UNITED NATIONS
SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

MESSAGE ON UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE DAY
12 December2021

As we enter the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we must urgently strengthen our health systems to ensure they are equitable, resilient and capable of meeting everyone's needs, including for their mental health.

COVID-19 has reached nearly every part of the world, but health coverage still has not. The shockwaves of this health emergency are hitting hardest those countries that lack health systems capable of providing quality, affordable care for all.

If we are to reach our goal of achieving universal health coverage by 2030, we must commit to investing in and scaling up proven solutions. This means making more and smarter investments in the foundations of health systems, with an emphasis on primary health care, essential services and marginalized populations.

The best insurance for resilient economies and communities, as well as pandemic preparedness for the future is strengthening health systems before a crisis arrives. The unequal distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in the past year has been a global moral failure. We must learn from this experience. The pandemic will not end for any country until it ends for every country.

On this Universal Health Coverage Day, let us join the commitment to end the COVID-19 pandemic and build a healthier, safer future for all by investing in health systems that leave no one behind.

Public Private Dialogue on FMD Control Strategy held in Sindh

Growth for Rural Advancement & Sustainable Progress (GRASP), a European Union funded project to support agricultural and livestock SMEs, held a Public Private Dialogue (PPD) on Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) jointly with the Livestock department, Government of Sindh. Livestock experts, academia from the Sindh Agricultural University, civil society organizations, and livestock-based SME experts attended the PPD.

Attending the event, Minister Livestock and Fisheries Department Mr. Abdul Bari Pitafi said that it was vital that the Slaughter Act be reviewed, as the sector contributes immensely to the GDP. FMD is controlled through accurate and quick diagnosis, enabling legal framework, and timely involvement of stakeholders are the solution to curtail the spread of the disease. A range of legislation on animal health is under process, including animal rights and benefiting women who are the main livestock breeders.

FMD is one of the most infectious disease of cattle in Pakistan, which results in annual loss of more than $349 million, resulting in an annual loss of USD 692.884 million, according to the 2018 livestock population data. It is also the primary reason of export restriction of livestock products. GRASP is working to promote public and private stakeholders' ownership, coordination, and involvement in the implementation of the FMD control strategy. DG Sindh Institute of Animal Health Livestock Department said that Sindh government is introducing risk-based strategic vaccination for FMD hotspot, where Karachi could be declared as FMD control zone.

Mehmood Nawaz Shah Vice President Sindh Abadgar Board elaborated how developing Sindh's FMD Control Strategy if harmonized with National FMD Control Program can curtail spread of the disease and take measures for the enactment of animal health regulation for Sindh harmonized with the Federal Animal Health Law to resolve the issue.

GRASP is a six-year project designed to reduce poverty in Pakistan by strengthening small-scale agribusinesses. GRASP is implemented by the International Trade Centre – the joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization – with active participation from local partners.

UNICEF

PRESS RELEASE

UNICEF to launch UN's largest-ever NFT collection to mark 75th anniversary

On the eve of UNICEF's 75th anniversary, the UN children's agency advances innovative fundraising with UN's first line of data-driven digital tokens launched globally in support of school connectivity.

NEW YORK, 10 December 2021 – UNICEF plans to sell 1,000 data-driven non-fungible tokens (NFTs), the UN's largest-ever NFT collection to date, the UN children's agency said today ahead of commemorations of UNICEF's 75th anniversary.

A portion of the NFTs will be digitally watermarked to commemorate the agency's 75th year, while others will be connected to events in early 2022. These digital collectibles will be sold directly by UNICEF, using the Ethereum blockchain.

"For 75 years, UNICEF has been a driving force for change in children's lives. And as we look back at our history, we must also look forward and seize every opportunity to take innovative actions to secure the future for our children," said UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore. "We have to use every tool in the toolbox if we are to reach more children and invest in a better world – including through new ways of fundraising and financing – and the launch of UNICEF's first global collection of data driven digital tokens will directly support our global efforts to close the digital divide and help give every young person access to the Internet."

Proceeds from this auction and other NFT fundraising scheduled for late 2021 and early 2022 will go towards promising initiatives of the UNICEF Global Office of Innovation, including Giga, a UNICEF and ITU initiative to connect every school in the world to the Internet using new technologies like low-earth orbit satellites, machine learning, and blockchain. To date, Giga has connected over 3,000 schools benefitting over 700,000 children, and mapped over 1 million more to help target investment in connectivity.

