



UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

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Removing the Stigma of Menstruation

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From “digital health education” to Economic empowerment



DallE - “African Girl enjoying trusted Internet on her mobile”

Reality of the Digital Divide



1. Boys have the toys



Dalle - "Boys have the toys"

2. The cost of access



Dalle - "African girl suffering from mobile broadband costs"

Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)

Step 1:



[Source: <https://www.gatesfoundation.org/ideas/digital-public-infrastructure>]

Step 2:



Digital Health Promotion for Everyone: Theory of the Problem

Hypothesis: Free access to (digital) health information and education fosters sustainable development (SDG 3 & SDG 4) as part of a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)

Perpetuated by ...

- “Digital as business”, not as societal task to establish DPI
- Lack of access to health education
- Relative unimportance of preventive health information
- Insufficient knowledge on digital
- Low societal priority girl’s & women’s health
- Political priorities for health
- Lack of policies and adequately funded strategies/plans
- Societies defined gender roles
- Insufficient institutional priority and resource allocation related to women’s issues
- Racism, Sexism, Stigmatisation

Resulting in ...

Digital divide becoming a gender divide, influencing health & economics of girls & women

System deficiencies that uphold the problem ...

Supportive Policy

- Lack of strategic and coordinated policy framework for digital health information and DPI
- Lack of fiscal prioritisation of strategic initiatives to improve access to digital health information

Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

- Lack of efforts and plans for assessment, monitoring and evaluation of cross-cutting digital health education through DPI

Access to Digital Health Information

- Lack of digital infrastructure, including access and devices
- “Costs of access” vs basic needs
- Lack of understanding of benefits from digital information
- Diffuse responsibilities, lack of regulations, priority and investments

Health Information, Education and Promotion

- Lack of culture for & knowledge of digital health information
- Lack of information and accessibility of the information
- Priorities dominated by short-term duties
- Lack of coordination and cross-sectorial benefits

Community Involvement

- Lack of strategic and coordinated use of existing community networks
- Upstream priority & top down models within the health care system
- Lack of mobilisation for & low status of community health
- Lack of local involvement (digital friends) & training of communities

Disparities

- Lacking acknowledgement of gender differences and gender gap
- Insufficient attention to systematic disadvantages (“boys have the toys”)
- Digital exclusion of girls, women, and people with special needs

Compounded by ...

Girls’ & Women’s

- Insufficient knowledge on health
- Lack of health literacy
- Insufficient self-efficacy related to own health outcomes
- Lack of control over their own health
- Misinformation relating to own health
- Lack of adherence to & knowledge of prevention
- Low socio-economic status
- Lack of (digital) economic advances
- Lack of access to sanitation facilities
- Low demand for change of status

Yielding ...

- Shortened school education
- Low personal & economic growth
- Low-status work force (if at all)
- Early pregnancy
- Reproductive complications
- Increased Morbidity & Mortality
- Physical & mental health pathologies
- Mental Wellness

Catalysts for the SDGs - Removing the Stigma of Menstruation



SDG 1.4 Equal access to basic services

SDG 4.A Education facilities for effective learning for all

SDG 5.B Use of enabling technologies

SDG 9.C universal and affordable access

SDG 16.10 ensure public access to information

SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals

Health Information at an InfoSpot



[Source: Christine Holst, UiO]

UiO : Global Health
DigitalGlobalHealth.no



Providing the information through animations

Snapshots from platform, HIV and Cysticercosis animations

[Mwanzo](#)
[Afya](#)
[Kuhusu](#)
[Wasiliana nasi](#)
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Kisababishi ya Tegu



Mnyoo bapa aitwae *Taenia solium*, husababisha binadamu kuugua vibaya sana. Binadamu hupata minyoo hao kwa kula nyama ya nguruwe mbichi au isiyoiva vizuri, yenye malengenge ya minyoo (cysts). Ndani ya utumbo wa binadamu, malengenge hayo hutoka katika nyama na kujishikiza kwenye ukuta wa utumbo na kufanyika minyoo ambao hukua na kutaga mayai.

Dodoso ya Tegu

Tafadhali jaza utafiti kuhusu Tegu

Jinsia yako ni ipi?

☐ A) Me

☐ B) Ke

Je, umewahi kusikia kuhusu minyoo aina ya tegu?

