

Response to the 2014 external evaluation of the EFA Global Monitoring Report

(August 5, 2014)

Background

Approximately every three years The Education for All Global Monitoring Report (EFA GMR) commissions an external evaluation of the quality of its annual report and other products, the impact of its outreach and communication strategies, and the cost-effectiveness of its expenditures. Following a competitive bidding process, the consulting firm Education for Change (EfC) was hired in December 2013 to conduct a third external evaluation of the GMR. Its findings were presented and discussed at the GMR Advisory Board meeting held in Paris on 19 June 2014.

The external evaluation report included a set of 15 recommendations. This document places each recommendation and short explanation in a box below, followed by a (i) succinct summary of the comments raised by the Advisory Board; and (ii) concluding response by the GMR. The document closes with a set of next steps that the EFA GMR proposes to take forward.

Response to the Recommendations of the 2014 evaluation of the EFA GMR

Recommendation 1: The editorial independence of the education monitoring function (EMF) must continue to be guaranteed and enshrined in any new structures and agreements.

Editorial independence, together with the continued high standards of accuracy and reliability, has been the hallmark of the GMR to date. This recommendation is made here only to emphasise the need to protect such independence in any new hosting, governance and financing arrangements so as to ensure the continued credibility and value of the monitoring and policy support function. Editorial independence rests with the Director.

Editorial independence implies a level of operational independence to steer research, innovate and respond to needs.

Advisory Board comment: Several members welcomed the conclusion that the GMR is perceived as a high-quality report and agreed on the clear need to have a series of post-2015 follow-up reports, which should remain editorially independent.

GMR conclusion: A global education monitoring report will continue to track and analyse progress in relation to the new global education framework post 2015. Both UNESCO and the GMR are in agreement that, in order to protect the quality and credibility of the Report, it should maintain its editorial independence in any new post-EFA structures and agreements. The GMR intends to have this independence formalised in a mandate contained within the future education framework.

Recommendation 2: The EMF should be underpinned by a strategic planning cycle so as to facilitate longer financing arrangements and provide for outcome level results-based management.

Partners and funders post-2015 will be likely to seek stronger strategic plans, which include outcome level results and value for money approaches that consider outcomes and impact as well as inputs.

Strategic planning, on a four year cycle (to match UNESCO's four year programming cycle) should therefore include:

- Identification and research into target audiences for the EMF outputs and their needs;
- Monitoring and performance assessment indicators;
- Outreach strategies;
- Research partnerships;
- Funding and resource planning;
- Content, format and product plans (on rolling two-year review).

Advisory Board comment: The recommendation on long-term strategic planning was taken up by several members of the Board, some of whom thought it a good idea and others who were less convinced that it would facilitate additional funding and a stable financing arrangement. One speaker said that although results-based reporting on the impact of the GMR was desirable, it would be very difficult to implement given the complex metrics involved.

GMR conclusion: There are clear advantages to multi-year strategic planning, and the EFA GMR has continually developed a three year strategy document, which it shares with existing and potential donors. That said, the EFA GMR is cognizant of the limits of such formal planning and has benefited from the flexibility that comes from not being tied to a fixed long-term strategic planning cycle. This flexibility has ensured that the themes and contents of the Report remain timely, policy relevant and pertinent to the ebbs and flows of external calendars. Listening thoughtfully to the concerns of external constituencies, including those represented on the Advisory Board, increases the likelihood that the annual Report is disseminated and read by policy makers and other key target audiences.

In recent years, the GMR is producing more than just an annual monitoring report, and benefits from a planning cycle that reacts to changing education agendas and responds to opportunities for advocacy-related partnerships. Finally, as mentioned by one of the donors

of the GMR, a long-term strategic planning cycle does not necessarily make it more likely that the GMR will successfully mobilise funds to support its work.

Beyond this, the EFA GMR embraces the need for monitoring and performance assessment indicators and in recent years has been building stronger systems for measuring the results-based outcomes of the Report. It also views positively the formation of longer-term research partnerships and the possibility of having two-year plans for complex research undertakings. Such partnerships and collaborations have increasingly characterized the work activities of the GMR team since its inception. As work on future monitoring reports advances, and the Report team and Director will further develop an Outreach Strategy for 2015-16 and set clear, time-bound expectations of the outcomes to be achieved.

