

MAKING EDUCATION A PRIORITY IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

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



Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations

CCNGO/EFA	Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All
ECCE	early childhood care and education
EFA	Education for All
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GPI	gender parity index
ICT I	information and communication technologies
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	non-governmental organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

1.0 Introduction

‘Making Education a Priority in the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Report of the Global Thematic Consultation on Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda’ offers a summary of the main themes and messages that have emerged from the wide-ranging contributions to the consultation. The report formed the basis of an input on education to the reports of the [High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda](#) and of the United Nations Development Group’s¹ – both of which will feed into the Secretary-General’s report on achieving the MDGs and post-2015 to be presented and debated at the General Assembly. This report also served as the basis for the [issue brief on Education and Culture](#) presented to the [Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals](#).

In 2012, the United Nations initiated a process to shape the global development agenda, building on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as their 2015 end date approaches. To coordinate system-wide preparations for a new development framework – in consultation with all stakeholders – the Secretary-General established the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, co-chaired by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

As part of this process, the [High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda](#) was convened to provide advice on the new global development framework. The panel is co-chaired by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia and Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, and it includes leaders from other governments, civil society and the private sector.

“We cannot continue to tell young people that they are the future, if we don’t provide them with the tools and resources they need to be successful in that future.”

– Jamira Burley, Executive Director, City of Philadelphia Youth Commission (Youth Advocacy Group member, Global Education First Initiative)

“Education is the closest thing to magic in the world. Nothing can transform a person’s life the way education can. It instils confidence and gifts people with a voice. Apart from the obvious benefits of a better lifestyle and a more meaningful life, education can lead to a better society at large; a society with people aware of their rights and duties.”

– Nivasini, high school student from India and participant on the World We Want online platform

1.1 Dialogue on development

Facilitating a global conversation was central to the process initiated by the United Nations. Along with six regional consultations and [national consultations in approximately 100 countries](#), there are [11 global thematic consultations](#):

1. Addressing Inequalities
2. Conflict, Violence and Disaster
3. Education
4. Energy

¹ The Global Conversation Begins: Emerging Views for a New Development Agenda, undg 2013.

-
5. Environmental Sustainability
 6. Governance
 7. Growth and Employment
 8. Health
 9. Hunger, Food Security and Nutrition
 10. Population Dynamics
 11. Water

The aim of these consultations is to bring together a broad range of stakeholders to review progress on the MDGs and to discuss the options for a post-2015 development framework. Findings from the global conversation will be delivered to the United Nations Secretary-General, Heads of State and Government attending the 2013 General Assembly, and the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, they will help inform the proceedings of other post-2015 discussions.

THE MY WORLD GLOBAL SURVEY

In the [MY World survey](#), people select their top six priorities out of 16 areas, covering such issues as education, water and sanitation, gender equality and health. At the time of writing this report:

- There were more than 850,000 participants, from 194 countries.
- The majority of participants – 584,329 people – chose a good education as the top priority for the post-2015 agenda.
- 77 per cent of participants were from low- and medium-income countries.
- 64 per cent of participants were under age 30.

The MY World participatory platform was developed by the United Nations, the World Wide Web Foundation, the Overseas Development Institute and Ipsos Mori, with support from partners around the world, to promote discussion on the post-2015 agenda.

Recognizing that education features prominently in the other 10 thematic consultations, this report includes some discussion of the ideas emerging from these forums.

[The Global Thematic Consultation on Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda](#) is co-led by UNICEF and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), with support from the Governments of Canada, Germany and Senegal. The overall objectives are to:

- Stimulate wide-ranging discussion at the global, regional and country levels on progress made and lessons learned from the [education-related MDGs](#) and [Education for All \(EFA\)](#).
- Generate consensus on the most effective way to reflect education, training and learning in the post-2015 development framework.
- Develop ideas about how progress towards greater education quality and equity may be measured, including what goals and targets need to be defined.

Details on the education consultations, which form the basic inputs for this report, are outlined in the 'The education consultation process' graphic, below.

The Education Consultation Process

The Global Thematic Consultation on Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda is co-led by UNESCO and UNICEF, with support from the Governments of Senegal, Canada and Germany, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

Fundamental Questions:

- How have the EFA goals, and MDGs 2 and 3, supported progress in education and equity? What are the remaining gaps and new issues?
- What are the key policy options and responses at the local, national and international levels to inform the post-2015 development agenda?
- How can a consensus be established on the best way to present education, training and learning in the post-2015 development framework?
- How can progress towards education quality and equity be measured? What goals and targets need to be defined, and how will government accountability be implemented?

Online Consultations on the World We Want 2015 platform

Four thematic e-discussions moderated by education experts and conducted from 10 December 2012 to 3 March 2013:



Evidence of Interest

Participants from Africa and Asia were the most active in the four education e-discussions, and most contributors were from civil society organizations. What were their priorities for education?

