



Outcomes of the Consultation Meetings held under the

**Global Thematic Consultation
on Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda**

(October 2012 – February 2013)

8 March 2013

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ARAB REGION: Regional Education for All Forum: a road map toward 2015 and beyond (Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, 15-16 October 2012)

Ideas for the post-2015 Education agenda

Vision of society: The starting point for any discussion of education post-2015 in the Arab region must necessarily begin with the fundamental question of what type of society is being envisaged. What is the model of citizen that is desired?

The right to basic education: Reaffirmation of the principle of the right to (basic) education as a fundamental human right and need for strengthened implementation of national legislation.

Beyond the 'silo' mentality: Education and development cannot be considered separately. If education systems are to contribute to national development efforts in an effective manner, education reform needs to be closely coordinated with political, social and economic reform.

Regional cooperation and partnerships: There is need for more effective regional cooperation and coordination frameworks; Partnerships need to be strengthened and diversified to include NGOs, the private sector, as well as academia in educational development.

Continued validity of EFA goals: The six EFA goals remain valid as the basis for a framework for educational development beyond 2015. Equitable access to effective and relevant basic education for all will not be ensured by 2015 as reflected in the persistent challenge of youth and adult literacy, incomplete schooling and out-of-school children, and the generally low average levels of learning achievement.

Youth: Need to focus on the education of youth, whether in terms of skills development for work and life, technical and vocational education and training, or general secondary education as the crossroads between basic education and further education, training and/or the world of work.

Early childhood development: The importance of early childhood development for more equitable and effective education was reaffirmed.

Quality of education:

- Need for external bodies to monitor and assess the quality of educational outcomes.
- Need for increased focus on quality of results and their more equitable social distribution.
- Need to consider the role of private education, shadow education and private tutoring.

Flexibility: Need for flexibility and adaptability of any future international agenda to regional and national realities. There needs to be better articulation between the global, regional and national levels of any international agenda, perhaps through common 'aspirational goals' at the global level and more context-specific regional/sub-regional and/or national target-setting.

AFRICA: EFA Regional Coordination Meeting for sub-Saharan Africa (Johannesburg, South Africa, 16-19 October 2012)

Post 2015 Education Agenda

Regional Consultation in Sub-Saharan Africa

2012 has witnessed a more concerted effort by the EFA convening agencies to engage EFA partners in Sub Saharan Africa in the task of EFA stocktaking and to initiate a process of collective thinking and exchanges relating to the post 2015 agenda. The first EFA coordination meeting in Africa (Johannesburg October 2012) was a prolific event attended by 31 sub-Saharan countries that has allowed for extensive consultations with high level representatives of ministries of education and other education stakeholders on the continued relevance of the EFA framework, the likely priorities of countries beyond 2015, and broader socio-economic challenges impacting on education¹. The regional consultation in itself was the launch of the process of jointly reflecting on the Sub-Saharan Africa positioning towards the definition of the post 2015 education development agenda.

The regional consultation on the post 2015 education agenda was built from two major modalities: a questionnaire sent to all Ministries of education in the 47 SSA countries prior to the meeting and working group sessions on the topic conducted

¹ The meeting was attended by 32 High level representatives of Ministries of education (Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroun, Cape Verde, Comoros, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopie, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, RD Congo, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania (including Zanzibar), Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) ; UN EFA Covering Partners representatives (UNESCO , UNICEF and UNFPA), ILO ; AU, Pan African Parliament, ADEA, ANCEFA, FAWE, OSISA, CONFEMEN, Plan International, ACCALAN, Education International, ICAE, Microsoft and one of the High Level UN SG Panel member for the Post 2015 (Amina Mohamed).

during the meeting. The collected information was then compiled and analyzed following a grouping of countries by Regional Economic Community (REC): EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC. This enabled to have a lower level context analysis while concurring alignment with the African Union and RECs (education) structures.

Addressing the Post 2015 Agenda in Education for sub-Saharan Africa

Country Questionnaires-

33 out of the 47 Ministries of Education (70%) responded to the survey². Based on the country specific EFA status, the questionnaires inquired on the main achievements, faced challenges and built capacities during the past decade³. It also inquired on preferred priorities for accelerating efforts until 2015 as well as on the concerns for the Post 2015 education agenda. In addition to the national priorities for the post 2015 agenda, countries indicated also their views on the priorities for inter-country and regional collaboration, preferred type of international assistance and on the usefulness of the EFA and

² The following countries have responded to the Questionnaire : Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroun, Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Eritrea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, RD Congo, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania (including Zanzibar), Togo, Uganda, and Zambia.

³ 44 EFA profiles were drafted based on UIS and Pole de Dakar data. The Profiles can be found at <http://www.unesco.org/new/fr/dakar>. No EFA profiles for Zimbabwe, Somalia and South Sudan are available due to unavailability of data.

MDG's frameworks for the advancement of education at national level.

The post-2015 national priorities identified by countries in SSA brings out a number of common concerns. After years of focusing on primary education, the region is clamouring for an extended and expanded vision of good quality and inclusive Basic Education for All that incorporates early childhood education, primary education, but also lower secondary education that relates not only to access but also to successful completion. Further, countries indicated that the post-2015 agenda for the region should be developed around the critical issues of Inclusion, Quality (Teachers and improved learning environments), Skills for employability and improving Governance in education. Bellow a summary table of the identified priorities per sub-region.

National priorities in each Regional Economic Community

The Post2015 national priorities identified by the **EAC** all point on the need to revisit the focus in education. After years of concentration on primary education, the region is ready and moving towards the adoption of an extended and expanded vision of Basic Education for All as described above. Equity is another prime concern relating to both access and learning achievement, focusing on reaching the hitherto excluded. A third recurrent priority is the need to improve educational management with

particular reference to management information systems, capacity development and functional research. The applications of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) both in the teaching and learning process but also in respect of educational management is yet another common suggestion made for the post-2015 agendas at national level.

