

can't wait to
LEARN.



Can't Wait to Learn

Closing the education gap through technology

Sudan



WAR
child

Education in their hands

Can't Wait to Learn is a proven digital game-based learning model designed with and for children affected by conflict.



It is a curriculum-based, context-specific solution, which brings together the know-how of locally based education stakeholders, such as Ministries of Education, international and community-based organisations alongside international expertise in software development, game development and design.

The result is a self-guided serious gaming format accessed on tablets that takes children through Ministry of Education approved curriculum, providing opportunity for children to access pathways leading

to primary level certification. In this way, Can't Wait to Learn aims to reinforce the education pipeline across informal and formal education, to decrease drop-out rates and encourage transition into formal primary and secondary education. In Sudan, Can't Wait to Learn is helping out of school children – many of whom refugees, displaced or from nomadic communities – gain basic maths and reading skills in informal learning centres.

Above — Child playing Sudan e learning 1-3 game

THE SITUATION

NO SCHOOL
=
NO HOPE FOR
MILLIONS OF
CHILDREN



...OUT OF SCHOOL

Overall, an estimated 3 million children are out of school (from the UNICEF OOSC report Sudan 2016)



FAR FROM HOME...

Over 2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and nearly 1 million asylum seekers and refugees are being hosted across Sudan. 65% of refugees and 61% of IDPs in camps are children.



...AND FAR FROM SCHOOL

Around 1.7 million school age children (4-16 years) need emergency education support, including about 0.8 million IDPs, in addition to returnees, vulnerable host communities and school-age refugees.

THE CHALLENGE

Amongst the challenges to accessing education faced by out of school children in Sudan are:

- School fees and the lack of qualified teachers are the main barriers of access to quality education for refugees and asylum-seekers.
- Existing schools lack sufficient infrastructure to accommodate all school-aged children, and teachers lack adequate teaching materials, while the capacity of parent-teacher associations remains weak. They also don't reach very remote communities.
- Nomadic communities are very conservative and traditionally reluctant to accept the notion of sending children, especially girls, to school



**THEY CAN'T WAIT TO LEARN...
NOW THEY DON'T HAVE TO**

Can't Wait to Learn offers:



Maths and reading curriculum educative game and full instructional model based on Ministry of Education curricula and requirements



A digital user interface that is adapted to context to support motivation and active, self-paced learning



Diagnostics for every learner which can be aggregated according to Ministry and sector requirements



A delivery mechanism that works across resource-constrained environments

Above — Children learning maths and reading in Kassala, using digital tablet desks

The game world is their world...



One of the unique features of the approach is that the software is tailored to the relevant national curriculum requirements and, crucially, **designed with target children** to ensure familiarity.

CWTL offers a local interface that reflects children's reality in both the look and feel of the characters and game design and in the game's storyline, which lowers the threshold for children to engage, particularly if new to technology. Instead of learning to recognize new characters, events and circumstances, children become immersed in a world that reflects their own and focus on math and/or reading.

Above — Part of the Sudan Maths 1-3 game

Digital tablet desks to support learning

In Sudan, the concept pilot identified an unforeseen user need; the lack of classroom furniture compelled children to use their tablets while floor sitting which created posture/comfort issues. Design experts from Sheffield Hallam University have developed a low-cost product that synthesizes the principles of frugal innovation and lean engineering; the digital tablet desk. Thanks to this, children using Can't Wait to Learn can learn in comfort!"



Above — Three of the math game characters (l) Arwa doctor, (m) Yassin engineer, (r) Adam, goat herder
Left — Final farmers scene Sudan Maths
Left below — Child being tested during the second maths study

OPENING UP A WORLD OF LEARNING

Whilst Can't Wait to Learn Sudan Reading games include significant new Arabic language content for which there is a global shortage, there is also extensive demand and support for English language skills to be taught in Sudan from primary school level. Future plans include working with the Sudan National Centre for Curricula and Educational Research and others to develop Can't Wait to Learn games which can help children to learn English through a fun, engaging and curriculum-based approach, which also broadens their global awareness.

EDUCATION FOR ALL

Can't Wait to Learn is designed to be appropriate for both girl and boy children; the Sudan phase II research findings showed that the game promotes a gender balanced learning experience, which stimulates and holds the attention of boys and girls equally. Since it is designed to reach children where they are, Can't Wait to Learn can be taken to children who cannot access learning facilities for reasons of physical disability or discrimination. Children with disabilities participate in consultation workshops, and games are designed to reflect these groups of children as well where possible.

Fast, effective and low-cost ...the results are in

With a rigorous research and learning agenda, including analysis of cost-effectiveness, Can't Wait to Learn has demonstrated improved learning outcomes, which compare favourably with the cost of traditional education.

Results from the most recent research conducted in 2018 - a quasi-experimental study for numeracy and literacy to evaluate the feasibility of using CWTL to teach Arabic reading, alongside the previously-developed numeracy component - show that for both Math and Literacy, children in Can't Wait to Learn and control groups improved between baseline and endline, however **Can't Wait to Learn children improved significantly more: nearly twice as much in maths and almost three times as much in reading.**

Based on the combined research in Sudan to date, **we anticipate children completing the program (grades 1-3 equivalent) with high level learning outcomes in just 2.5 years**, even when taking into account external factors which may negatively influence learning, such as being out of school for harvest, planting or other commitments.

Our research also includes determining the cost of delivering Can't Wait to Learn in comparison with other alternative education approaches. In the small-scale trials conducted so far - which included considerable research costs - the cost per child has been around \$400. **However, plans to go to scale in Sudan would bring this figure down to around \$30.** This would make it cheaper than government schooling; the Sudanese Government spends around \$76 per child.