Recommendation 3: Within this strategic exercise the principle should be to design the content and format of EMF products to meet specific audience needs, with an annual monitoring output as the only minimum requirement.

Given the uncertainty around the resources and demands that the new GDF will require, there seems to be no gain in specifying the content and format of the EMF outputs at this stage, nor in basing future options only on the formats adopted by the GMR (e.g. one single annual report including monitoring plus thematic analysis). Beyond a minimum annual monitoring output, and noting that the GMR's annual thematic analysis is highly valued and might sensibly be kept in some format, the EMF should be seen as incorporating a range of different monitoring and knowledge products. These should be planned to meet different audience needs and to support GDF partners' missions to disseminate and advocate for GDF.

GMR conclusion: The GMR agrees with the recommendation on the need for flexibility in specifying, at this juncture, the content and format of future outputs. The team has continually revised the format of its core annual report and supplemented it with other products as a way of addressing the needs of specific audiences. Recent examples include: the creation of a youth-oriented version of the 2012 EFA GMR, an infographic booklet on how *Education Transforms Lives* (September 2013), as well as various regional overviews and country factsheets. The team is currently working on a developing a teacher advocacy toolkit based on findings from the 2013/14 Report. Building on these successes, the EFA GMR will seek ways to enhance the relevance of these products for national and regional audiences. The GMR will also work with different advocacy partners to create policy papers better suited to their needs. In short, the GMR team will devote focused time and energy to reconceiving each and every output it produces in a new post-2015 monitoring and assessment framework, including the name, structure and contents of its core annual report.

Recommendation 4: Within this strategic exercise consideration should be given to optimising dissemination of appropriate EMF products to disaggregated target audiences, particularly those at national levels.

Dissemination should be viewed and planned on the basis of maximising the reach to target audiences involved in policy discourse. This will involve understanding the needs and most effective means through which to reach each of these audiences with appropriate products and using this as the basis for decisions on dissemination and communication channels and partners. All such channels (hard copy distribution, social media, press, launches, advocacy partnerships) should be reviewed together as a set of complementary tools that are strategically targeted to cover relevant audiences.

Within the current set of dissemination tools, it is noted that UNESCO field offices lack coverage and capacity for both effective and reliable distribution and launches and, for the EMF, other partnerships for disseminating and mediating its products at national levels should be explored. The post-2015 GDF arrangements are an opportunity to work with other agencies as partners in the dissemination of EMF messages and products, most pertinently UNICEF, which has relevant interests and a wider geographical reach.

Advisory Board comment: One member of the Advisory Board said that the focus of the work of the GMR had always been at the macro international level, though fundamentally fed by micro evidence. As the external evaluation points out, the GMR has provided the global community with an authoritative report and alerted it to emerging challenges and, in his opinion, it should continue securing these overarching aims in the future. For such a report to also seek relevance and voice at the local level within Member States would be a lot to ask of a single document. At the national level he insisted that the GMR had already achieved significant voice through ministries of education and national NGOs and CSOs.

A number of speakers highlighted that one of the GMR's priorities going forward would be to find new ways to reach out to stakeholders in the South, particularly in Africa and Asia, at the national and local levels. Beginning with consultations at the national level, the GMR team should provide a clear dissemination strategy. To the extent that people are consulted and different viewpoints collected, it more likely that they will make use of the information and evidence found in the Report.

GMR conclusion: The GMR will prepare a detailed annual dissemination strategy taking into account the (sometimes limited) capacities of UNESCO field offices and finding ways to make better use of them. This strategy will:

- pilot the use of other partners, such as UNICEF, for the launching and dissemination of GMR materials, especially in areas where UNESCO field offices are either absent or have insufficient capacity;
- provide a holistic view of how different outreach mechanisms target audiences in different regions;

- identify a group of countries with important issues relevant to the report where additional efforts will be invested in order to interject evidence-based advocacy points into the national policy discourse;
- continue to involve different partners in the development and dissemination of policy papers; and
- consider distributing low cost products such as USB keys or CDs that contain the entire series of EFA monitoring reports (in all languages) and background papers.

While the GMR believes that its strength and influence are strongest at the global level, it is keen to find more effective and efficient ways to impact national level debates and audiences, within the limited means at its disposal.

