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EDUCATION BEYOND 2015

SUMMARY

Pursuant to 37 C/Resolution 11 and 194 EX/Decision 6, the Director-General submits a report highlighting the work undertaken since May 2014 and the results achieved to prepare for the post-2015 education agenda. The document contains the goal and targets proposed by the Muscat Agreement (Annex I) and the proposed education goal and targets of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG) of the United Nations General Assembly (Annex II).

The financial implications related to this document are covered in document 37 C/5.

Action expected of the Executive Board: proposed decision in paragraph 20.

Muscat Agreement

1. As requested by the Executive Board at its 194th session, UNESCO continued to consult with Member States, the other Education for All (EFA) convening agencies and partners in refining the proposed targets, which resulted in the finalization of the Joint Proposal of the EFA Steering Committee on Education Post-2015. The Joint Proposal was presented and discussed at the 2014 Global EFA Meeting (GEM) organized by UNESCO and hosted by the Sultanate of Oman (Muscat, 12-14 May 2014). The resulting Muscat Agreement, which was adopted by ministers and representatives of bilateral and multilateral institutions, civil society and the private sector, represents the shared vision of the international education community key stakeholders for the post-2015 education agenda.

2. The Muscat Agreement outlines an aspirational, transformative, balanced and holistic post-2015 education agenda of universal relevance and with a focus on equity, quality, learning outcomes and lifelong learning. It contains **an overarching goal and seven global targets**, covering early childhood care and education; basic education; adult and youth literacy; skills for work and life; skills for global citizenship and sustainable development; teachers; and financing of education (Annex I).¹ The Agreement strongly supports UNESCO's leadership and coordination role in facilitating the development of the post-2015 education agenda in collaboration with the EFA partners. It encourages UNESCO to continue facilitating the debate and to consult Member States and key stakeholders on the further development and refinement of the overarching goal and targets and the identification of corresponding indicators, as well as the development of a framework for action to guide the implementation of the future education agenda. Furthermore, participants at the GEM committed to using this Agreement as a reference for the negotiations in the global consultations on the post-2015 development agenda, in order to ensure that this latter has a strong education component.

3. The Muscat Agreement was then transmitted to the United Nations Secretary-General and the co-chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG) of the United Nations General Assembly by the Director-General of UNESCO. It was also distributed to all Member States of UNESCO for their consideration, in order to facilitate their preparations for the global and regional consultations on the post-2015 education agenda, leading up to the World Education Forum 2015 (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 19-22 May 2015) and the high-level United Nations Summit in September 2015.

4. Moreover, UNESCO's Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA (CCNGO/EFA) held its seventh meeting (Santiago de Chile, 21-23 May 2014). In their Final Declaration, participants clearly expressed their support to the Joint Proposal of the EFA Steering Committee and to the Muscat Agreement.² They committed to continue to engage with UNESCO and other key stakeholders around the development of the post-2015 education agenda and its articulation with the global development agenda. Civil society also pledged to mobilize "all governments at local, regional and central level to engage and commit to active participation in the development of the post-2015 education agenda and its subsequent implementation".

5. A technical advisory group (TAG) was set up by UNESCO to work on indicators and to provide technical guidance to the EFA Steering Committee. This group is coordinated by UNESCO through its Institute for Statistics (UIS) and includes measurement experts from UNICEF, the World Bank, OECD and the EFA *Global Monitoring Report* (GMR) Team. Its overall objectives are to provide advice on the articulation of post-2015 education targets, provide guidance on the use of existing indicators and highlight where new indicators need to be developed, in support of monitoring the targets. The TAG produced a document in July 2014 that provides an initial review of potential indicators for each target, highlights key measurement challenges and indicates next steps for the development of post-2015 education indicators. The document was transmitted as

¹ The full document of the Muscat Agreement : <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002281/228122E.pdf>

² The Final Declaration of the seventh meeting of CCNGO/EFA:
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002280/228039e.pdf>

work in progress to the EFA Steering Committee and shared with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).³

Advocacy and partnerships

6. On 25 June 2014, UNESCO and UNICEF organized a high-level discussion in Brussels to promote the new agenda for education as proposed in the Muscat Agreement and build support for its inclusion as a central pillar in the post-2015 development framework. The event was hosted by the European Union and held in conjunction with the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) Second Replenishment Pledging Conference. Statements by the Director-General of UNESCO, GPE Chair, the European Union and UNICEF were followed by a moderated panel discussion among leaders from across government, international organizations and civil society.

7. Prior to the sixth BRICS Summit (Fortaleza, Brazil, 15 July 2014), UNESCO liaised closely with the Brazilian and other BRICS delegations to UNESCO to ensure strong language on education in the Leaders' Statement. As a result, the outcome document of the Summit, known as the "Fortaleza Declaration", reflects a strong commitment by BRICS leaders to strengthen cooperation in education and made a clear statement on the importance of positioning education centrally in the post-2015 development agenda. The Declaration, in paragraph 56, stresses that the post-2015 development agenda should "ensure equitable, inclusive and quality education and lifelong learning for all", which mirrors the overarching goal of the Muscat Agreement.