The Post 2015 agenda for the **SADC** will clearly seek to prioritize Quality in education focusing on improving learning outcomes and the assessment thereof. It follows that countries refer to teacher policies in all its different aspects as a major focus of attention in the future. Nonetheless, access will remain an enduring priority with reference to the minorities, special needs and the poor but extending in its focus to secondary education and post basic education pathways generally. The issue of the employability of youth and ensuing concerns with curriculum content and preparation for the world of work through skills acquisition will undoubtedly constitute a cornerstone for educational policy in years to come.

The survey of the medium term priorities indicated by ministries of education of **ECOWAS** states reveals a pervasive concern with the need to reinforce efforts to ensure Equitable Access for All, from early childhood care and education, to primary and lower secondary education that is of good quality. Embedded in this shared regional ambition are (i) the policy issues of inclusion; (ii) of an extended basic education of 9 or 10 years duration; and (iii) of enhanced and



effective learning environments. Recalling that West Africa accounts for the largest number of out-of-school children on the continent, it is perhaps not surprising that strategies to reach out to the excluded figure prominently on ministries' post 2015 agenda. These include bridge building between formal and non-formal routes, region specific school building, gender sensitive approaches to student enrolment and retention including sanitation, school feeding and support to poor or nomadic populations. Another recurrent focus is that of the educational continuum from pre-primary to primary and lower secondary education, as all three sub sectors are prioritised from the perspectives of access and achievement. The Quality concern translates into various proposals for teachers, curriculum improvements including early literacy programmes and improved governance.

Countries of Central Africa note the tendency for national education systems to evolve with time towards a redefined basic education of 8/9 years duration with major implications for the future in terms of institution building and curriculum reform. Within that perspective, an all pervasive priority across the **ECCAS** sub region for the post-2015 agenda concerns Teachers and more particularly teacher training. One present EFA Goal that promises to remain very much of a central focus for Central Africa beyond 2015 is that of learning needs of youth and adults: TVET and skills development aligned to labour market demand for employability. Similarly, Quality as it relates to enhancement of learning environments (school infrastructure and class sizes, free provision of textbooks) is foreseen to figure prominently on the priority list of education ministries of ECCAS in years to come. Another cross-cutting issue that is identified for future prioritisation is Equity and Inclusion by reaching out to marginalised communities including minorities and children with special

needs and offering support to families in need to ensure school attendance by all children.

Regional and Sub regional cooperation to address the post-2015 agenda

The EAC countries consider that some of the post-2015 priorities lend themselves to inter-country collaboration. An obvious example is Quality with special reference to learning outcomes, with the suggestion that common assessment mechanisms may be put into place. Another idea mooted for regional cooperation is capacity development relating to educational management.

For SADC countries, it is in the fields of Access, Quality, Skills' Development for Youth employability, ECCE that the potential for regional cooperation appears most promising in the view of policy makers.

The promise of sub regional cooperation within ECOWAS is diversely viewed. The two areas most often identified for joint initiatives relate to educational management and quality assurance on the one hand, and teacher training and professional development on the other. ECCAS sub regional cooperation is proposed in areas such as educating and skilling youth for employability or HIV and AIDS awareness programmes or Non Formal pathways for basic education or adult literacy.

Relevance of the EFA framework

Within the SADC sub region, it is believed that the EFA internationally agreed goals and associated global effort are credited for having helped provide strategic direction to educational planning and budgeting in the region. The synergy effect when considered with broader MDGs has reportedly

yielded tangible development gains. Most importantly, the framework has acted as a yardstick to monitor progress as in UPE and adult literacy.

The Dakar EFA framework is widely acknowledged by ECCAS countries for the progress in UPE and to the emphasis on literacy but more fundamentally to the practice of sector-wide planning and to the focused and sustained support of development partners.

EAC countries deem that the Dakar EFA framework has been useful for focused sector-wide reviews and planning, prioritizing inclusive primary education with reliable external support. Yet some country point to ensuing difficulties to adequately support post-primary and post-basic education.

The general view among ECOWAS ministries of education is that the internationally agreed goals in education have had the merit of prompting focused educational planning (cf. national EFA plans, sector-wide planning, EFA Goal-specific planning), advocacy, awareness-raising and resource mobilisation. However, a few ministries underlined the consequence of setting quantified universal goals without any adequate consideration for the national context, thereby condemning countries to pre destined failure or, alternatively, to high dependence on external partners.

Commitments to be renewed for African education

Ministries of education of Sub Saharan Africa look to the EFA convening agencies and other concerned United Nations agencies to work together to support the development of education after 2015.

ECCAS countries refer for example to ECCE so as to call for close collaboration between UNESCO (Curriculum

development and teacher training) and UNICEF (Health, nutrition and parent education) to support national efforts involving national governments but also local communities. It is suggested, in this particular example, that communities would provide essential leverage for awareness raising campaigns for enrolment of young children and classroom construction while being fully involved in management committees for pre schooling.

Having regard to the post 2015 priorities in education, representatives of ministries consider that UNESCO has a key role in supporting the elaboration of education sector plans and strategies, institutional capacity building and monitoring systems. UNICEF, the World Bank, UNDP and the World Food Programme are identified as the other crucial partners in relation to the school construction, procurement and provision of instructional material, capacity development and systemic evaluation.