Recommendation 5: The GMR should undertake preparatory actions for post-2015 that strengthen representativeness and outreach, and position it better to take on the post-2015 EMF.

To this end it should, for example:

- Prepare a technical report on the new monitoring environment post-2015, methods, indicators, challenges etc.;
- Work with UNESCO Regional Education Bureaux and other potential partners to plan for regular regional consultation meetings that will contribute to early consultation on proposed content of the EMF annual outputs;
- Undertake analysis of target audiences for the EMF outputs, within the new GDF partnership arrangements, and ways to improve dissemination of appropriate EMF outputs to them;
- Establish and formalise links to research institutions particularly in the South as potential contributors and research partners;
- Identify outreach partners (including for dissemination) who can assist in developing the EMF's support to GDF advocacy as well as mechanisms for audience reach. These may include GDF partner agencies, beyond UNESCO, such as UNICEF, INGOs, regional organisations etc.; and
- Assess and update funding and resource requirements.

These essential positioning activities will underpin the development of a medium-term strategic plan for the EMF (see Recommendation 10 below).

Advisory Board comment: Members of the Advisory Board agreed that it is imperative to carefully define the monitoring, assessment and advocacy roles of the GMR in the future. Several members commented on the need to focus on the contents of the post-2015 development goals and targets. While monitoring and assessing data related to the new global development framework are important activities, a future GMR should also identify promising policy approaches and alert the global community to emerging challenges. The GMR would not want to avoid advocacy altogether, as one member pointed out, because

the Report was created as both a monitoring tool and an advocacy platform, underpinning advocacy with evidence. EFA itself was a clear advocacy statement.

GMR conclusion: The GMR will carefully examine the goals, targets and indicators of the emergent post-2015 development agenda, especially in relation to education, leading up to and including decisions taken in Seoul (WEF) and New York (UN GA) during 2015. It will undertake preparatory activities and consultations to identify special measurement and monitoring challenges in the area of education. It will consider establishing new links with researchers in institutes and centres, particularly those located in the South, to improve the quality and diversity of its data and evidence. It will initiate selectively, and in line with time and resource constraints, consultations to better understand the needs of geographically diverse target audiences for its products. In countries or regions where the disjuncture between audience needs and GMR products is significant, the GMR will work with various agencies, partners and/or consultants in order to develop more nuanced and relevant products. In part this is meant to better reflect the theory of change laid out in the external evaluation.

Recommendation 6: To support the new EMF mission and mandate, a representative Advisory Board should continue with an explicitly technical and advisory role.

The Advisory Board should be drawn, as it is now, from the wide-ranging education policy, research and practitioner communities in the global North and South, and should seek to strengthen the regional and professional range of inputs to the EMF. It would be expected that education specialists from bilateral and multilateral development agencies would be included as members of the Advisory Board, though **not** representing their organisations as funders of the EMF (i.e. the concerns of the donors as donors should be addressed separately, see Recommendation 14 below).

GMR conclusion: The role of a geographically diverse Advisory Board to the GMR as laid out in its current ToRs will be carefully examined going forward, with an eye to continuity. The current governance structure, which sees members and the Chair rotated on a regular basis, has many strengths and is unlikely to change. The GMR team has benefitted greatly from the diversity of views voiced by Advisory Board members in the past, and expects this will continue in the years ahead.

Recommendation 7: To support the new EMF mission and mandate a small editorial group should be maintained.

A small editorial committee should be retained, analogous to the current GMR expert group. Its membership should be reviewed annually, to ensure the right mix and representativeness of subject expertise and geographical perspectives. It would be expected that the composition of this committee would change regularly. The editorial group would be convened by the Director, with advice from the Advisory Board. Representativeness of

the editorial group should be a process indicator in a results-based management framework.

GMR conclusion: As has been the case with previous EFA GMRs, a small editorial, or ‘Expert’ group will be assembled to advise on the content and direction of each future Report. Members of this group will also be asked to review early drafts of Report chapters to assure the quality and relevance of the work carried out by the Report team. The members of this group will be selected according to Report theme and to ensure diverse geographical perspectives, and will be convened by the Director after consultation with the Chairperson of the Advisory Board.

Recommendation 8: To support the new EMF mission and mandate a small group should be established to advise on dissemination and support to GDF advocacy.

