Now they know everything. Now they are even asking about cybersecurity, what is malware, what is phishing and so on. So I think that it is not maybe as structured way of learning but the Internet is offering them too many data now. And they can feed themselves with the data. Yes, there is junk among this data. But 75% of the data they are consuming from the Internet is good. Everything is good.

So our mentality here is not to believe in everything that you read. So I think that that is a natural preservation of junk data and what you can see. But the digital is coming, how should I say? It is not by default. It is in our nature. So it's becoming like our third arm or something. We cannot do anything with our phone even. Results from COVID we are seeing on our phone like mail, SMS. It is becoming part of our life and you cannot use any tool or device if you are not skilled in that. And skills comes with a weird -- how do you say? A conscious or unconscious learning. Intentional or unintentional. Planned or unplanned learning. So this is my experience in a nutshell.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: That sounds very good to me. Thank you very much for that. Hajar --

>> Just a second. I need to go to another meeting. I was very pleased to meet you.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Thank you very much.

>> Looking forward to another event. Bye-bye.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Thank you very much. Have a wonderful day.

>> Bye-bye.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Hajar.

>> Hello.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Hello. We haven't heard you yet actually. Could you introduce yourself and explain --

>> Okay. I'm not a specialist. I'm a Ph.D. candidate in education and ICT. And I'm a Portuguese professor. So you have to excuse my

English as well. So I'm working on -- it is my fourth year. So I'm working on teacher training in education and ICT, especially in integrating ICT in education. And the teacher training for this. And this speech was very interesting for me because I discovered like a common sense with my study because one of the -- one of the main reasons when I was collecting my data for my classes, one of the main reasons of why teachers are not committing to the national program of training teachers in ICT, here in Morocco is that they think that the training, the existing training doesn't match to their needs. Because we don't have a national program for the digital skills assessments.

So yeah. That's it. I don't know what can I share with you? Because my research is focused on the teacher side, teaching training side.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: But I think where all of us understand that teachers are actually key to the development of all our workforce that's coming for all our youngsters. So make sure that teachers are upscaled and ready for the classroom. It is not an easy transfer for teachers. You are working in Morocco?

>> Yes. I'm doing a comparative study between the Portuguese case and I'm working on -- the Lisbon region and the Rabat region.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Are you also comparing with the Margaish which is the implementation that Portugal has done a couple of years ago?

>> Yes. No, I'm just comparing several programs that we're --

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Fair enough. Understood. Thank you very much. Thanks.

>> Thank you.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Nina, because you work in several countries. So I think we are orientating, most teachers are focused on youth. We might as well concentrate to getting some policy ideas or focus ideas out of this conversation which are practical toward Governments and what we can say well, this should be a good idea for any Government basically to say these are things that you need to think about when we are talking about youth. But these are also things to think about when we are talking about education or teachers because they are all interlinked in a way. With your experience with working with youth and UNICEF, different countries, different policymakers, where do you think are the good -- where can we find some good ideas that would mix?

>> Thank you very much. I think that many colleagues have raised many issues. I think when it comes to the issue of the young people, lessons with young people themselves I think it is very interesting the fact that what Jelena was talking about, those who are excluded you need to do even more effort to include them. So that -- so that actually there is a huge risk that the gap would get larger at the moment. Because you would get those that our Macedonia colleague was talking about, the excellent teachers preparing students to create new jobs would be even further out than those

Roma, et cetera, who are even -- so there is a huge risk of a gap. So really the -- and the problem is that the gap is not simple to solve by more skills training because it tends to be a gap that also is linked to, you know, dysfunctional households, family conflict, poverty. It is not by teaching these kids skills that you are going to solve it. Really wholistic policy to reach out and support the marginalized. Including skills and connected to social programs and benefits and these kinds of issues.

So looking at -- putting a real lens on to the marginalized excluded who are becoming a larger number because the jobs are shrinking. So we are at the risk of increasing numbers of excluding and increasing gaps. Positive policy that would look at their needs more wholistically are really important at this point in time. For teachers specifically, one of the things for discussing the European training foundation and other people who have been working on these topics a long time, you know, it is -- the amount of information accessible on the Internet is enormous. Enormous. So the role of the teacher no longer is the one who transfers the knowledge, but the one who guides the student through the process of choosing what to study, how to study, where to study and how to organize the information and how to combine it in to a set of skills that would fit their personal strengths but also would fit opportunities in the job market, et cetera.

