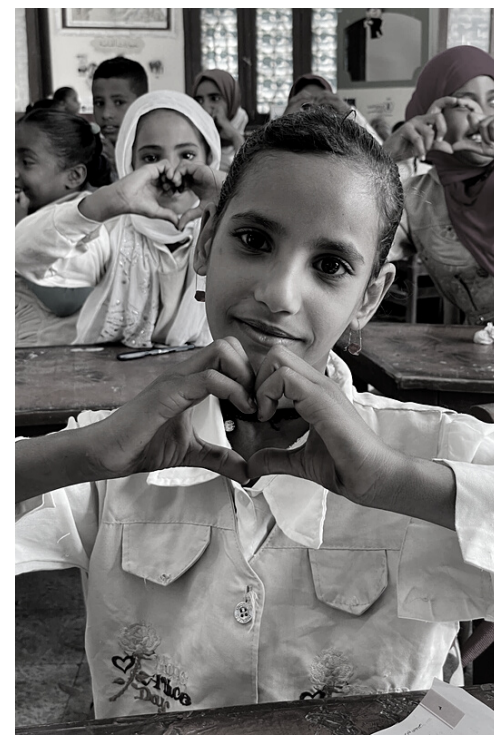مبادرات محمد بن راشد آل مكتوم العالمية
Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives

المدرسة الرقمية **The Digital School**

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

INCLUSIVE AND QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

UNITED NATIONS TRANSFORMING EDUCATION SUMMIT 2022

Transforming Education Summit
19 September 2022

1. The Digital School commitment

The Digital School drives the frontiers of digital learning to empower underserved communities towards a brighter future, serving the marginalised and deprived at the global level through innovative teaching and learning.

Through our global programmes, we are committed to supporting the 2030 Agenda, and in particular, the targets of SDG 04: inclusive and quality education for all to promote lifelong learning.

By 2026, we aim to have created measurable learning impacts for over 1 million of the world's most marginalised and underserved learners.

The outcomes of the Digital School's programmes will also indirectly contribute to the goals of SDG 08: an educated and skilled workforce, sustained economic growth and higher levels of productivity; and SDG 17: global partnerships for sustainable development.

2. The global challenge

Our world is experiencing a global learning crisis that is depriving hundreds of millions of children, young people, and adults of their right to quality education. The continuing COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of effective measures for learning recovery risks turning this crisis into a generational catastrophe, especially for marginalized and vulnerable groups.

The learning crisis is part of a broader challenge relating to the ability of conventional education systems to deliver the knowledge, skills and outlooks needed for children, young people and adults to excel in today's world and contribute to sustainable, healthy and peaceful futures.