A small dissemination and advocacy group should be established with membership renewed annually, taking account of different strategic priorities in audiences and themes. This group would advise the EMF team on dissemination channels to different audiences and the tools and derivative products that might best support those involved in GDF advocacy. It would also provide a means to establish or identify strategic partnerships to optimise the reach of EMF analysis and mediate EMF messages into a range of advocacy spaces, particularly at national level.

GMR conclusion: While formalizing a small dissemination and advocacy group to advise the Report team may have some value, the overall benefits of constituting, annually renewing and consulting the members of this group are limited, especially given the time needed to conduct this consultation in an effective manner. There are also limits to what group members could be asked to do. The GMR believes that it is preferable to call on the cumulative expertise of its Advisory Board members, both past and present, as well as their broad organisational networks on an ad-hoc and informal basis. Reaching out to Advisory Board members has occurred in recent years in conjunction with its policy papers with considerable success, and will be written into the 2015 dissemination strategy and beyond.

Recommendation 9: The annual outputs of the EMF should be published in all the UN official languages as a matter of course.

The EMF must have an established position in the global machinery for the GDF and therefore must produce its outputs in all six UN official languages as a minimum. Different decisions about publishing in other, non-UN official languages will be driven by the kinds of product planned, the targeted regions, countries and audiences, and the possible partners involved. However, the EMF team should budget for and be able to guarantee access to the annual outputs in all UN official languages with no exceptions.

The language of EMF outputs will be an important factor in accessibility and take-up of

different products for different audiences; language policy and other considerations should be a key element in a strategic and longer-term approach to outreach and content development. The tradition of demand-led partnerships for translation into a wider range of languages has been successful for the GMR and may be expanded if the EMF has more operational relationships with other partners.

GMR conclusion: The GMR will aim to publish the full Report in all UN official languages. This ambition is cash dependent, however, and will depend upon the level of funding received to support this important dissemination activity.

Recommendation 10: Whatever the eventual shape of the GDF and its implications for the EMF, the GMR team should set aside a preparatory period of 12 months to: a) adjust to the data and monitoring requirements of the new framework; b) research and develop a robust medium-term strategic plan for the EMF; and c) formalise partnerships e.g. for research and dissemination.

Time constraints have been the enemy of strategic review and planning for the GMR, with its intensive annual cycle of publication and scale of outputs. The previous recommendations (Recommendations 2 and 5 specifically) require the GMR to undertake preparatory work, planning and partnership building that are preconditions for developing an effective post-2015 EMF.

We therefore recommend a complete pause in education monitoring outputs (including any kind of GMR given that EFA will have been replaced within the GDF) for one calendar year (2015/2016), starting when the final work on the 2015 GMR and associated products is completed. This will give the team, Advisory Board, UNESCO and other stakeholders sufficient space for preparatory work and the development of a strategic plan, governance and financial structures that are fit-for-purpose in the new post-2015 landscape.

Planning for the allocation and prioritisation of tasks during this pause year should begin earlier in 2015, once the final shape of the GDF and the possible mandate of the EMF become clear.

Advisory Board comment: Members of the Advisory Board said that the recommendation of a hiatus in the Report team's work activities for 12 months did not make sense, especially since there needed to be a smooth and focused transition to a new monitoring and assessment team and set of priorities. It was deemed absolutely essential to look ahead to specific target audiences, with clearly articulated future outputs and products. The opportunity was immense in terms of revisiting the scope of monitoring and outreach activities, and establishing the links between education and the other development goals. This would also provide tremendous possibilities for other partners to become funders of a newly constituted global report team. One member highlighted the importance of the GMR model in uniting the international development community and the donor community by linking the different sectors in the post-2015 development goals.

GMR conclusion: In order to allow for a smooth transition from the 2015 Report to a new series of global monitoring reports, the GMR will set aside this recommendation to pause the development of its key output: an annual report. The GMR team will continue to make all necessary preparations for a new 2016 Report, which would be launched in mid-2016, and then each subsequent year until the validity of the next set of global education targets has concluded. Possible themes of a 2016 Report were discussed by the Advisory Board and a specific topic was clearly recommended by the Board to which the GMR Director agreed. Depending on status and specificity of the post 2015 education goal, targets and indicators, the newly mandated Report team will begin establishing benchmarks for their monitoring as it did for the EFA goals.

