



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Sixth meeting of UNESCO's Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All (CCNGO/EFA)

24 – 26 October 2012
Paris, France



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.