So that role for a teacher to become really an individualized coach for his or her pupils and students is something that is required for, you know, teachers in order to build that skill. Because it's not -- it doesn't come automatic. So moving from knowledge -- somebody who transfers knowledge to somebody who coaches kids is a big transformation.

And the third point I would like to perhaps mention is the whole issue of sort of mental health and well-being because one of the things that we have seen is that, you know, it is one thing to have blended learning and all of this, in a context where you actually knew all your students and you just moved online. So it is a very different context than this blended learning where you will no longer know all your students, and you will go in to blended learning because in a way what some people are saying is that some of the preconceived ideas that teachers have about certain students are transferred on to Zoom. When little Peter wanted to speak, the teacher knew little Peter already from before. So they could manage still. But the kid who has issues and who has withdrawn and whose camera is off, that teacher has no longer a possibility to have any sign of alert or alarm that this kid is losing connection to the classroom, to the peers, to the schools.

There is no way of having that alert system because you don't see the nonverbals anymore. You don't see the kid is not looking at other kids. You don't see what's going on between them. So it is that whole mental health package there to make sure that's not forgotten is really, really important. And I think those are some things to keep in mind. Many more, of course. But if I had to choose those, these will be three that are

super important and urgent. Over.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Okay. Georges, what do you think are the key things that should be put in place except for pedagogy which is what we are talking about? (Speaking in a non-English language)

>> (Speaking in a non-English language).

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: So the pedagogy is something that comes from the state level. Is the final state.

>> (Speaking in a non-English language).

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: In France it is very complicated to move the lines because state in France everything is centralized. So the state decides. For this case for the pedagogy that's the same story. So pedagogy is decided by state.

>> (Speaking in a non-English language).

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Right.

>> (Speaking in a non-English language).

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: For George it is very complicated because he is in a very fragile, very easy community to work and he is confronted with Government in this case which is not agile at all. And with unions that are very -- very blocked in a way. But everyone is starting to have a conscience that there are something that needs to move. Okay. All right. Fair enough. That works.

Thank you very much for that.

In terms of -- are there in countries, Jelena, for example, in your country, have governments started thinking about -- there's obviously the ICT policy for general for the Government. And there is ICT policies for education which are specific, right? Which integrate devices, which will integrate teacher training and everything else. Have the governments that we are representing here, have they already started working on the ICT for education or are you more still at the ICT high level Governmental plan at the moment?

>> Okay. So at the moment we have new Government after 30 years of old Government. So some things are changing. And it is -- it is slowing the progress. But I can -- I can talk about a previous period. And yes, there were some global politics about ICT, and it was under I think Ministry of Public Government or something like that. But Ministry of Education, we were separated of them on some way. So we -- we developed ICT using and infrastructure and everything needs -- since the 2004 year.

And since then we started with a huge project of equipments of schools. We have Internet in every schools. So every school in Montenegro even in the rural places are powered with the Internet, et cetera, et cetera. So we do more than ten years on some ways separated the Ministry of Education. And we have that -- we have those information systems and all others.

Also when talking about digital skills of the candidate, I'm talking about

educations. Maybe not I'm not the right person because I'm coming from ministry and coming from the Department of ICT. You know, my main job is information systems. And in Montenegro people who think about teaching curriculums are from the Bureau for Education and Center for Vocational Education. So they think about that. They think about education programs, et cetera.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Okay. Thank you very much for that. Can I ask you Nina, from -- and that's just from a UNICEF perspective, how do you work with policymakers within the Government? I think that might be interesting actually to share also with the people here. Is there a way that they can relate with, can work with you on things or maybe you work together with a lot of these people?

>> Yes, you know how these things go. It is all about the history of having been in the country and building relationships of trust over the years. So that's how it ends up happening. So there is -- because we have presence in all the countries in -- in all countries of the region we tend to have more of a chance to have had a whole bunch of conversations about adapting influencing curriculum development, whatever. So but there are some examples where you actually achieve certain things by demonstration of what works. So there are good examples are sometimes these training programs that start out as an out-of-school initiative that is like okay, whatever. Let them do whatever they want to do, these guys. It ends up like innovation lab. And I think that Montenegro has one for sure. Kosovo has one and Macedonia has one. They start these labs and whatever, it sounds good.