Recommendation 11: The management and administrative capacity in the GMR team will need to be expanded to undertake the EMF.

To meet the requirements of improved planning, partnership and accountability, the EMF team should include the following posts and capacities:

- A senior manager or executive officer, with the key responsibilities of managing the strategic planning and review cycle, budgeting and financial management, establishing and reviewing management procedures that will deliver demonstrable value for money, and monitoring and evaluation of the EMF operations. This is a supportive post, possibly at Deputy Director level. It is intended in this recommendation that the Director would retain oversight of strategic planning and budgeting but that the new post would undertake the technical and managerial workload.

In addition the EMF team should be strengthened with:

- A post with the responsibility to research, establish and manage links with research organisations across all regions but especially in the South, and put in place research agreements with research organisations that meet identified capacity and quality criteria and with the potential to contribute research inputs to EMF reports and other outputs.
- Staff capacity to undertake or commission audience research, and manage partnerships and promotional arrangements with partner organisations to deliver effective dissemination and advocacy support, especially in countries or regions where UNESCO does not have a strong presence.

GMR conclusion: Having taken the decision not to set up a Steering Committee as per Recommendation 14, and to continue with its 1-2 year strategic planning cycle (Recommendation 2), the GMR does not think it prudent, nor cost effective, to expand its management and administrative capacity at this time. The GMR has decided to hire a Special Advisor to assist in the conceptualization and planning of new post-2015 monitoring and assessment activities. It may also consider engaging a consultant to assist in the identification of target audience needs in different national contexts, and the establishment and management of new partnerships to improve dissemination activities and advocacy support.

Recommendation 12: A service level agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the EMF and UIS should be drawn up as the formal basis for the relationship.

The agreement or MOU would be contiguous with the four year medium-term strategic plan and clarify roles and responsibilities for both UIS and the EMF team. It could also provide the basis for greater complementarity and more effective linkages with UIS data to respond to the new complexities that are likely to be introduced in GDF targets and indicators.

Advisory Board comment: The Director of UIS questioned the interest of the GMR team in signing an MoU with UIS, as it would not necessarily improve upon the collaborative ways the two units have worked in the past, which has been based on trust and a willingness to work together to ensure the publication of the highest quality data and its analysis. The UIS Director thought that such an MoU could actually reduce the level of flexibility that currently prevails.

External Evaluator response: They said that a service-level agreement or MoU between UIS and the GMR could easily allow for flexibility by resetting parameters on an annual basis.

GMR conclusion: Both the GMR and UIS are in agreement that an MoU is not needed at this time for the continued smooth and functional relationship between them. The GMR Director will discuss with the new incoming UIS Director ways to improve its relationship in the coming years. A formalization of this relationship, however, risks undermining the flexibility of the collaboration between the two entities, and is not deemed to be a cost- or time-effective action.

Recommendation 13: UNESCO should remain as the hosting agency for the EMF.

UNESCO has the mandate for education within the UN family and has hosted and administratively supported the GMR effectively. As host to UIS it facilitates cooperation and complementarity. Its strong brand and professional reputation, particularly in the global South, should continue to give advantage to the credibility of the new EMF.

GMR conclusion: Both the GMR and UNESCO agree that UNESCO should continue to host the future series of global education monitoring reports. The GMR will seek to work with UNESCO to have this relationship formalised in a new mandate for the report as the post 2015 global education framework takes shape. This would include a commitment to preserve the editorial independence of the monitoring team.

Recommendation 14: A steering committee should be established, in collaboration with UNESCO and other GDF agencies, and endorsed by the UN Secretary General's office as appropriate, to provide the governance, accountability and oversight mechanism for

the EMF.

This steering committee will be separate from the Advisory Board, and accountable to the GDF mandating agency (possibly the UN General Assembly). Representation on the committee should come from UNESCO, EMF donor organisations, GDF partner agencies and possibly UNESCO member states to be representative of the EMF's constituency. The committee should have no more than 15-20 members serving for a limited term, with a rotating chair. It should meet once a year, and have the power to convene sub-committees to undertake specific tasks (e.g. resource mobilisation).