Impacting the United Nations debate

8. The OWG was established by the General Assembly on 22 January 2013 and mandated by the Rio+20 outcome document to prepare a proposal on sustainable development goals (SDGs) for consideration by the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session (Sept. 2013-Sept. 2014). From March 2013 to July 2014, the OWG convened 13 sessions to develop this proposal. UNESCO and UNICEF proactively provided technical support to this work as designated co-leads in the focus area on education as part of the OWG's inter-agency Technical Support Team (TST). This was done through providing comments and analytical inputs to various draft versions of the OWG document and making suggestions for possible reformulations so as to ensure close alignment between the proposed education targets of the OWG and those of the Joint Proposal of the EFA Steering Committee and the Muscat Agreement.

9. During this process, UNESCO and UNICEF regularly informed Member States represented in the OWG on the goal and targets of the Muscat Agreement, via their Permanent Delegations to UNESCO and their Permanent Missions to the United Nations, and through communications, briefings and advocacy events, with the aim to ensure alignment between the goal and targets of the Muscat Agreement and the goal and targets developed by the OWG. Members of the EFA Steering Committee and civil society also actively participated in this advocacy work.

10. UNESCO and UNICEF organized an Information Meeting on the Muscat Agreement at the United Nations, co-hosted by Argentina, Brazil and Norway, during the twelfth session of the OWG (16 June 2014). Presenters included the Chair of the EFA Steering Committee, the President of the Global Campaign for Education, and representatives of Education International, UNESCO and UNICEF, with welcome and closing remarks by the Deputy Permanent Representatives of Brazil and Argentina respectively. Technical information on indicator development was also provided by the EFA GMR Team. This initiative was welcomed by Member States represented in the OWG.

11. The Director-General of UNESCO strongly promoted the education agenda as proposed in the Muscat Agreement on various occasions, including during a meeting with the G-77 (New York, May 2014); the GPE's Second Replenishment Pledging Conference (Brussels, June 2014); ECOSOC's High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (New York, July 2014); a

³ UN DESA co-chairs the United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda as well as the Technical Support Team which was established to support the work of the OWG.

meeting with the Groupe des Ambassadeurs francophones (New York, July 2014); and a meeting with the co-chairs of the OWG during its thirteenth session (New York, July 2014).

12. As a result, during the OWG discussions, a number of Member States increasingly proposed specific wording for the education goal and targets, as formulated and in consistency with the Muscat Agreement.

13. On 18 July 2014, the OWG adopted an Outcome Document – Proposal of The Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals – containing 17 Goals, which includes a proposed goal on education: Goal 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all and a set of global targets (Annex II).⁴

14. Compared to earlier versions, the education goal and targets in the OWG Outcome Document are much more aligned with those proposed in the Muscat Agreement. This was made possible through the strong engagement of a number of Member States (including their Permanent Delegations to UNESCO and their Permanent Missions to the United Nations), facilitated by the proactive and intensive communication and advocacy activities jointly conducted by UNESCO, UNICEF and civil society.

Challenges and next steps

1. Achieving a fully aligned education agenda

15. The proposal of the OWG will be debated by the United Nations General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session. The United Nations Secretary-General will then issue a synthesis report on post-2015 in autumn 2014, which will be followed by intergovernmental negotiations until September 2015. This means that there is still scope to further fine-tune the currently proposed education goal and targets. Therefore, as a first step, UNESCO will undertake a technical analysis of the proposed OWG targets with reference to the Muscat Agreement. It will also continue to facilitate debate and consultations between Member States and education stakeholders and inform the forthcoming intergovernmental negotiations. This work will aim at ensuring that the post-2015 education agenda is transformative, holistic and universally-relevant to all countries, and that the targets are achievable and measurable.

16. The main challenge is to ensure that the outcome of the World Education Forum 2015 to be held in Incheon, which aims at adopting an agreed position on education, and the education goal and targets of the global development agenda to be adopted at the high-level United Nations Summit in September 2015, are fully aligned. In order to achieve this, continued strong engagement and support of all Member States throughout the process is required. In this regard, close communication between Permanent Delegations to UNESCO, their capitals and their Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York is crucial.

17. Further consultations will include a series of regional preparatory conferences planned for the second half of 2014 and early 2015 to review the progress on EFA, build a regional position, and develop recommendations for the future education agenda and for the related Framework for Action. The following regional conferences are currently planned, the outcomes of which will inform the World Education Forum 2015.

- Asia and the Pacific: Bangkok, Thailand (6-8 August 2014)
- Latin America and the Caribbean: Lima, Peru (30-31 October 2014)
- Arab States: Kuwait (17-19 November 2014)

⁴ Detailed information can be found at: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>

- Europe and North America: 4-5 December 2014 (*to be confirmed*)
- Africa: Kigali, Rwanda (9-10 February 2015)

Furthermore, an E-9 ministerial conference is also scheduled to take place in Islamabad, Pakistan, in November 2014 (*to be confirmed*).