☐ A) Ndio

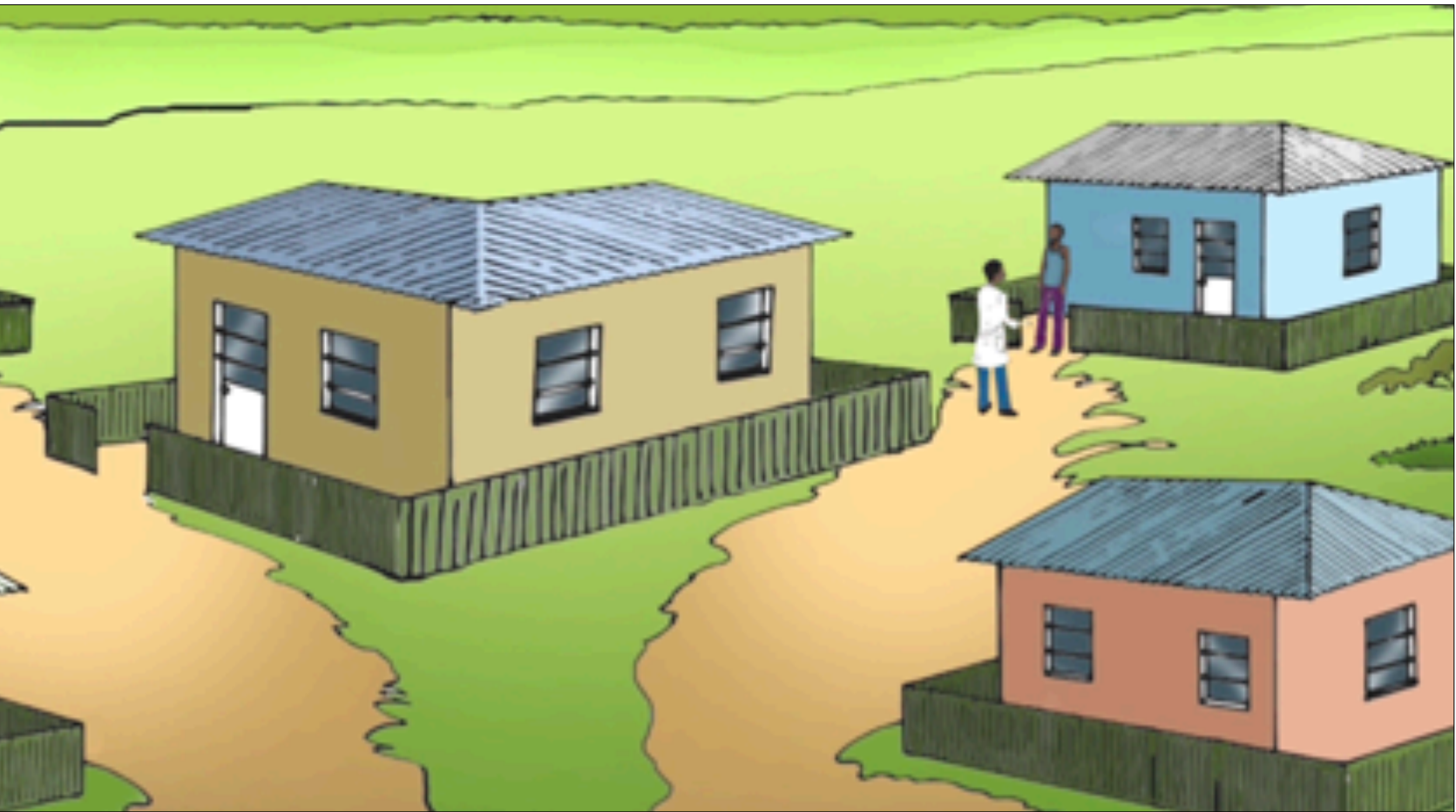
☐ B) Hapana

☐ C) Sijui

Je! Umewahi kusikia kuhusu minyoo ya tegu kwenye wanyama aina ya nguruwe?

☐ A) Ndiyo

☐ B) Hapana



Results: **Knowledge increase** in

Cysticercosis (TSCT) 60%

Tuberculosis 30%

HIV/AIDS 13%

[Source: Christine Holst, UiO (Nov2019)]