Group work sessions at the 2012 SSA EFA consultation Meeting

The consultation in Johannesburg was framed to consider as much as possible the wide diversity among countries allowing at the same time, grouping of countries to a common denominator. This is why discussions were organized around Regional Economic Communities (RECs), respecting thereby alignment principles with existing structures in Africa. Participants were thus divided into working groups by countries belonging to the same REC in SSA (CEEAC, ECOWAS, EAC/IGAD⁴ and SADC). With the view to expand the information gathered through the questionnaires, the

⁴ As only a few countries of the IGAD were present and as some of the countries of the EAC belong to both structures, group work was done jointly;

approach for the face to face consultation on the Post 2015 outlined the role of education in the contribution to the key development priorities defined by the RECs:

- (i) Strengthening human capacities for sustainable development
- (ii) Enhancing economic prosperity
- (iii) Promoting peace and inclusive societies
- (iv) Managing the development process

In that regard, participants carried out an exercise to examine the role of education in addressing major development concerns looking at four dimensions that define the sub-Saharan context, namely⁵:

- Demography (Population Growth and mobility);
- Economy (Economic Growth and development);
- Social structures (Cultural Diversity, Social Transformations and Conflict);
- Governance (Rule of Law, democracy, transparency and accountability).

These domains are aligned with the four broad objectives of the AU, namely: (1) Strengthening human capacities for sustainable development; (2) Enhancing economic prosperity; (3) Promoting peace and inclusive societies; and (4) Managing the development process.

This approach considers present and evolving circumstances of the region and seeks to highlight the transversal role of education in addressing key national and sub-regional concerns on a more holistic manner. The following education challenges and related key areas of intervention were identified:

⁵ The results of this exercise do not reflect the full range of issues to be addressed as time constraints did not allow to deepen the analysis. The process was however conducive to instill a holistic approach to education planning.

In terms of demography, all countries noted the pressure the growing population which will lead to an increase demand of educational infrastructures and services and in particular in urban areas due to the intensification of the rural exodus.

The increased population and poorly developed formal labour market, imply an even greater concern for adequate vocational training and education provision. In addition, the reduced trends of education finance call for innovative and flexible systems of education and teacher deployment, as well as the need to augment public spending and private modalities of education financing.

Valorization of formal education seems to be an area requiring attention across the regions, as countries feel that parents seem not to be convinced of the value added of education. This links directly with the need of improving curricula, making them more relevant and relating not only to the diversified learners' needs but also to the context wherein they will be functioning in their adult lives.

The reduced education financing and limited capacities for education management, demand more efficient and accountable systems of education.

Annex 1: The Regional Economic Communities in Sub Saharan Africa

REC	Founding date & HQs	Member countries	Population	Education programme
EAC – East African Community –	2000, Arusha, Tanzania	5 members: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.	142 million	Education included as Priority Area 2 of Section 4.4 (Development of Social Sectors) of the EAC Development Strategy (2011-2016).
ECCAS - Economic Community of Central African States	1984 Libreville, Gabon	10 members: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tomé and Príncipe.	39 million	Unknown
ECOWAS - Economic Community of West African States	1975 Abuja, Nigeria	15 members: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo	308 million	Regional Protocol on Education (2003); related Action Plan covering HIV&AIDS preventive education, girls' education, teacher training through distance learning, promotion of science and technology and TVET; Convention on the Recognition and the Equivalence of Degrees, Diplomas and other Qualifications. REC-wide qualifications framework for higher education institutions.
IGAD - Intergovernmental Authority on Development	1996 Djibouti	7 members: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan (pre-secession) and Uganda	188 million	Consultations initiated on human capital strategy
SADC - Southern African Development Community –	1992 Gabronne, Botswana	15 members : Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.	280 million	Protocol on Education and Training. Education covered in section 3.5 (Social and Human Development) of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan, adopted in 2004. Convention on the Recognition and the Equivalence of Degrees, Diplomas and other Qualifications.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: Post-2015 educational agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean (Mexico City, Mexico, 29-30 January 2013)

Recommendations for the Post-2015 educational agenda in Latin American and the Caribbean

We, the Ministers and representatives of the Ministries of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered in Mexico City, on 29th - 30th of January 2013, at the extended 3rd Board Meeting of the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean:

1. Reaffirm education as a fundamental human right, as stated in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in Articles 28 and 29 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, and in other international instruments, and as a means to exercise other rights.
2. Acknowledge the internationally recognized educational progress achieved by the region towards meeting the six Education for All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals (particularly education) by 2015, while recalling that important challenges remain to fully reach these goals by 2015.
3. Recognize that the major pending task in the region is inequity and its consequences on the progress of countries. We agree that the guiding principle of the post-2015 educational agenda is thus the reduction of inequity and poverty through the provision of quality education for all that contributes to making societies more inclusive.
4. Appeal for the post-2015 educational agenda to take into consideration national and sub-national realities and

specificities, so that the educational strategies and policies are pertinent and relevant to the social, economic and cultural contexts in the countries, in their quest for social equity.

5. Considering the magnitude of the tasks ahead between now and 2015, and especially beyond, acknowledge the importance of generating strategic alliances and coalitions in the broadest sense, in support of educational progress in the region.
6. Advocate for an integrated post-2015 development agenda, which considers innovative approaches and in which education plays a preponderant role, given that its impact is essential on sustainable human development.

We identify the following challenges as relevant to the region for the design of the post-2015 educational agenda:

Part I. Challenges towards achieving the education goals by 2015:

7. In relation to the six EFA goals, quality of education at all levels of the education system as well as all teacher-related issues, are determinant factors to improve education systems and to establish more inclusive schools where better learning outcomes will be achieved.
8. As a priority, the continued expansion of early childhood care and education services, including informal ones,

while ensuring overall quality improvement and emphasizing the holistic development of children.

9. Access to and completion of quality compulsory education cycles, with emphasis on the skills and competencies required to continue education, for a proper transition from school to adult life, and in response to both illiteracy and functional illiteracy, with the purpose of a decent job in the work place for full personal development.
10. Beyond numerical parity, progress towards better gender equity by addressing the causes of unequal learning achievements and by reducing school drop-outs, child labor, the number of adolescent mothers and other social phenomena.
11. Progress towards quality education for all, using, among other instruments, periodic evaluation systems including learning metrics to also assess soft and non-cognitive skills. The evaluation cycles need to be carried out within timeframes that allow for pertinent evidence-based decision-making.
12. Promote national regulatory frameworks to support the achievement of the quality education for all goals.

