

## FAQs

### 1. Why do the school children need smartphones /tablets?

- Due to the global Covid-19 pandemic, public schools in the Philippines are currently closed. The Department of Education in the Philippines has implemented an online learning App for school children to continue their studies online.
- This is part of a wider recent announcement from the Department of Education that four different ways of learning for school children would be available: on-line distance learning (via an App); modular learning; TV or radio broadcast learning; and face to face learning (for Covid-free zones).
- The cost for Upskills + Foundation Inc (UFI) to purchase new smartphones and tablets for all of the school children in its supported education programme is prohibitive, however we can recycle and reuse donated phones and tablets relatively inexpensively; another option is to purchase reconditioned smartphones in Manila.

### 2. Why do some of the beneficiary-students have smartphones/tablets and others do not?

- UFI runs a number of programmes that support families living in urban poor communities. Many of the families reside in shanty houses or old dilapidated buildings. Some of the parents have jobs such as construction helpers, repairman, domestic helpers; however, some of the families are waste pickers in Tondo. Only a few families with a regular income can purchase a smartphone and possibly a tablet, however it is usually shared amongst the rest of the family members.
- Due to Covid-19, and the school curriculum partly being transferred online, the need for a smartphone or tablet is not a luxury for these vulnerable children, it is now a necessity.

### 3. How will the donated phone/ tablet benefit each child and their family?

- Donations will enable children who do not have the funds or access to mobile technology to be able to continue their studies online whilst they cannot physically attend school.
- Mobile phones will also enable the families of the children to have contact to the wider community. UFI have set up a help line for students to be able to call their teachers and social workers. By providing students with mobile phones, our welfare team will be able to contact them directly and can help them with their schoolwork as well as any mental health issues.

#### **4. How will my donated smartphone or tablet be distributed and monitored?**

- UFI conducted a survey amongst its current student-beneficiaries to ascertain those who have access to a mobile phone/tablet. The survey provides information of the kind of phone each student has, what network they use, and quality of internet signal in their area. This information guides the UFI team as to which students have the most need for a donated phone or tablet.
- The phones will be distributed carefully to those most in need, whilst instilling the value of shared responsibility and accessibility of technology that they would not normally have.
- The donated phone/tablet will be distributed to students via one of three methods:
  - Renting the phones from UFI – The smartphone will be offered to the student at a minimal cost, to ensure the phone is cared for. Any money collected for the rental of the phone will be used to maintain or fix the phone or to purchase additional phones for the students. At the end of the school year, rented phones will be returned to UFI.
  - Rent-to-own – this scheme is similar to renting a smartphone as above; however, the student has the option to purchase the smartphone via minimal instalments over a long period of time.
  - Reward – the smartphone/tablet can be given to a student by UFI as a reward for exemplary performance during the previous school year.
- UFI will monitor and manage the distribution of the smartphones and tablets at monthly meetings with the students and parent volunteers (assigned to each student). These volunteers will make regular checks to ensure the gadgets are working properly. Any damaged or stolen smartphones or tablets will be reported to UFI staff. UFI will also monitor the donated smartphones by arranging regular calls to the students.
- Details of every student who receives a donated smartphone/tablet will be processed and recorded.

#### **5. What happens to the donated smartphones once the children are able to return to school?**

- The donated phone or tablet will remain with the student for the entire school year to help the student in his/her online schooling, research work, group projects and communication with his/her classmates and our welfare team.
- The donated smartphones/tablets will be returned to UFI once the school year has ended according to the scheme that the student has agreed to.
- If the student still requires the smartphone or tablet during the summer holidays or he/she has a summer school class, a separate agreement for him/her will be made.

#### **6. Can I donate an old iPhone or Apple tablet?**

- If you have a used iPhone or iPad that you would like to donate, we can accept these however there's a little more work involved to ensure they function properly in the Philippines, please ensure that you unlock the phone and contact your network provider to ensure an open line where possible as this will save UFI costs. Ensure the sim is removed and the phone is returned to factory settings. Any concerns please call/text Marcel on 0917 310 6527

**7. Should I remove my SIM card before donating my phone/tablet?**

- Yes and please return to factory settings.

**8. Who will pay for the cost of the SIM cards and any related network charges/ data for the students to use the donated smartphones/tablet?**

- Before the donated smartphones or tablets are distributed, the UFI team will arrange meetings with the parents of the students and will present the different schemes (and payment options) to them.
- Depending on the scheme selected for the student with their parents, UFI will provide a SIM card and pay for the data used (at a set maximum amount per month).

**9. How will the children be supported in working through the on-line learning system?**

- UFI staff are preparing for the implementation of a 'new normal' situation in the Philippines which includes the education system. The accessibility of online technology for our students is a key step in their continued education despite any restrictions of movement of people, transport or services in our country.
- UFI staff will attend teaching webinars / on-line seminars to help them adapt to the needs of the present situation. This training will equip them with necessary knowledge and skills on how to manage on-line classes, how to prepare on-line materials for each age group and how to monitor the progress of the students. Local and overseas volunteers are also being welcomed to help in the preparation of on-line modules to be used by the students in support to those given by the respective schools where students are enrolled. UFI is also planning to develop its own on-line learning modules on practical life skills to support the students during these difficult times.

**10. If I need to arrange for my donated smartphone or tablet to be sent by courier, do I have to pay for courier cost?**

- We would be happy to pay for the courier cost, (we suggest the items are bubble wrapped and sent by courier).
- Please keep the receipt, and send us a photograph of the receipt via phone or email, after which we will reimburse you to Marcel 0917 310 6527 E: [marcel.clado@upskillsfoundation.org](mailto:marcel.clado@upskillsfoundation.org)

**11. Once a school child receives a donated smartphone, how will their online safety be monitored and any potential risks managed?**

- Online technology will create new opportunities for our school children that go beyond just educational content. Protecting and safeguarding our children are very important to us at UFI.

Before providing a smartphone to each school child, the UFI team will guide and teach each child and their parents about cyber/online safety and provide support on social media, which will be reviewed on a regular basis by parent volunteers, our welfare and UFI team.