The EMF team, as the implementing body, would be accountable to the Committee for approval of strategic plans, management and use of EMF funds according to agreed annual work plans and targets, and monitoring and reporting within agreed accountability frameworks and M&E procedures.

Advisory Board comment: Clarification was requested concerning the definition of accountability and governance, as it had been suggested in the evaluation that UNESCO was in some way accountable, while at the same time the GMR was hailed as independent. It was therefore necessary to establish who was accountable for what.

Several members warned against complicating the governance structure, however, which was currently flexible, dynamic, easily managed and representative, with an economy of meetings between advisors and donors and therefore good value for money. A strong note of caution was sounded about adding layers of bureaucracy, which might introduce a more costly process with more constraints.

External Evaluator response: With regard to governance, the suggestion to establish a small steering group to research the new framework of the GMR was a good idea. With regard to the recommendation on governance, they insisted that layers of bureaucracy were not required but rather a small expert group to consider the advocacy roots of the GMR

They insisted that the recommendation on governance was not to create a deeply complex structure but to separate out governance (leadership, strategic thinking and support for resource mobilization) from technical and advisory functions and provide a level of clarity and accountability. The steering committee would be accountable, whereas the advisory body would not. The steering committee should be representative of the key stakeholders of the report, perhaps with rotating membership, but not excessively procedural. The Director would also be a key member of the steering committee, and the Director would put into action its recommendations.

GMR conclusion: The UN General Assembly in New York may eventually express a preference as to how the global monitoring of post 2015 goals and targets should take place. It can be expected that a group of international agencies, bilateral donors, Member States and NGOs will highlight their support for a GMR-like model in the area of education to be hosted by UNESCO. It remains to be seen whether, and under what terms, the international community will formally establish a new mandate for the GMR team's continued monitoring, assessment and advocacy work in education. Given this situation there is little rationale for establishing a steering committee along the lines described in Recommendation 14.

The GMR supports the Advisory Board position that a new layer of administration would be unnecessary and unwarranted at this stage. Making improvements to the current governance structure, as detailed above in other recommendation responses, would assure the accountability of the work undertaken by the newly constituted team. The addition of new governance structures and procedures, to those already in existence, risk cramping the focus and flexibility of the team's work activities, which are perceived as making a significant contribution to international policy debates in education. New entities and administrative procedures also come with costs, in time and money, which the GMR can little afford to accommodate at this time.

Recommendation 15: A multi-donor trust fund (MDTF) should be established for the EMF, which would retain the pooled funding principle and be open to a wide range of national and international funders.

Unless there is a higher-level financing mechanism for the monitoring functions of the GDF as a whole, an MDTF would be a more transparent and robust financing mechanism for the EMF, likely to encourage longer-term financing commitments from a wider range of donors. These might be expected to include GDF partners, other bilateral and multilateral development agencies, private sector foundations and UNESCO Member States. The MDTF could be set up by UNESCO (as the hosting agency) or another GDF partner from the UN system. UNESCO as hosting organisation could provide administrative services (account management, financial accounting etc.) in much the same way as it administers its current GMR special account.

An MDTF automatically brings a route to an accountable governance structure (Recommendation 14), as it would require an independent and representative steering committee or governing board. Appendix 5 to this report provides details of a good comparator MDTF managed by the World Bank.

GMR Conclusion: The current pooled funding structure, which has been in place since the GMR's inception, has served as an effective mechanism for financial transactions related to the GMR, while maintaining the Report's independence and minimising the administrative costs to individual donors. The six-monthly management reports, prepared by the GMR and assured by UNESCO administration, have also been deemed as satisfactory by the GMR's donors. In reaction to this recommendation, members of the GMR's Advisory Board indicated that the current governance structure was transparent, flexible, easily managed, with an economy of meetings between the GMR and its donors, and thus good value for money. The Advisory Board cautioned against establishing a MDTF, which would complicate the governance structure and add layers of bureaucracy, and likely introduce a more costly process with more constraints. The GMR therefore concludes that a change in the funding mechanism is neither necessary nor desirable at this time.