Part II. Emerging trends that impact on educational development and go beyond 2015

13. Innovative programmes and curricula on citizenship education focusing on young people, for a culture of peace through “coexistence”, civic education, physical education and sports, sexuality education, students’ participation, respect for teachers and families, and conflict resolution.

14. Expansion of ICTs in teaching, learning and in education management, to improve learning outcomes, reduce the digital gap and to facilitate the insertion of young people in the workplace.
15. Beyond the traditional concept of education, programmes that focus on lifelong learning thus generating multiple opportunities for training, competency-based education (basic, transferable, technical/professional), as well as permanent training opportunities for decent work.
16. Consolidate the expansion of tertiary and higher education with quality programmes and the strengthening of institutions so that they accompany scientific and technological production, thus contributing directly to local and national development.
17. Develop comprehensive intercultural/multicultural education programmes, in cultural, pedagogical, linguistic and institutional terms.
18. Enrich the education systems with contents and methods on sustainable development, green practices, climate change and disaster prevention concepts, as a follow-up to Rio+20.
19. Improve significantly educational planning in its broadest sense for the design of sound, evidence-based education policies, relevant to national and sub-national contexts.

Ministerial validation of the recommendations for a post-2015 educational agenda

We, the Ministers and representatives of the Ministries of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean:

20. Request the convergence of the post-2015 educational agenda and the post-2015 development agenda, through improved interagency coordination and joint work planning, and the harmonization of these agendas with national public policies.
21. Commit to promoting actions in our countries to support the formulation of national plans that include the objectives and goals agreed upon in accordance with the proposed convergence.
22. Call for the strengthening of South-South and North-South Cooperation mechanisms, innovative financing for development, and the setting up of alliances and coalitions in the broadest sense, in support of education in the region. With UNESCO's support, these mechanisms shall promote, amongst others, the establishment of databanks on good practices and the exchange of students, teachers and education decision-makers.
23. Validate the present roadmap and recommendations for the post-2015 educational agenda in the LAC region.

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: Post-2015 Development Agenda - Regional Thematic Education Consultation in the Asia-Pacific (Bangkok, Thailand, 28 February and 1 March 2013)

OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND

This regional thematic consultation on education in the post-2015 development agenda (referred to as “the Consultation” thereafter), held on 28th February – 1st March 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand, was co-organized by UNESCO Bangkok (Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education), the UNICEF Regional Office for East Asia and the Pacific (EAPRO), and the UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) in partnership with civil society organizations. It brought together over 120 stakeholders from the Asia-Pacific region, including representatives from governments, non-governmental organizations (international, regional, national and local), universities and academia, teachers’ unions, disabled peoples’ organizations, and youth organizations.

This Consultation was convened to develop a collective voice from the region regarding education priorities for a post-2015 development agenda and, as an immediate result, to contribute to the debate of the global thematic consultation on education taking place in Dakar, Senegal in March 2013. The outcomes and recommendations of the Consultation will also feed into further discussions within the UN towards developing the possible contours of the post-2015 development agenda.



CONTEXT

The importance of the regional inputs from the Asia-Pacific region is to be seen against the backdrop of its great diversity and the large size of its population. These two aspects alone illustrate the development challenges and opportunities this region represents.

The Asia-Pacific is also characterized by rapid and dynamic economic growth, a growing number of middle income countries, innovation and technological advances. However, these overall economic trends belie vast disparities between

and within countries and economic growth has not necessarily resulted in equivalent increases in living standards in all countries. Trends show that these gaps are widening, rather than narrowing, and are compounded by a diversity of challenges such as demographic change with huge youth bulges in some contexts and a rapidly aging population in others, increased labour

mobility and migration, environmental degradation and natural disasters and continuing presence of conflicts in parts of the region.

As concerns education, remarkable progress has been made in improving access across all levels of education. However, there are persistent disparities among and within countries including access to schooling, equity and quality of education and levels of learning achievement. In particular, considerable progress has been made to improve youth and adult literacy, but is still inadequate to meet needs in Asia-Pacific countries. Indeed, the Asia-Pacific contains the largest number of

illiterate adults of any region in the world. Concomitantly, most countries have now also become increasingly concerned with improving the quality of education, increasing access to post-basic education and to skills development.

VISION AND PRINCIPLES

The Consultation **reaffirmed** that education is a basic human right for every person, a public good for all societies, an essential condition for human fulfillment, sustainable development, peace and democracy, and an important vehicle for global citizenship.

The Consultation **recognized** that the Education for All (EFA) goals and the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are yet to be achieved in many countries. At the same time, the depth and scope of how education is linked to a post-2015 development agenda need to go beyond current goals. In this view, the emphasis of education policy and reform needs to go beyond the provision of academic knowledge and skills often confined to economic growth, to promote education's central role in forging more just, peaceful, democratic, tolerant, resilient, transformative and inclusive societies and in providing people with the understanding, competencies and values they need to resolve many challenges that our societies and economies are facing.

The Consultation **acknowledged** the outcomes of the two Asia-Pacific regional high-level expert meetings on the future of education and learning in May and November 2012 respectively which recommended a new, fresh and comprehensive look at education, with learning restored as the core concern in all aspects of education. It also **acknowledged** the outcomes of the "13th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators: The Big Push" held on 26-27 February 2013 and other research findings which testify to the

need to rethink and reorient education towards a stronger emphasis on quality learning for all.

The Consultation **acknowledged** that many changes have occurred in the "state of the world" since the advent of both the EFA goals and the MDGs – each with a clear impact for education. In the Asia-Pacific region, the main considerations are its rapid socio-economic development, widening disparities, demographic changes and environmental challenges as detailed above. These changes require that sustainable development, broadly defined to cover social, economic, environmental, and cultural issues, should be upheld more than ever as a key principle in promoting inclusive and equitable societies in the future.