In honour of its 75th anniversary, for this NFT collection, UNICEF partnered with data visualization scientist and artist Nadieh Bremer to create a visually striking collection of NFTs called Patchwork Kingdoms. Each piece has a world 'above' representing connected schools, and a world 'below' for unconnected schools. The squares in the hidden pale 'reflection' city represent a lack of connectivity contrasted with the 'vibrant' connectivity in schools in the upright city. The various colours show how many children are still in need of Internet access. The artwork is inspired by Giga's live maps on school connectivity.

The collection of NFTs incorporates data on more than 280,000 schools from 21 countries, and each artwork represents a subset of these schools.

"My most fundamental source of inspiration was the sense of wonder we experience during our childhood," said Bremer. "The live maps from Giga guided my artwork, using its data to create 1,000 tiny fantasy art pieces while subtly trying to convey the importance of the project; there are still many schools not connected to the Internet, and many children excluded."

Each Patchwork Kingdom is a modern time capsule, meaningfully capturing where children are currently connected and where children are still in need of life-changing access to the Internet and all that connectivity offers for their wellbeing and opportunity. Through a variety of initiatives of the UNICEF Office of Innovation, alongside many public and private partners, UNICEF seeks to capitalize on the potential of the digital revolution for every child to thrive, including a variety of high-profile priorities such as mental health and climate change. As these specific NFTs are bought, collectors will own a snapshot of Giga's progress at this point in time. Further developments to the NFTs will include the ability to collect individual schools, connect Patchwork Kingdoms, and observe the network of cityscapes grow as Giga evolves and more schools and communities are connected.

"There are more than 1.3 billion children disconnected in an increasingly connected world. We cannot allow these children to grow up on an information island, cut off from the wealth of information and opportunities available online, and with fewer resources to learn and grow," said Fore. "The Office of Innovation is working to close the digital divide through innovations and technology across the world."

In addition to being the UN's largest known NFT collection, it is believed this marks the first time the UN has created NFTs based on data. The collection is supported by the Ethereum Foundation, Snowcrash, CfC St. Moritz, and Metagood.

For 75 years, UNICEF has been working for child rights and the wellbeing of every child. From short-term relief to long-term development programmes, UNICEF works around the world to save children's lives, protect their rights, and secure their futures.
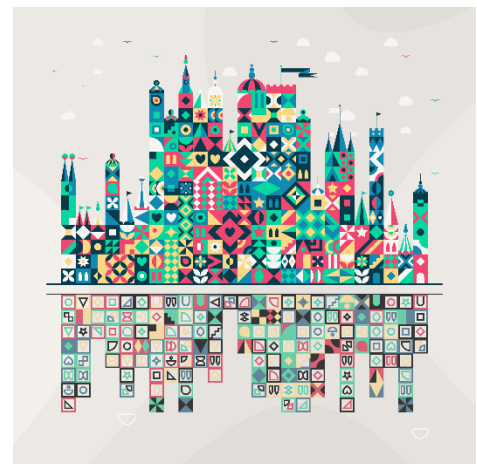
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Notes to editors:

An NFT is a unique digital token in an original and non-interchangeable digital asset record stored on the blockchain network. The ownership of the NFT token is attributed to the crypto address where the token is located, and data such as price, transaction history and ownership are forever stored and accessible on the blockchain network.

These NFTs will be on sale at www.unicef.fr/giga. More information will be available on Twitter at @gigaconnect

Download multimedia content here.

About UNICEF
UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across

Pictured: 1 of the 1,000 'Patchwork Kingdom' NFTs designed based on Giga's global data on school connectivity.

more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone.

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About UNICEF Office of Innovation

UNICEF Global Office of Innovation is located in Stockholm, Sweden. Alongside young people, public partners, and private industry, we are committed to collective design for equitable social impact by bringing together human and financial capital alongside practical and concrete innovative solutions.

One of UNICEF's key innovation initiatives, Giga is a partnership between UNICEF and ITU working to connect every school in the world to the Internet by 2030. Working with 19 countries (and growing), the initiative maps school connectivity in real-time, advises on appropriate technical solutions, creates models for innovative financing, and supports governments contracting for school connectivity.

For more information please contact:

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