When you bring the young people together and they show their projects and their process of how they learn certain things through that, then in some cases you have ministries of education saying oh, we want to offer that to everyone. We have cases in several countries where some of these started out as an innovation lab, they are starting to get mainstreamed in to the education system because it is a way of learning certain skills, using the methodology that is not the antiquated ex-kind of methodology, but teaching some of these skills that can be digital skills but also teamwork, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, all these things that are a part of the digital skills.

We don't do enough as a region for Eastern Europe, Central Asia, is the whole issue of Artificial Intelligence and these more complex things partly because we still have a situation in Central Asia where the labor force is too cheap. There is less of a perception that it is urgent. But in places -- but in places where people are leaving and looking for other jobs and exiting from the country, that's true for the Western Balkans, this desire to leave it is really starting -- you enter from that perspective. You are losing your young people they are all searching for jobs elsewhere. What are you going to do to make sure they have a better future and can build a business in

their own countries, entrepreneurial skills. And it is a long process developing these.

There is a general hesitance to trust anything. I think COVID showed that. There is at least one thing that COVID showed that this can happen at a pace that nobody expected. There is a generational issue, oftentimes a lack of understanding of how changes can happen and how profound they are and how much of a risk there is if you don't act in time and start to prepare your country for it. But most politicians think in most terms funds. Working slowly is the only solution and bringing them to seminars like this. Over.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Yeah, on the other hand, we are not that many in the seminar. One of the things that we are facing is people are sitting in front of their Zoom half a day, maybe even full day and getting to a stage where digital is really nice but...for example, I'm dreaming of traveling just because we haven't been able to join. The Netherlands have joined us because you had a meeting a little bit later. We were talking about education and skills development and mainly in this case also aligning skills with industry which is more of your area in this case. What would you recommend to a Government as an implementation, a very practical one? And we don't have a lot of time left. So it is going to be a short one.

>> I don't -- I would recommend don't look at skills, the IT skills, the digital skills but look at market skills and the jobs he or she has done. And then -- and because it is rescaling and upscaling. And we forget in the professional world that 40% is really digital. 60% is digital related to the vertical market to management, to business goals. And if they understand the business rules, if they understand management rules, if they understand how to behave in an organization and they are able to read, that's important.

And then they can learn a digital language or digital skills, and continue and be very useful in an organization. Start not with I need a programmer or a developer. No, start with who does understand logistics. Who does understand data. Who does understand the --

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: So you are saying the first competency is your competency let's say your studies and your second is we will digitalize at the second stage?

>> No only your study. Yes, that's giving the level. So if you -- but your working experience in a certain area, in a certain branch, in a certain vertical market or in a certain silo. So logistics, HR whatever. If you have HR experience, you can add HR digital tools.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Understood. Okay. Okay. Thank you very much. Are there any because we are going to the end of this session? First of all, I would like to thank you for your time. We will do a small recap just after this before we close the whole session at 4 o'clock. Is there anything that you would like to add, comment that you think should be

taken away that would should have been shared in the larger sessions?

>> I think that the bigger picture politics around this is really important. And I think that the piece that is making everybody nervous is the chances of unrest as a result of all the -- of all the difficulties that are happening now between COVID and digitalization, loss of jobs, et cetera, and the shift in the economy. I think that I have never seen the EU as nervous as it is now to make sure that there are opportunities for young people and this is a moment to start seeing how do we push for change and do it in a way that everybody benefits.

>> Perhaps I can add management leadership doesn't understand digital and put it not on the agenda but add the capacity, ITU, UNICEF, UNESCO, whatever, at the top. Really at the top level have to push digital skills for economic growth that's -- that's the main thing. If they don't put it on the agenda, if they don't follow, then it's --

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: It is complicated to get everyone else. True. Absolutely. Thank you very much for that. AnaMaria, we are going to go back in to the rooms. Where has AnaMaria gone?

>> Thank you for chairing and moderating this session.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: We'll see how it goes. It is hard to moderate a group as diverse as this. We will be in touch. We have been working on the assessment for the nine countries. And apart from that obviously I run the digital skills foundation. So we do digital inclusion and courses and everything else. And we do mainly teacher training. If you want to download the manual on the site. It has been given to lots of countries in Africa and they are using it on a daily basis. Because the main thing that has come back from teachers there is so much information out there. That they don't know where to start. So what we've done is we we've grabbed Intel teach. We have put everything in to one manual which gives you basic outlines to start. And when you get your complete training afterwards with the training provider, with Government at least it gives you some kind of Guidelines to start. That's a Guideline for you to start. Thank you very much. And we are going back it in to the rooms. Let me see --

>> It says in 13 minutes.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: No, no. We are finishing this. They set it up a bit later.