Summary of decisions in relation to each recommendation

1. A new global education monitoring report, whose editorial independence is guaranteed, will be established to track and analyse progress in relation to the post 2015 global education framework, and related themes.
2. The current report team will continue to develop and implement a 2-3 year planning strategy, while ensuring that the contents of the Report and related outputs remain timely, policy relevant and pertinent to a broad range of external constituencies at both the international and national levels. Key elements of this planning strategy include: an increase in the number of long-term research partnerships and collaborative undertakings; an expanded framework for assessing the impact and influence of the main Report and team outputs; and the development of a two year Outreach Strategy with clear, time-bound expectations of the outcomes to be achieved.
3. The GMR agrees with the recommendation on the need for flexibility in specifying, at this juncture, the content and format of future outputs. The GMR team will devote focused time and energy to reconceiving each and every output it produces in a new post-2015 monitoring and assessment framework, including the name, structure and contents of its core annual report.
4. GMR will prepare a detailed annual dissemination strategy taking into account the (sometimes limited) capacities of UNESCO field offices and finding ways to make better use of them. This strategy will consider partnerships with other agencies and NGOs for launches; develop plans to target specialize audiences in different regions; identify countries where the GMR's work and findings are especially relevant and timely; involve different advocacy partners in the development and dissemination of policy papers; and consider distributing low cost products containing the entire series of EFA monitoring reports (in all languages) and background papers.
5. The GMR will carefully examine the goals, targets and indicators of the emergent post-2015 development agenda, especially in relation to education. It will undertake preparatory activities to identify special measurement and monitoring challenges in the area of education. It will consider establishing new links with researchers in institutes and centres, particularly those located in the South, to improve the quality and diversity of its data and evidence. It will initiate selectively, and in line with time and resource constraints, consultations to better understand the needs of geographically diverse target audiences for its products.
6. The current governance structure, which sees members and the Chair rotated on a regular basis, has many advantages and is unlikely to change significantly.
7. A small editorial or 'expert' group will continue to advise the GMR on the content and direction of each future Report to assure the quality and relevance of the work carried out and to ensure diverse geographical perspectives.

8. GMR believes that it is preferable to call on the cumulative expertise of its Advisory Board members, both past and present, as well as their broad organisational networks on an ad-hoc and informal basis.
9. Contingent on adequate funding the GMR will publish the full Report in all UN official languages.
10. The GMR will set aside recommendation #10 (to take a 12 month hiatus from Report development) and will make all necessary preparations for a new series of global monitoring reports, beginning with a 2016 Report which will examine the multiple roles and influences of education in the new global sustainable development agenda.
11. Consistent with other governance decisions the GMR will continue to support its streamlined management and administrative capacities while concurrently hiring specially tasked consultants to assist in the planning and implementation of post-2015 monitoring and assessment activities and in the identification of target audience needs in different national contexts.
12. Both the GMR and UIS are in agreement that an MoU is not needed at this time for the continued smooth and highly functional relationship between them. The GMR Director will discuss with the incoming UIS Director ways to improve their collaboration in the coming years.
13. Both the GMR and UNESCO agree that UNESCO should continue to host the future series of global education monitoring reports and to safeguard the editorial independence of the monitoring team. A new mandate formalizing this relationship will be undertaken.
14. The GMR supports the Advisory Board position that new governance entities are unnecessary and unwarranted at this stage. Making improvements to the current governance structure, as detailed above in other recommendation responses, would assure the accountability of the work undertaken by the newly constituted team.
15. The GMR supports the position taken by the Advisory Board and Donors that the current governance structure—consisting of an appointed Chairperson, a rotating Advisory Board and a small expert group, a pooled funding arrangement and semi-annual management reports—provides adequate accountability and transparency, while minimising the transaction costs to individual donors.

Next steps and action plan

Many of the above decisions will be implemented by the GMR team in the coming 6-8 months. A detailed report of all actions taken in relation to the external evaluation will be presented at the next Advisory Board meeting scheduled for the summer of 2015.

A handful of the decisions concerning possible revisions to the governance and funding structures of the GMR team and its work programme deserve further discussion by the Advisory Board and the GMR Director. The Director welcomes the establishment of an ad-hoc mechanism—for example, the creation of a small steering group of Advisory Board members—to examine the viability of broader actions to improve the transparency, accountability and long-term funding of the GMR team, as it moves beyond its work on the 2015 Report. The Director invites members of the Advisory Board to indicate their willingness to participate in these exchanges.