The Consultation **highlighted** that the root causes of disparities, not only in terms of access to quality education but also of learning outcomes, should be seriously addressed and need to feature prominently across all education-related goals, targets and indicators in the future development agenda. The eventual aim is to eradicate all forms of exclusion, marginalization and discrimination in education, based on differences in age, gender, wealth, ethnicity, caste, nationality, religion, language, displacement, geographical location, disability, culture, citizenship status, socio-economic background and health conditions. In this view, it was recommended that disparity reduction targets should be included in any post-2015 development agenda.

The Consultation **asserted** the obligation of governments to ensure equitable learning opportunities for all, at least at the basic education level, and underlined the importance of genuine partnerships - between government and various stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, parents, school administrators, teachers, children, young people, organizations representing marginalized groups

including disabled people and the wider community - around national education policies and priorities, with a clear definition and understanding of respective roles and responsibilities.

The Consultation **underscored** the need for clear, concise and measurable targets to ensure and monitor the achievement of equitable access to education, the quality of learning, values underlying global citizenship, skills needed for life and work, as well as progress in governance, financing and partnerships.

The Consultation **emphasized** that quality learning for all should be the unifying umbrella theme for national education policy reforms and the future global development agenda. Learning is a continuous process throughout all levels of education, from early childhood care and education to higher education to vocational training, and is acquired through various delivery modes, from a lifelong and “life-wide” learning perspective. In this view, lifelong learning should be considered a key, guiding principle in education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above, the Consultation made the following **recommendations**:

A. Equitable and Inclusive Access to and Participation in Learning

1. Equitable and inclusive access to quality learning should be ensured for all (children, youth and adults), at all levels of education according to country contexts and priorities. It is the obligation of governments to provide at least free and compulsory basic education for all. Attention should be paid to reaching gender equality in education and to mainstream children with special needs. Policies guaranteeing educational provision need to begin with

early childhood care and education and go beyond primary schooling. Early childhood care and education plays a crucial role in building strong foundations for learning. Primary education provides the foundational skills for further learning such as literacy and numeracy. Post-primary education, at the crossroads of learning and life, is increasingly a minimum requirement for people’s empowerment for a decent life and work. Higher education is crucial not only for the formation of specialised skills and capacities required for knowledge economies, research and innovation, but also for the development of the communities in which they serve.

2. Those who missed formal schooling and lack foundational skills such as basic literacy and numeracy should be given special attention in the post-2015 development agenda. While there should be a strong effort to bring these groups back to school, alternative pathways to quality learning should be supported and recognized. Multiple learning pathways and multiple entry points and re-entry points at all ages and at all educational levels should be provided.
3. Building learning cities and communities is a dream within reach. Education reforms should aim to transform schools into learning hubs. This requires the education sector to engage and work with other sectors.
4. Education systems should reflect and welcome the diversity of the social fabric and aim to achieve social cohesion by doing so. Therefore, education systems should be able to cater to multiple needs and circumstances by promoting flexibility and respect for diversity so as to achieve minimum, essential core standards of quality and achievement and a maximum level of inclusiveness.

B. Quality of Learning

1. Key factors of quality learning are effectiveness and relevance, and quality learning must be an area of key emphasis in education beyond 2015.
2. Quality teachers are central to quality learning, right from the early childhood stage and onwards. Quality learning requires a professional, committed teaching force which is able to respond to diverse learning needs and is supported by effective and safe learning environments and competent school leadership and is underpinned by pioneering findings of scientific research on learning. Safe and inclusive learning environments are of particular importance for girls and marginalized groups, including the disabled. Appropriate systems and policies are needed concerning teacher pre- and in-service training, recruitment, certification, deployment, professional development, career advancement, accountability, remuneration, as well as their working environment and conditions of service.
3. Attention should also be paid to appropriate curricula and teaching/learning processes which enable the achievement of meaningful and relevant learning outcomes including ‘non-cognitive’⁶ skills and competencies.
4. The potential and innovative use of new technologies by teachers and students to support lifelong and “life-wide” learning should also be fully tapped, including improving learning of low performers.
5. The future education agenda should encourage a systems approach to quality learning, which involves reasoned consideration of all building blocks, not merely selected ones, and of learning in education policy reforms. The principle question in this endeavour is: “What do students deserve as a learning experience and what subjects should be taught to develop all-round personalities?” Improved learning requires a more holistic attention to sustainable development, cultural diversity, human rights education, gender equality, peace education, the use of the mother tongue in education, the learning of other languages including sign language, international languages, and traditional knowledge.
6. It also requires a proper participatory monitoring and assessment system that evaluates learning processes and outcomes. This includes current formative and summative forms of learning assessment. Ways to measure not only academic performance but also other outcomes such as critical thinking, innovation, flexibility cooperation, need to be developed. Increasingly, assessment should be for learning, not just of learning.

⁶ There is an ongoing debate around the term ‘non-cognitive skills’. Alternative terms have been suggested, including ‘21st century skills’, ‘non-academic skills’, ‘higher-order skills’, ‘transversal skills’ and ‘transferable skills’. In the absence of an agreement on a different term, ‘non-cognitive skills’ will be used in this document to refer to skills that are non-academic and include communication skills, interpersonal skills, creative thinking, entrepreneurship and global/responsible citizenship skills.

C. Global Citizenship, Skills and Competencies for Life and Work

1. Responsible and global citizenship should become an important theme for education in the post-2015 development agenda. Education systems should enable all children, young people and adults to participate actively and responsibly in their communities and in the increasingly interconnected and globalizing world. Values

and attitudes such as embracing diversity, non-discrimination, empathy, communication, conflict resolution, and environmental awareness are vital aspects of responsible and global citizenship.

