



The Global Initiative  
*for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*



**Right to Education**

**50th session of the Human Rights Council  
Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the right to education on his report on  
impacts of digitalisation on the right to education  
Oral Statement by the Global initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (GI-ESCR) and  
the Right to Education Initiative (RTE)**

Thank you, Mr. President.

We welcome the report by the Special Rapporteur on the impacts of digitalisation on the right to education.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how reliance on digital education, in particular distance digital education, may exacerbate rather than reduce existing inequalities. We strongly support the Special Rapporteur's recommendation that before being introduced, digital technologies in education should always be measured against their potential human rights impacts.

We reiterate the Special Rapporteur's observation that the digitalisation of education is closely related to the engagement of private actors, and therefore risks leading to greater commercialisation of education. Our work in the past decade has shown that increased commercialisation may seriously jeopardise the realisation of the right to free, quality public education for all and associated human rights.

To ensure the beneficiaries of the digitalisation of education are learners and teachers, the developments in digital education must be adequately regulated and monitored by States, and ensure equal access for all, with a particular attention to vulnerable, marginalised and disadvantaged groups.

In accordance with the Abidjan Principles, States should adopt rules and regulations for the private sector in addressing the risk of increased privatisation through digitalisation processes. These rules and regulations should also apply where partnerships are developed between public education and private actors, for the design and implementation of digital education.

Finally, we thank the Special Rapporteur for her efforts and dedication to further advance the realisation of the right to education for all during her mandate.

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