2. Operationalizing the future education agenda

18. As a next step, a framework for action will be developed, with the objective to support the implementation of the future global education agenda at the global, regional and national levels. It will spell out the overall purpose and vision of the future global education agenda and “unpack” the targets, providing clear definitions on each concept included in the targets and a detailed narrative. The framework will define the future “architecture” of mechanisms related to the post-2015 education agenda at global and regional levels and also provide suggestions on implementation strategies at the country/State level. These relate to important strategic issues such as coordination, policy and institutional coherence, governance, accountability, partnerships, capacity development, advocacy, financing and monitoring. The development of the framework for action will culminate at the World Education Forum 2015 where it will be presented for endorsement.

19. The measurement and monitoring of progress of the future education agenda require identification and development of indicators. In this regard, the TAG will continue its work through further technical consultations in the autumn of 2014, so as to finalize detailed technical recommendations on indicators to measure access and completion, quality, learning outcomes and equality of opportunity by the end of the year. The TAG recommendations will be discussed by the EFA Steering Committee and subsequently put forward to the World Education Forum 2015 as part of the Framework for Action, which will also provide guidelines for national target setting and indicator development to respond to diverse social, economic and cultural contexts and needs.

Action expected of the Executive Board

20. In the light of the above, the Executive Board may wish to take the following decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 37 C/Resolution 11 and 194 EX/Decision 6,
2. Having examined document 195 EX/6 and 195 EX/6.INF,
3. Expresses its appreciation for the Director-General’s efforts in facilitating the process of developing the post-2015 education agenda and in widely advocating for it with different stakeholders, in particular at the United Nations;
4. Expresses its gratitude to the Sultanate of Oman for having hosted the 2014 Global Education for All Meeting ([GEM], 12-14 May 2014) and to the Director-General for having ensured its successful organization;
5. Welcomes the adoption of the Final Statement of the GEM (Muscat Agreement) which proposes an overarching education goal and a set of targets for post-2015;
6. Recognizes the impact of the Muscat Agreement on the Proposal of the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals;
7. Encourages all Member States to continue using the Muscat Agreement for the intergovernmental negotiations and other debates on the post-2015 development agenda with regards to education;

8. Requests the Director-General to:
 - (a) continue to facilitate the debate on the post-2015 education agenda, by organizing various fora and consultations, which are complementary to the intergovernmental negotiations organized by the United Nations;
 - (b) provide timely information and advice to the Member States in view of supporting them to fine-tune the proposed goal and targets for the post-2015 education agenda;
 - (c) actively work towards ensuring the alignment of the outcome of the World Education Forum 2015 (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 19-22 May 2015) and the education goal and targets of the global post-2015 development agenda to be adopted at the high-level United Nations Summit (September 2015);

9. Invites the Director-General to submit a progress report on the development of the post-2015 education agenda and the preparation of the World Education Forum 2015 to the 196th session of the Executive Board.

ANNEX I

2014 GLOBAL EDUCATION FOR ALL MEETING FINAL STATEMENT *The Muscat Agreement* (May 2014)

Proposed overarching goal and targets

Overarching Goal

Ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030

Target 1: By 2030, at least x% of girls and boys are ready for primary school through participation in quality early childhood care and education, including at least one year of free and compulsory pre-primary education, with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalized.

Target 2: By 2030, all girls and boys complete free and compulsory quality basic education of at least 9 years and achieve relevant learning outcomes, with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalized.

Target 3: By 2030, all youth and at least x% of adults reach a proficiency level in literacy and numeracy sufficient to fully participate in society, with particular attention to girls and women and the most marginalized.

Target 4: By 2030, at least x% of youth and y% of adults have the knowledge and skills for decent work and life through technical and vocational, upper secondary and tertiary education and training, with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalized.

Target 5: By 2030, all learners acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to establish sustainable and peaceful societies, including through global citizenship education and education for sustainable development.

Target 6: By 2030, all governments ensure that all learners are taught by qualified, professionally-trained, motivated and well-supported teachers.

Target 7: By 2030, all countries allocate at least 4-6% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or at least 15-20% of their public expenditure to education, prioritizing groups most in need; and strengthen financial cooperation for education, prioritizing countries most in need.

ANNEX II

PROPOSAL OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (July 2014)

Proposed goal and targets related to Education

Proposed Goal 4

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all

- 4.1 by 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
- 4.2 by 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education
- 4.3 by 2030 ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university
- 4.4 by 2030, increase by x% the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
- 4.5 by 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations
- 4.6 by 2030 ensure that all youth and at least x% of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy
- 4.7 by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

[Means of Implementation]

- 4.a build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all
- 4.b by 2020 expand by x% globally the number of scholarships for developing countries in particular LDCs, SIDS and African countries to enrol in higher education, including vocational training, ICT, technical, engineering and scientific programmes in developed countries and other developing countries
- 4.c by 2030 increase by x% the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially LDCs and SIDS