>> Yes, it is right now. Actually 3:30 they said.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: So they wanted to go back at 3:30. I wanted to make sure we kept to time because we are having a little bit of time issues today.

>> Where you are talking about is that on your side or on the side of digital skills?

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: Digital skills. Digitalskillsfoundation.org, if you go in to that site we have the digitalskillsfoundation.org and you go on to the education. And after that you can download the manual directly.

>> Okay. Thank you.
>> Thanks.
>> That's useful.
>> Thank you all.
>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: We are all going back in to the room.
>> Thank you.
>> JOHN GLASSEY: We did have some technical issues and we mainly heard from Moldova and Albania. Some important points raised particularly about policies for ensuring -- they have carried out a 2019 assessment. Though put a lot of work in to promoting entrepreneurship and there is an IT, an IT part where the taxes are as low as 7% in -- we did have some connectivity issues. I did a short presentation on addictiveness of mobile technologies, how we feel we have a vibrating in our pocket but it is not vibrating. But young people have low responses to digital devices. So the -- it is a very important point about safeguarding young people, particularly when a vast majority of the time spent on gaming and social media and overall ICT for education we've seen an uptake in online and blending learning.

In Albania they are going back to school. They have been back at school and they have much more of a blended learning strategy. But admittedly the country is now from the Prime Minister's office, from the Ministry of Education starting to devise a wider ICT for education policy that brings in online learning and blended learning in the pedagogies required online. And equally in Moldova they are looking at that. But in Moldova they don't have a precise time for the reopening of schools. And there is obviously concern about the supervisory role of parents, especially for young kids at home while doing online learning. And overall, the -- the countries, they have adopted and they are working on the ITU's digital assessment framework, digital skills framework, use of assessment and the digital skills toolkit and these are highly valuable to the countries. And they will be working more to provide more feedback on those. A lot of work to be done.

We had more attendees including from the likes of Bulgaria and Georgia but unfortunately we had a few technical issues. So I think we can safely say in this new world, in this COVID world that the rescaling that we all require still needs quite a bit of work and our rescaling both from a human level and from a technological level. So thank you very much, AnaMaria.

>> ANAMARIA MESHKURTI: Thank you, John. This is really great. And we can hear from the second group that was led by Annemijn for their outcomes. You are muted.

>> ANNEMIJN PERRIN: You are right. First of all, I had a very interesting group. It was very varied. We had people from France, North Macedonia, Montenegro, UNICEF was there. It was kind of a different dynamic. We can't do specific to countries, but we had a bigger picture more focused on education and also explaining what is happening in the

countries because the challenges for many of the countries have been the same which is connectivity, devices, teachers, uptake of digital skills but also what they have said is that the uptake has been very fast.

So in certain countries so for, for example, in North Macedonia and also Montenegro it has been ten years that people have been involved in digital and Microsoft has been put in place, and in this case in the space of a month the uptake was taking already ten years was done and everyone was focused and doing things and having everything on the go. So that's been a very positive outcome of the COVID situation.

The bigger picture is in politics. It is generally as we said Europe is uneasy at the moment around unrest issues. We need to create opportunities for young people. We need to make sure that their skills are aligned with industry and to make sure we can get that as a focus to make sure that young people have a future because if that's not the case that's not going to help.

We said that a skills alignment with industry is not just about digital skills. It is also about -- it is about 40% digital skills but 60% are all related to other things. Those 60% are really important. We have gone in to this COVID mode where everything has gone digital and we do everything digital. And we don't think about the rest. Wholistic approach, for the marginalized people to avoid skills and job gap. It is great to have people having digital skills but for what purpose. What are they going to do with them? What jobs align with industry? Within the policymakers the industry alignment with Government is really important, to understand which industry needs what kind of competencies and what needs to be developed. And it is not only about digital. The biggest change has obviously been around teachers and students that were -- at least in very noticeable for everyone. Teachers who are now supposed to guide a student to learn is very much individualized. It is individualized learning and how do you manage a classroom with 30 kids in a class and you don't see them face to face. And you don't know how to manage them face to face or you don't know how to manage them online in this space.