Equitable Access to Education
– 175 contributions

Quality of Learning
– 171 contributions

Global Citizenship, Skills and Jobs – 135 contributions

Governance and Financing
– 57 contributions

MEETINGS

1 Global Meeting of the Thematic Consultation on Education in the Post-2015

2 UN Member States briefing

3 EFA Regional Meetings:

- Arab Region
- Africa Region
- Latin American Caribbean Region
- Asia and Pacific Region

4 EFA Side Meeting

5 Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education For All (CCNGO/EFA)

6 A consultation with the private sector and donor agencies

Ongoing dialogue on education, using social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, attracts an extensive response at the World We Want, www.worldwewant2015.org/education2015.

As of end of June 2013 –

21,000+
visitors

35,000+
page views

4,500
registrations

100+
countries

600+
responses

twitter

facebook

1.2 About this report

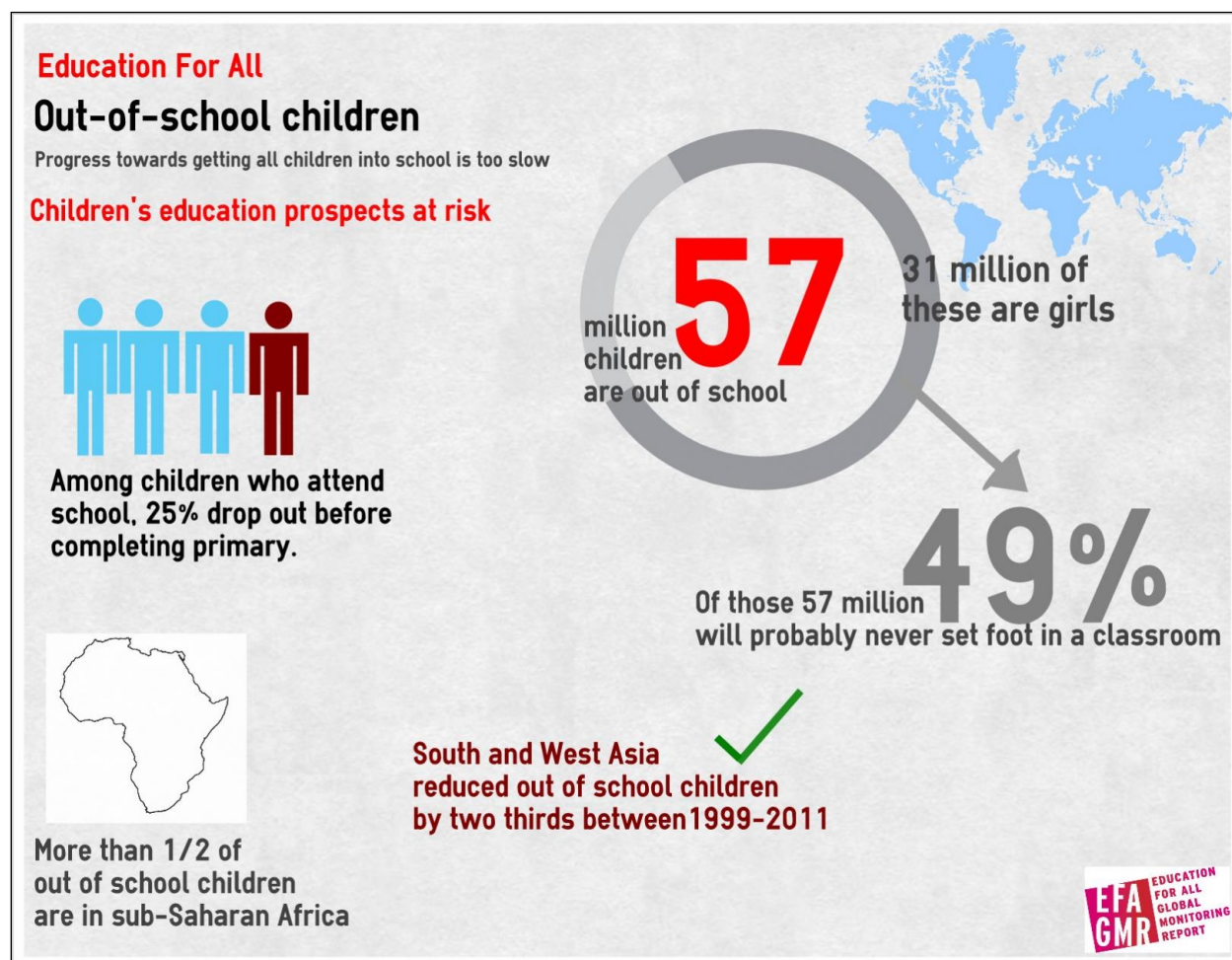
'Making Education a Priority in the Post-2015 Development Agenda' is designed to distil the outcomes and messages that were contributed during the consultations on education, as well as provide background on the global situation for education development. This report attempts to synthesize the themes and capture the different voices heard throughout the process.