2. The future increasingly requires that people acquire those skills and competencies required to be more creative and innovative, able to adapt to and assimilate change and able to continue learning. Those 'non-cognitive' skills are rarely measured by current assessments and examinations. Broader life skills should also be promoted, which in general include psycho-social skills, income-generation skills, entrepreneurship and sustainable livelihoods, and healthy behaviours and skills to prevent unwanted pregnancies and HIV. There is also an increasing need for traditional knowledge and skills.
3. The need for people (youth, adults, and especially women and persons with disabilities) to acquire relevant technical and vocational skills combined with necessary 'non-cognitive' skills for a decent life and work in a rapidly changing world should be fully reflected in the post-2015 development agenda.
4. Education systems should be revisited and reoriented to facilitate pathways between different education streams and the transition from school to work, and even from work to school, while allowing for the acquisition of an appropriate mix of generic and vocational skills.

D. Governance, Financing and Partnership/Cooperation

1. Governance is a cross-cutting theme for education and development beyond 2015. Responsible and participatory governance is required to strengthen transparent and accountable education systems; to reduce and eventually eliminate corruption, malpractice, and inequalities in

access to quality learning; and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of policy implementation.

2. Accountability frameworks need to be put in place at all levels, from school to the national level. Structured spaces for citizen participation, including that of youth, need to be created for planning, and monitoring in the education system as means for enhanced systemic transparency and accountability. Mechanisms for independent verification of government data and grievance redress mechanisms are critical.
3. The primary obligation to deliver education by governments is non-negotiable. However, partnerships with all stakeholders, including private foundations and communities are critical, and they will be most effective if their missions and work priorities are aligned with and contribute to government priorities.
4. Legal arrangements and ethical standards should be established to strengthen the commitments of governments and their implementation should be actualized in terms of allocating appropriate budget for education. To this end, the post-2015 development agenda should indicate a fixed percentage of fiscal revenue as a benchmark for governments to achieve. Clear and progressive targets for domestic investment in education, including early childhood care and education programmes, technical vocational education and training (TVET) and non-formal education, to meet the international benchmarks of 6 per cent of GNP should be set and its full utilisation ensured, while the development partners will endeavour to respect their previous commitment to deliver on the promise of 0.7 per cent of the GNP for official development aid (ODA). Innovative sources of financing which support the government provision of education should be sought.

In addition, appropriate systemic reforms to ensure financial transparency and earmarked allocations for marginalized communities should be promoted.

5. Education reform and strategies in each country should be reflective of national and local contexts, aiming to reach out to all people, especially the disadvantaged. In this light, a sustained equitable share of the education budget should be allocated to the alternative education pathways catering to them. Any alternative provision of education should not compromise the quality of learning.
6. Partnerships should include all stakeholders who can contribute to the common goal of education for all. While partnerships for education are important, it is the primary obligation of governments to provide education as a basic right. Stronger regulatory frameworks for the private sector need to be put in place where private players are currently significant providers.
7. Meaningful participation of learners, communities, and civil society in education governance should go beyond intermittent consultation, and should be institutionalised in formal mechanisms from the national level down to the school level.

E. Possible scenarios and options on how to best articulate and position education in a post-2015 development agenda

1. Education should feature prominently in the post-2015 development agenda given its direct relevance to the achievement of all the other development goals.

2. There should be an education-specific agenda which should be in convergence with all education goals in the post-2015 development agenda.
3. The post-2015 development agenda on education should be guided by an overall vision and underlying principles of equity, human rights and importantly sustainable development. Quality learning for all should be an overarching, universally relevant goal, with possibility of flexible adaptation in terms of target setting at national and local levels. In order to ensure that education goals contribute to narrowing disparities within a country, it is crucial to set targets for – and systematically monitor - disparity reduction.
4. A sector-wide and holistic approach should be taken to develop education in the post-2015 education framework.
5. Education should be linked to all other development challenges, such as education and governance, education and economic/industrial development, education and innovation, and education and culture.
6. Country situations will change and evolve, and the post-2015 development framework needs to be flexible enough to adapt to the changes, including the possible advent of conflict or natural disaster.
7. The goal for education in the post-2015 development agenda could embrace the key aspects encapsulated in the discussions of the Consultation and stated as follows: *‘To guarantee equitable opportunities for all to participate in transformative quality learning at all levels aiming to provide the knowledge, skills, competencies and values vital to achieve inclusive and sustainable development’.*

Sixth meeting of UNESCO's Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All (CCNGO/EFA) (Paris, France, 24 – 26 October 2012)

Final Declaration adopted on 26 October 2012 PUSHING EFA THROUGH 2015

Preamble

1. We, the representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and regional and national NGO networks from different parts of the world have gathered at the Sixth Meeting of UNESCO's Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All (CCNGO/EFA) at UNESCO in Paris, France, from 24-26 October 2012 to address the scale of the challenges to be faced in achieving the Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the short time left to 2015. We further considered recommendations for the post-2015 education agenda and how education could best contribute to wider development goals.
2. We were encouraged in our deliberations by the reinforcement of the role of the CCNGO/EFA within the reformed global EFA architecture.
3. In view of the findings of the 2012 EFA Global Monitoring Report which show a stagnation, and in some cases reversal, of progress towards the EFA goals; in the context of the post-2015 debates and the welcome initiative of the UN Secretary-General, *Education First*; and drawing on the written consultations with members of the CCNGO/EFA, we have reflected on the achievements and bottlenecks affecting progress towards the EFA goals, and formulated recommendations for pre- and post-2015 efforts on education.
4. We re-affirm:
 - education as a fundamental human right;
 - commitments to build alliances among EFA advocates and other social movements;
 - our demand to countries to meet fully their obligations to fulfil the right to EFA through free, equitable, quality public education;
 - our call to UNESCO and other United Nations agencies to harness effective support for the CCNGO/EFA both in funds and human resources;
 - our demand to international development partners to live up to their pledges to fill the resource gaps for achieving EFA.