Research findings for Sudan indicate that Can't Wait to Learn has the potential to improve children's chances of reaching required reading competency levels at a rate **2.7 times faster** than the Government Alternative Learning Program (ALP).



PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCALE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Can't Wait to Learn is managed globally by War Child Holland, and in Sudan started as a partnership between the Ministry of Education, UNICEF, War Child Holland and Ahfad University for Women.

With **positive research results showing that children learn fast and effectively** and suggesting that the model could be empowering, flexible and cost-effective at scale, implementation in Sudan is being transitioned to UNICEF, who are in a unique position to scale up the program across the country, reaching the most marginalized groups, including ethnic minorities and refugees. The partnership puts UNICEF Sudan in the lead at country level in supporting

Above — Working with the Ministry of Education, Khartoum

the Ministry of Education - National Council for Literacy and Adult Education/NCLAE - to adopt the program as part of its policy approach for out of school children, and to expand the program to White Nile, Blue Nile and Kassala states.

With positive results, strong partnerships and active Ministry of Education engagement and support, Can't Wait to Learn is poised to scale up and bring **education to thousands of conflict-affected children in Sudan.**

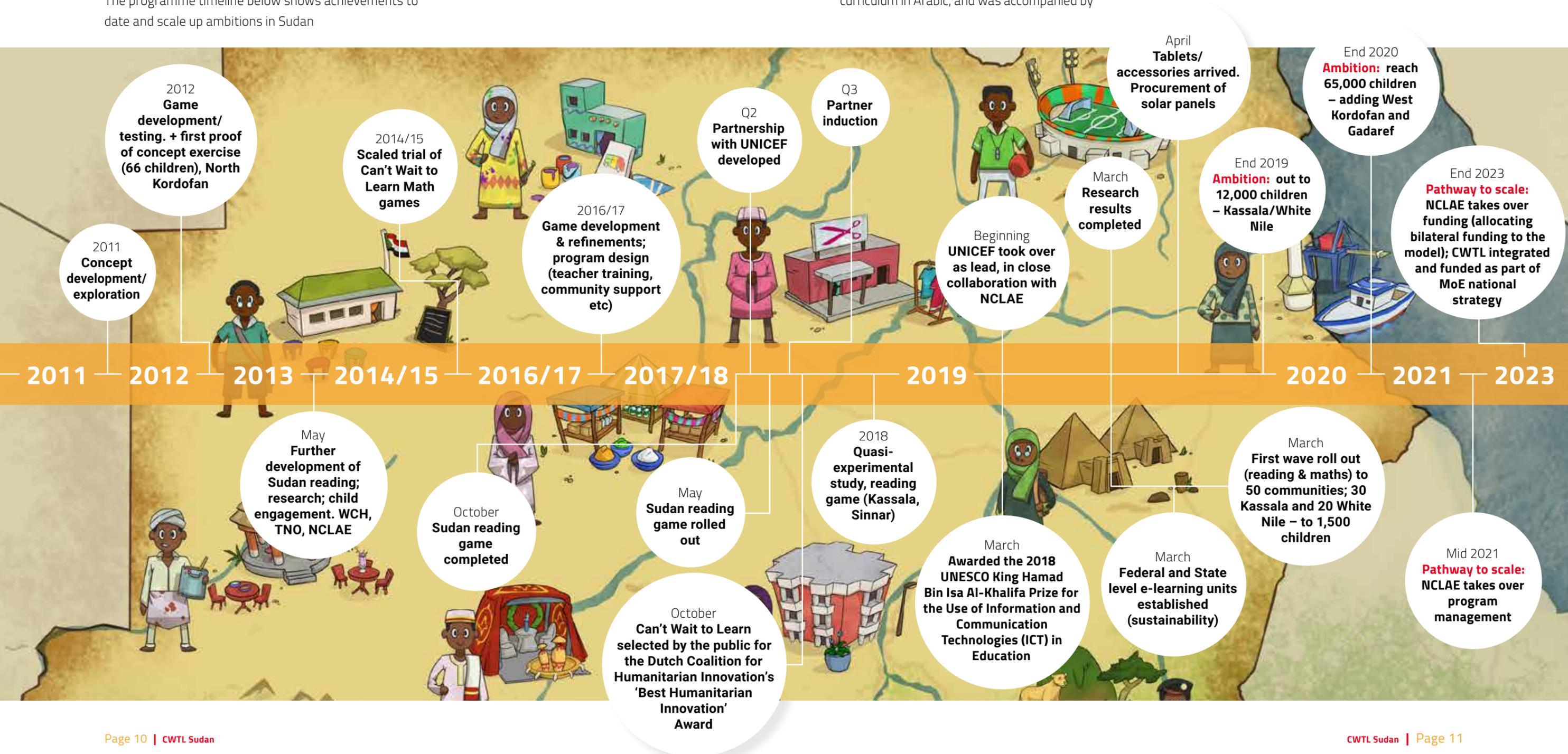
Achievements and scale up ambitions

The programme timeline below shows achievements to date and scale up ambitions in Sudan

What is now globally known as Can't Wait to Learn began as a small innovation trial in Sudan, called e-learning Sudan, designed to create an education solution for the 3 million out of school children who, without innovative approaches, would not have access to government-supported learning opportunities at all. The trial piloted the Maths game, using the Sudanese curriculum in Arabic, and was accompanied by

rigorous research and monitoring. The promising results spurred the programme to expand to new countries, and to create Reading games using the same approach.

Below — Part of the e-learning 1-3 game





Left — Hassan, construction worker helps to build a new school in the e-learning Sudan 1-3 Game

Can't Wait to Learn receives funding from key supporters and implements with partners:



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