Removing the Stigma of Menstruation

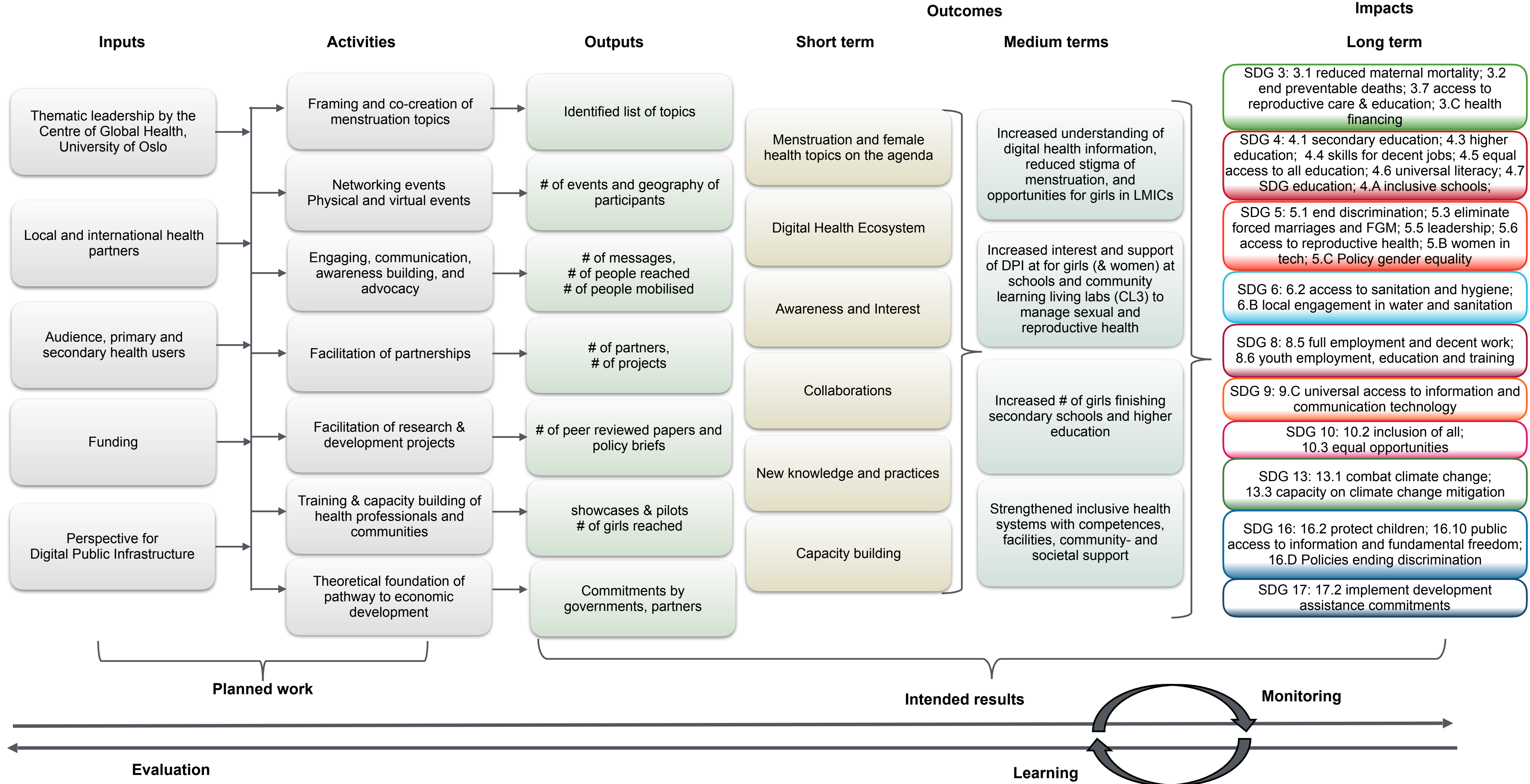
- Theory of change
 - Digital animation
 - Digital Public Infrastructure
 - # girls finishing sec. school
 - reduced child marriage
 - increased earnings
 - Economic development
- *under development*



Figure 1: Scene from Removing the Stigma of Menstruation

<https://iframe.mediadelivery.net/embed/166310/509d7d21-2d3d-420c-ba48-6cf26b4b34b6>

Theory of change for Removing the Stigma of Menstruation



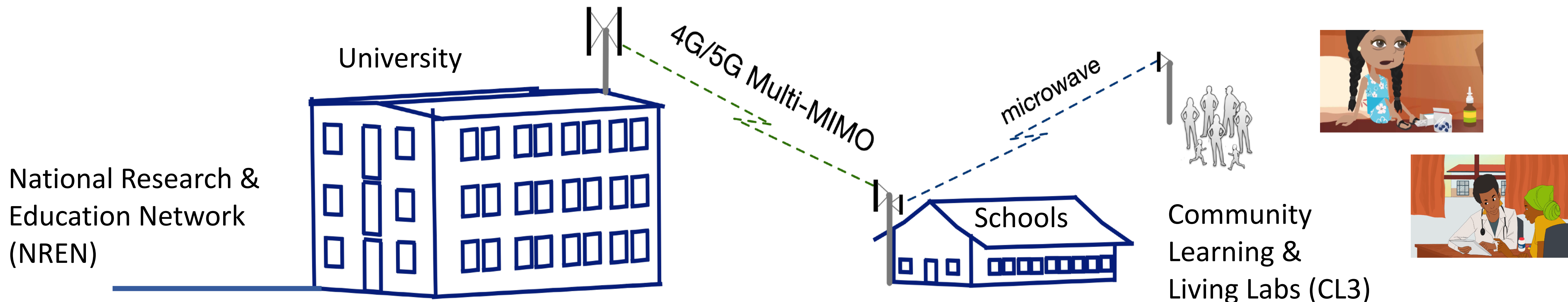
background info

Instantiation of Digital Public Infrastructure

collaboration by

- University to build Regional Competence Centres (RCCs) and connect via NREN and 4G/5G
- Mobile Operators to share infrastructure

- Government to support School Connectivity & CL3
- NGOs to establish digital friends and empower the community



How can we “Connect The Future”?

Specific focus: Girls & Women



World Summit of the Information Society - WSIS 2023



Doreen Bogdan
Secretary General ITU



through
**Community Learning &
Living Labs (CLL3)**