Achievements and bottlenecks

5. We welcome progress since 2000 in all six goals, and in particular, note the expansion of early childhood care and education and of gender parity in enrolment at the primary level.
6. We celebrate the growing mobilisation of civil society, its critical participation in education governance and the increased recognition of its legitimacy in policy-making at all levels.
7. We also recognise advances in national legislation guaranteeing the right to inclusive education and the impact of its implementation on the life chances and well-being of children, young people and adults.

8. At the same time, we deplore the negative impact on education of the global financial and economic crisis, increased poverty and marginalization, worsened conditions for migrants. Even where there is growth, there are accelerating inequalities.
9. We experience the impact on and interruption of educational opportunities caused by the climate crisis, persistent conflicts and fragility.
10. We deeply regret that for the first time since 1997, there has been a decrease in international aid to education, reflecting the failure of many international development partners to match their promises with the resources needed to meet them.
11. Many governments have lacked the political will to deliver on the EFA goals, despite the availability of resources at national and international levels. As a result, in 2010, there were 61 million children out of school, and 250 million children with four years schooling remain without basic literacy and numeracy. There were still 775 million adults lacking literacy skills of whom 64 per cent were women – a percentage that has not changed for twenty years. Two hundred million of 15-24 year olds have not completed primary school, including 71 million adolescents who lack access to lower secondary education. More than 620 million young people are neither working nor studying.
12. We are deeply concerned over the widespread shortage of trained teachers. This constitutes a major obstacle to the provision of quality education and to achieving the EFA goals.
13. It is also clear that the adoption of just two of the EFA goals in the MDG framework has skewed investment and political attention away from the other four goals. The EFA goals should be viewed as mutually reinforcing and indivisible. Their achievement is a prerequisite for the fulfilment of human rights and meeting development goals.

The final push up to 2015

14. There needs to be an accelerated push to achieve all the EFA goals by all stakeholders, including the sector for higher education, giving priority and special attention to the needs of discriminated and marginalised children, young people and adults, especially girls and women.
15. Policymakers should address access, quality and equity together.
16. It is essential that governments invest in the recruitment of well-trained teachers and in developing the capacity of the existing teaching force as reflective practitioners. Improving working conditions for teachers and recognising them as key actors in policy making is also a key to success.
17. Adult literacy is the goal furthest from achievement and needs significant new investments as well as a broader conception that recognises literacy as a continuum and adult education as going beyond literacy.
18. Whilst there has been uneven progress, early childhood care and education is in need of urgent and increased investment, not only because of its immediate and long-term positive impact on the holistic development of

children but also on the social and economic development of societies.

19. Developments in vocational education, designed to secure foundation skills for young people, should not be limited to a narrow conception of skills and the immediate needs of the labour market, but should include citizenship education and other types of knowledge. Furthermore, many young people need effective strategies for mentoring and support for vocational education in the informal and subsistence economy, appropriately contextualised.
20. Improving data collection and developing capacity for its effective use, are essential for effective policy and governance. Disaggregated data should be generated and used in addressing inequalities.
21. Open Educational Resources and quality open, distance online and e-learning offer an important opportunity to be used to deliver on the EFA goals.

Recommendations for the post-2015 education agenda

We recommend that

22. Unaccomplished goals should be addressed in the post-2015 agenda.
23. The post-2015 agenda is founded on the recognition of education as a fundamental human right as enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
24. The post-2015 goals should be universal, with contextualised targets that fit the national realities and in

particular meet the needs of educationally marginalised groups.

25. Principles of equity, inclusion and non-discrimination must underpin policies and practices in the post-2015 education agenda. Gender equality should be a central dimension in this agenda.
26. A holistic lifelong learning framework, initiatives are identified for each stage from early childhood care and education through secondary and higher education to the workplace and lifelong and life-wide learning. A broad concept of learning is foundational to all aspects of development.
27. The key role of teachers, in partnership with families and communities to quality education is given higher priority in the post-2015 agenda.
28. Education for active and effective citizenship must be a central feature of new goals.
29. Member states increase domestic financing for education, including progressive taxation measures; linking revenue from natural resources to investments in education to secure long-term social and economic benefits. In addition, to secure the compliance of the private sector in meeting their fiscal and legal responsibilities and obligations related to training and development.
30. Donors keep their promises.
31. Member States guarantee institutionalized mechanisms for civil society participation in policy development and monitoring at the national level.

32. Private sector recognises its responsibility to train employees, pay taxes in the places they generate profit and contribute to the wider learning culture of the communities where they operate.
33. UNESCO strengthens its leadership role at the international and regional level and provide support to Member States in their efforts to pursue the new education agenda.
34. UNESCO secures and disseminates quality data and analysis, and assists Member States to strengthen their database systems in order to inform policy development.
35. UNESCO secures funding for the sustained participation of the CCNGO/EFA in the global EFA architecture and resource the Seventh Meeting of the CCNGO/EFA in 2014 in the run up to the Korea World Education Forum in 2015.

We commit to:

36. Collaborate in the post-2015 agenda-setting and implementation
37. Fostering the active engagement of parents, children, young people and the wider community so that their voices are heard in agenda-setting and policy-making
38. Step up our advocacy for education both within and outside of the education community and holding governments and donors accountable for meeting their obligations.

Side Event of the Global Education Meeting (GEM): Education Post-2015: Between EFA and MDG Logics (Paris, France, 22 November 2012)

This dialogue session was organized as one of the side events at the Global Education for All Meeting (GEM) in Paris held 21-23 November 2012. The session was organized within the framework of the UNESCO/UNICEF-led global thematic consultation on education in the post-2015 development agenda and was facilitated jointly by Sobhi Tawil (UNESCO) and Jordan Naidoo (UNICEF). This summary reports the key points that emerged during the discussion as they relate to the process of defining the international agenda, the shape it might take, as well as the scope it might cover.

