

TOMORROWREADY

Background Note for the Executive Board

Special Focus Session on Innovation for Children and Young People

UNICEF 2018 Second Regular Session of the Executive Board

12 September 2018, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Conference Room 1, United Nations Headquarters, New York

1. Concept and Goals of the Special Focus Session

- Promote a broad understanding among the Executive Board around emerging frontier technologies, and an acknowledgment of the challenges and opportunities they present for children;
- Support enabling environments to explore, seize and scale up technologies that can help to improve children’s lives;
- Share insights based on the contexts set by the two guest speakers – around frontier technologies and their impact on the world and on children;

2. Run of Show

The Special Focus Session will include two panellists with different focus areas and areas of expertise, and a moderator. The moderator will guide the discussion by asking questions of the panellists, followed by facilitated discussions between the panellists and the members of the Board.

Through a moderated discussion on frontier technologies, the **Board will engage with the two speakers around emerging technologies** and consider how best to embrace these rapid changes to benefit children. The two speakers will bring different perspectives to the discussion: one offering insights on global trends in frontier technology; and the other discussing experiences in applying technology to specific contexts or businesses. The moderator will open and guide the discussion between the two speakers to elicit a picture of the global trends and to allow them to share how they have used technology in their respective contexts.

After the guided discussion between the two speakers, the **moderator will facilitate questions from the Board to the two panellists**. The Special Focus Session aims to engage the members of the Board for their perspectives, opinions and insights on how to enable practical applications of technology for the benefit of children -- with support from the two experts who have direct experience with emerging technologies. UNICEF is not promoting the pursuit or adoption of any specific emerging technology. The session will illustrate how UNICEF proactively embraces “what’s coming tomorrow”, and that the organization wants to continue working with the Board – both to keep pace with innovation and to apply its most promising opportunities for the benefit of *all* children.

3. Questions to be posed by the Moderator to the Board

1. What are the changing forces or trends that will have a large impact on children?
2. What can Governments and partners do differently using data to get real-time insights on children and young people?
3. How can Governments and international organizations amplify the voices of young people around the world?

4. Guest Speaker and Moderator Bios

HANNAH GODEFA (Moderator), Education Advocate and Student, Duke University

Hannah Godefa is an intern with the Associate Vice Provost of Digital Education for Duke Innovation and Education and helps to facilitate online course-building. Godefa is active in dialogues about innovation and advocates for education and girls' empowerment. On 11 October 2013, Godefa made an impressive speech at the International Day of the Girl Child event at UNICEF Headquarters on "Innovating for Girls' Education". On 20 November 2014, she moderated the discussion on innovation during a UNICEF *State of the World's Children* report event.



NICHOLAS THOMPSON (Guest Speaker), Editor-in-Chief, WIRED

As the Editor-in-Chief of *WIRED* – one of the most prestigious positions in the world of technology – Nicholas Thompson is staking out a bold, optimistic vision for covering, and responding to, the changing realm of digital culture. From artificial intelligence to entertainment, privacy to social media, ethics to war, Thompson leads the news cycle as a quick-witted keynote speaker and, as a provocative host, he champions the ways in which technology can enhance our lives.



STEPHANIE SY (Guest Speaker), CEO and Lead Data Scientist, Thinking Machines Data Science

Stephanie Sy is the woman behind the start-up Thinking Machines, a data science firm that harnesses and analyses data. The company works with brands and the corporate sector to help them to “discover insights and improve decision-making”. At the same time, it also contributes to the civic sector, academic institutions and Governments, making use of artificial intelligence and machine learning for social good. The company helps to uncover crucial insights for the betterment of society.