The other thing that has been mentioned is that you have devices. So a lot of the people have devices and even countries like France will have devices. And the kids will have a phone. How do you learn from a phone? How do you make kids learn by themselves? To focus on innovation and move by themselves for things that they want to do. So that is the other area. And the fast -- the mental health issue, which is the -- that's not only education. It is civil service. It is citizens at large. Everyone has -- there has been a large shift in mental health. A lot of people being depressed. Don't know where they are going. Futures are not always clear and everything else.

So mental health and well-being is a shift to know how students are doing, but how your employees are doing. How your employers are doing.

And how your civil servants are doing and how they focus. Those kinds of things are very much in to this space. And I think that the biggest thing is the skills alignment of jobs and education because education just for the sake of education which is what we have done in many countries because it is important to have knowledge. And I agree it is important to have knowledge. But it is also important to have a job and a future. So that is kind of what we are coming out of. So I would like to thank you very much, my panelists. It was very nice to have you on board. Thank you.

>> ANAMARIA MESHKURTI: Thank you. Thank you, everyone, who joined the breakout sessions and active in those. And it is very nice to see that we are discussing digital skills in a digital platform. And now I have the pleasure to give the floor to the head of Europe office of ITU, Mr. Jaroslaw Ponder, to close this great day.

>> JAROSLAW PONDER: Thank you very much, Ana, and thank you very much to all of you for staying and making this day so special.

We learned a lot and most probably you have learned as well, you exchanged a lot between each other but also you shared very, very valuable information with those who are trying to support the countries in their endeavor of advancing digital skills, development efforts of the countries. ITU will continue to dedicate efforts in promotion and support in the case of the digital skills development strategies and programs together with the other partners. And this is very important for us that this is an open call for joining the forces. And we already -- we have already joined the forces with many of those who joined today this meeting.

So thank you very much to all of them. And all of you who were today with you. Also let me thank Annemijn and John and Ana for their efforts and moderations for the session. My special thanks are going to them for curating the program of this meeting and also proposing quite interesting breakout discussions which introduce a little bit more of dynamics in to the regular way of proceeding of such a meeting. And I think that all of us, all of you shared the views that this was a very nice exercise at the end of our day.

I invite you also to take a look at the executive summary of the exercise done for the Southeastern Europe which is very broad -- which is on the Web. As I mentioned we are in the discussions with several countries on assessment issues and on the direct assistance to the countries in the field of digital skills as this becomes the top on the agenda of many countries. And just to say this year is very particular for the ITU as we are preparing for the development conference, bringing all economies and all Ministers of ICTs together to set the new agenda for the next four years. And already from both regions which already carried out the regional prioritization we know that the capacity development and digital skills will be on the top of the agenda. So we are paving the way towards the new chapter of the work.

Before I close, let me draw your attention to a series of different activities of our office. Next week we will be learning a lot about the accessibility. Today we've talked about digital skills. But also touched upon in one or two interventions I have heard about the digital skills of the disadvantaged groups including the Persons with Disabilities. And this will be one of the topics which we will be handling during the Accessible Europe 2021 under the presidency of Portugal, presidency of the European countries. We hope that you will be joining us and deliberating on the issues of digital skills and the skills for Persons with Disabilities to ensure the equal opportunities.

So let me thank all of you. Also our captioners and also the IT support for being with us at the moment. And we wish you a great continuation of your journey in the field of the digital skills. And the most important we wish you also an excellent end of the day, a lot of reflections on this, what we have heard during these few hours of our interactions. So thank you very much. And we are looking forward to seeing you and interacting with you in very near future. Thank you very much. And have a nice and safe trip home if you can say so.

>> JOHN GLASSEY: Thank you very much, Jaroslaw. Jaroslaw, I hope we can talk about accessible Europe because, you know, we have a unique program for special needs actually.

>> JAROSLAW PONDER: That's excellent. So we'll make the follow-up discussion.

>> JOHN GLASSEY: We should do it. It is very important. There is a way of dealing with it better than everybody in education. Thank you very much.

>> Thank you all. Bye-bye.

>> JAROSLAW PONDER: Thank you. Bye-bye.

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