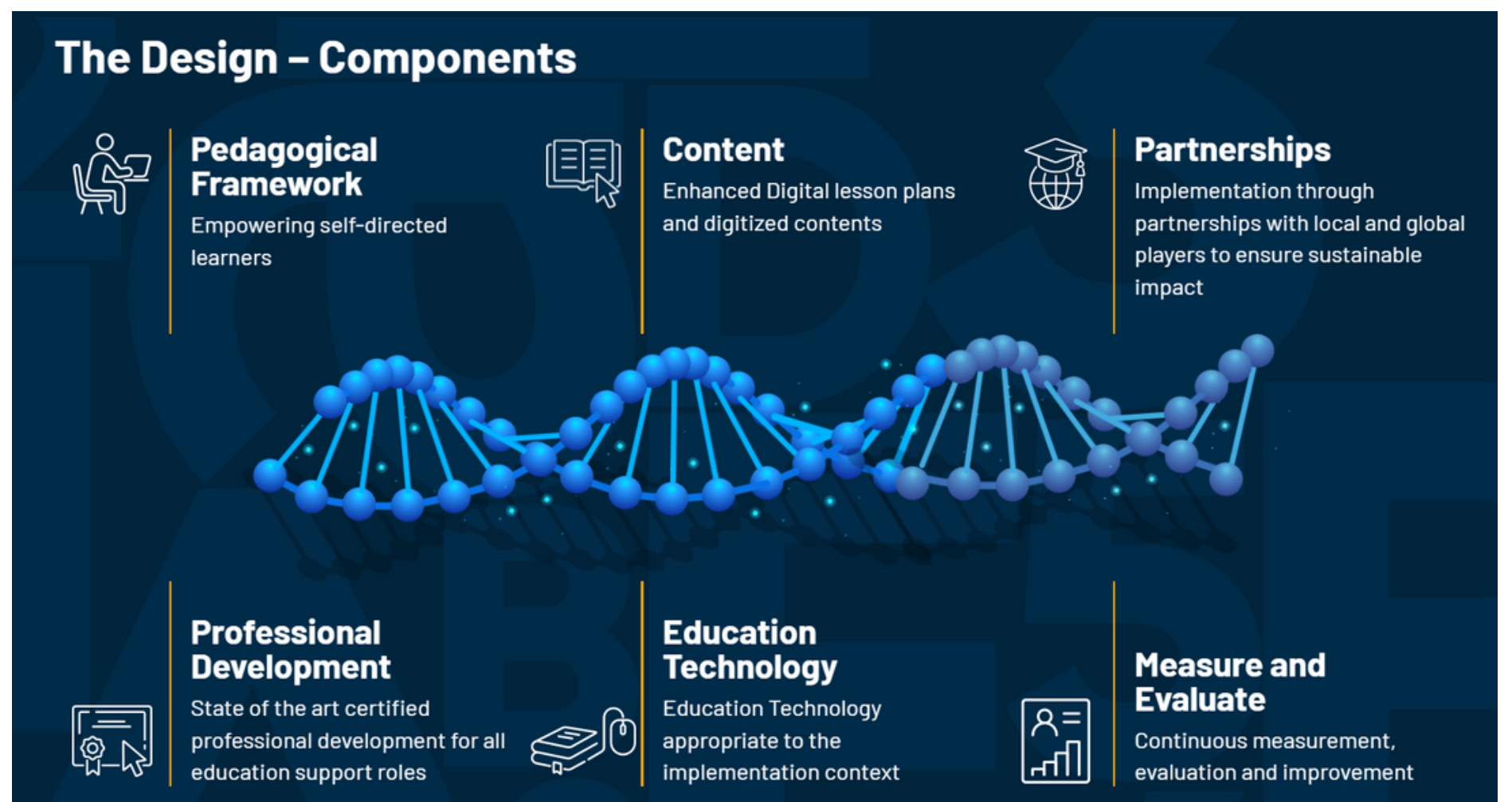*Concept Note, Transforming Education Summit, 2022*

3. Our mission and methodology

An initiative from Mohamed bin Rashid's Global Initiatives (MBRGI), the Digital School is a global, integrated online and hybrid school targeting those in marginalised and hard-to-reach communities: students who may not have had equitable access to educational opportunities, and communities facing educational, socio-economic and political challenges.

Our mission is to provide contextualized and validated education opportunities guided by innovative digital ecosystems and partnerships to improve access and learning outcomes.

3.1. Holistic approach to quality education

Our definition of digital learning is holistic and represented in a Learning Design model which encompasses six key components:

4. How we support Action Track 4

As digital Learning and transformation is at the heart of the Digital School's vision and mission, we are most clearly aligned with **Action Track 4: digital learning and transformation.**

It is guided by three clear principles, originally outlined in the 2021 Rewired Global Declaration on Connectivity in Education:

- Principle 1: Focus on marginalised learners
- Principle 2: Free, high-quality digital education content
- Principle 3: Pedagogical innovation and change

These principles are central to the achievement of the Digital School's vision for providing our students with the learning opportunities they deserve.

4.1 Principle 1: Focus on marginalised learners

The Digital School recognises that its learners' requirements are many and diverse, with widely varying needs, contexts and life circumstances. We place our learners at the centre of our strategy, aiming to tailor and personalise the learning experience to distinct requirements. We aim to:

1. Understand individual student learning requirements
2. Provide insight into life goals and learning motivation
3. Understand context and environmental factors that affect learning
4. Design appropriate and personalised learning paths
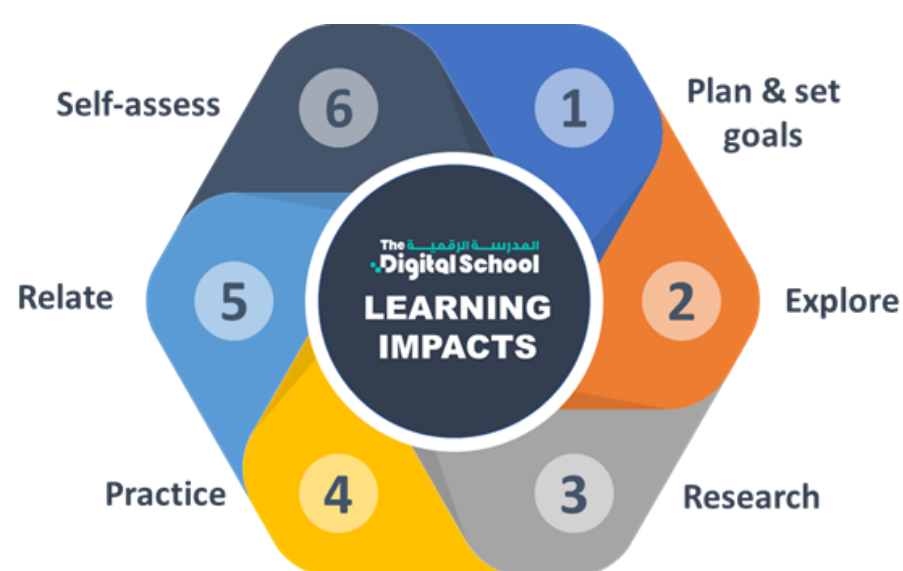5. Understand what successful outcomes may look like

4.2 Principle 2: Free, high-quality digital education content

Our content strategy focuses on core learning and key subjects in local curricula. The initial priority is STEM, concentrating on math and science.

The Digital School Content Quality Framework provides a benchmark of quality for all our lessons and digital learning content. Our quality standards ensure that our content has been quality assessed to meet the needs of our educators and students.

4.3 Principle 3: Pedagogical innovation

The Digital School pedagogical model aims to develop students' agency and self-directed learning skills. It blends a range of well-established, research-based, student-centred learning practices, simplified into six steps:

5. How we support the remaining SDG04 action tracks

Through its holistic approach, and unique learning design model, the Digital School is also well positioned to embed and support the other identified SDG 04 action tracks.

5.1 Action Track 1: Safe and equitable learning space

Working with our implementation partners, the Digital School aims to provide safe and inclusive learning spaces designed to accommodate the ways in which lessons may be delivered, and classes managed.

Through our physical learning spaces, the Digital School provides learning opportunities for students who live in remote areas and who have little or no access to schooling, overcoming challenges such as high distance to schooling, or domestic or contextual pressures which prevent regular school attendance.

5.2 Action Track 2: Resilience, social and emotional development

The Digital School curriculum plan, pedagogy model and professional development program all prioritise students' development of social-emotional skills, and as we evolve, these will rapidly become more embedded to enhance the quality education we provide:

- Within the pedagogy model, the learner's development of agency, self-directed learning, and associated skills and attitudes are central.
- Within the curriculum plan, social-emotional learning content will be developed and made available through the LMS.
- Within Level 3 of the professional development system, facilitators, teachers and leaders will learn how to implement the pedagogical model, and how to support students to become confident, independent, self-directed learners.

5.3 Action Track 3: the continuing professional development of the teaching workforce

We understand that success in achieving global impacts for our learners depends on developing a community of confident, skilled and dedicated educational practitioners, who can share best practices and discuss applications with their peers at a worldwide level, through the technology provided by the Digital School.

The Digital School has partnered with Arizona State University, a leading and globally recognized accreditation partner, to provide a structured program of online professional development courses to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

5.4 Action Track 5: Sustainable financing

The Digital School aims to achieve economies of scale and sustainability through coordinated and targeted partnerships with sponsors and funding partners. Through these partnerships we aim to help our stakeholders create wider impacts through digital learning and gain global recognition by association with Digital School strategic initiatives.

6. Ensuring success and sustainability

To ensure that we achieve our ambitions, the Digital School is embedding measurement and evaluation as a central feature of its development and operations. The most fundamental measure of Digital School success is the impact we have on our students' learning, and in order to facilitate that learning, we will also critically evaluate and measure all elements of the Digital School –strategic and operational.

We aim to build on the knowledge, experience and innovation that has proven effectiveness, and create a vision and approach that contributes to widening learning opportunities.

The Digital School aims to be affordable, scalable and sustainable, through coordinated and targeted partnerships with international NGOs, funding organisations and global players. Through these partnerships, we are charting new milestones for the future of global education for those who need it most.