SUMMARY of KEY POINTS

1. Process of defining the post 2015 agenda

Ownership: Concern was expressed that the process of defining the post-2015 education agenda must be based on country realities. Unlike the more top-down experience of goal definition and target-setting that characterized the 2000 MDG experience, the current process must be more bottom-up, building on the voices of stakeholders at country and regional levels.

Parallel frameworks: When thinking about education in the post-2015 development agenda, it is important to bear in mind that, since 2000, there have been two parallel international agendas; (1) an education-specific agenda (EFA) with a set of six goals, and; (2) an integrated development framework (MDGs) with two education-related goals. Should two parallel frameworks be continued beyond 2015, or should education only be integrated into one comprehensive development framework?

Synchronization: While these two agendas are running in parallel, current MDG and EFA processes of assessing experience

since 2000 and defining perspectives beyond 2015 do not appear to be synchronized. It is generally believed that an integrated development agenda post-2015 will largely be shaped in 2013, building on MDG country consultations and the global thematic consultations already underway. On the other hand, the international education agenda post-2015 that may follow the current EFA framework will only take shape in the latter part of 2014, building on EFA 2015 country assessments to be initiated in 2013.

2. Shape of the post-2015 education agenda

Need for prioritization: Whatever the timing, the framing of education within any post-2015 development agenda requires prioritization. While the current MDG framework includes two education-related goals, it is unclear how much room there may be for explicit references to education in any development framework beyond 2015. Indeed, education has recently slipped on the international development agenda, in part as a result of the perceived success in reaching the current education-related MDGs. If only one education-related goal is to be adopted in a post-2015 development framework, what might it be?

Need for simple goals and clear targets: There is need for a simple and pragmatic approach to goal formulation and target-setting for international education beyond 2015. Goals must be easy to understand, targets clearly set and simple to monitor. Arguably, the progress observed towards the two education-related MDGs (universal primary completion and gender equality) since 2000 is largely due to their simple formulation and clear

targets.⁷ Post 2015 education goals and targets must therefore be achievable and measurable.

Need for greater flexibility: In order to ensure that any post-2015 development framework is more responsive to country-specific contexts and challenges, it must necessarily be more flexible. Such flexibility might translate, for instance, into a common set of global ‘aspirational’ goals combined with targets and benchmarks at the regional level. Having said this, caution is also in order: Too much flexibility in any international framework that may weaken its usefulness as an instrument for resource mobilization, advocacy and accountability at the country level.

3. Scope of education in a post-2015 framework

The right to education: Reference to education in any post-2015 development framework must be rights-based. Beyond its intrinsic value, the right to basic education is an enabling right for the realization of other rights required for progress in other areas of development. Having said this, it is necessary to balance a rights-based approach to education with the instrumental role of education in reaching other developments goals.

Beyond primary schooling: The current global agenda reflects a ‘lowest common denominator’ approach that does not necessarily reflect national concerns and ambitions. Expanded access to schooling at various levels, and current demographic challenges are focusing attention on youth, vocational skills development and employment.

Towards a broader vision of learning: There needs to be a broader vision of education that does not only focus on schooling but on the skills and competencies required for lifelong learning in the knowledge society of the twenty-first century. This might include more difficult to measure ‘non-cognitive’ or ‘soft’ skills, as well as information and media literacy skills.

Global citizenship: New elements need to be factored into a post-2015 development agenda. The third priority introduced by the UN Secretary General’s Initiative - fostering global citizenship - introduces the neglected dimension of the relevance of education. Beyond ensuring equitable access to effective basic learning, educational content must be relevant in terms of the types of knowledge, skills and value-orientation that ensure positive citizen engagement in local and global development issues.

⁷ It is to be noted that three of the six EFA goals did not set any clear targets to reach for 2015. Indeed, EFA goals relative to expanding and improving early childhood care and education (Goal 1), meeting the learning needs of youth and adults through life-skills programs (Goal 3), and improving the quality of education (Goal 6) have no clearly-set targets.

UNESCO-UNICEF Thematic Consultation on Education in the post 2015 Agenda

Participants in 4 Regional Consultation Meetings and Global CCNGO/EFA Meeting

Arab Region (Sharm el-Sheikh - 16-19 October 2012)

Total participants: 50⁸

17 countries (36 representatives); 4 regional IGOs; 2 regional NGOs

Africa Region (Johannesburg -16-20 October 2012)

Total participants: 75⁹

31 countries (52 representatives); 4 regional IGOs; 6 regional NGOs; 1 private sector company; Regional Parliamentarians Network

Latin America and Caribbean (Mexico, 29-30 January 2013)

Total participants: 70¹⁰

17 countries (50 representatives); 3 regional IGOs; 1 regional NGO; 5 institutes/universities

Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, 27 February to 1 March 2013)

Total participants: 78¹¹

26 countries (60 representatives); 1 regional IGOs; 12 regional NGOs and foundations; 1 academic

Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA (Paris 24-26 October 2012)

Total participants: 130¹²

Overall Total: 428 Participants

Government representatives: **210** from **91** countries

Representatives from around **90** international, regional and national NGOs
Representatives from **10 regional** intergovernmental organisations

84 NGOs members of the CCNGO (106 representatives); **17 Observer NGOs** (21 representatives); (Regional Breakdown: 40 International NGOs; 18 African; 7 Arab; 8 Asia Pacific; 9 Europe/North America; 8 Latin America and Caribbean)

Side event at Global Education For All Meeting (Paris – 22 November 2012)

Total participants: 25¹³

8 countries; 2 regional IGOs; 2 NGOs; 1 institute/university

⁸ Not including UNESCO, UNICEF and other UN agencies

⁹ idem

¹⁰ idem

¹¹ idem

¹² idem

¹³ idem