The dialogue on education features broad representative participation across online consultations, face-to-face global and regional meetings and in written documents. For this report, main themes have been extracted from the thematic consultations and the summary reports of the regional and other meetings. Documents that were uploaded to the online consultation by participants have also been analysed.² Recognizing that education has featured prominently in the other 10 thematic consultations, this report includes some discussion of the ideas emerging in these forums.

Section 2.0 summarizes progress and gaps in the current education EFA goals and MDG education framework, including the relationship between these two frameworks. Section 3.0 describes how education as a priority within the development agenda was identified during the consultations. Sections 4.0 and 5.0 identify the main principles and thematic education priorities emerging from the consultations, highlighting several interrelated priorities, none of which are surprising or new. Collectively, however, they reflect a more expanded vision of quality education at the heart of the post-2015 education agenda. This vision is summarized in section 6.0, which identifies several points of convergence as well as a number of strategic issues requiring further deliberation in moving forward. And, finally, section 7.0 focuses on how the post-2015 education agenda could be fulfilled in practice.

² The online consultations, and the documents that were submitted, are available at the World We Want online platform, www.worldwewant2015.org/education2015

2.0 Progress and gaps in education



Source: <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/GMR/pdf/gmr2013/oosc2.jpg>

Section 2 sets the context for the consultations by describing the most recent data on progress on the education-related MDGs and EFA goals, and the strengths and weaknesses of the current agenda as identified by participants in the consultation.

The efforts to achieve the MDGs during the past 13 years have yielded unprecedented progress. Aggregate reductions in household poverty, more children in school than ever before, rapid reduction in child death rates and increased access to clean drinking water illustrate that ambitious and measurable goals can have an impact. However, significant challenges remain, and by all accounts, the EFA goals and education MDGs will not be achieved by 2015.

Table 1. Summary of global progress on key MDGs to date

Goal or target	Improvement since 1990?	Global progress achieved, by %*	On track?
Poverty	Yes	80%	Yes
Hunger	Yes	77%	No
Primary education	Yes	90%	No
Gender equality	Yes	96%	Yes
Child mortality	Yes	69%	No
Maternal mortality	Yes	57%	No
Drinking water	Yes	88%	Yes

* 100% = goal or target attained. Source: Melamed (2012).

2.1 Progress in achieving education goals

Appendix 1 summarizes the progress achieved for the MDGs and EFA goals. The consultations noted that there has been significant progress from 2000–2010, including more than 50 million additional

EDUCATION-RELATED MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND EDUCATION FOR ALL

MDG 2 – Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

MDG 3 – Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015

EFA Goal 1 – Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

EFA Goal 2 – Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

EFA Goal 3 – Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.

EFA Goal 4 – Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

EFA Goal 5 – Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

EFA Goal 6 – Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The “millennium educational goals have miserably failed in terms of effective, equitable and meaningful education; there are different quality educational institutions for poor and the rich, women are yet socialized to remain inferior to men, patriarchy yet continues and girls are liability, married off in childhood by their parents, there is widespread ignorance about environmental change and global warming. There are yet over populated countries and the problem of unemployment persists.”

– *Contribution to the World We Want online platform*

children enrolled in primary school. Nonetheless, education remains as one of the core ‘unfinished businesses’ of the MDGs and must be prioritized in the post-2015 agenda.

There are still about 57 million children of primary school age, including 31 million girls, who are not in school due to financial, social or physical challenges.³ In addition, wide disparities among regions and within countries remain to be addressed in the education agenda. In 2010, the global primary completion rate was about 90 per cent but only 70 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa.⁴

Among the consultation participants, there is a consensus on the necessity for goals like the education MDGs and EFA, and the role these have played in shaping and advancing the education agenda. There is wide recognition that these goals have provided strategic direction to educational planning and budgeting; are an important measure to monitor progress; and have encouraged focused and sustained support from development partners. The regional consultations, in particular, emphasized that the EFA goals have promoted

focused educational planning (including national EFA plans, sector-wide planning and EFA goal-specific planning), advocacy, awareness-raising and mobilizing resources.

Despite these positive outcomes, the goals framework has been criticized for a number of shortcomings, as discussed in section 2.2.

2.2 Shortcomings of the education framework

Underlying many gaps in the current global education framework is the fact that it fails to address education in a holistic and integrated manner. More achievable goals are privileged, and others, such as adult literacy, are relegated to a lower priority. The goals are also not adequately targeted to reach the poor and marginalized, thus underserving those who are hard to reach.

Implementation of the current framework specifically tends to privilege access to primary schooling relative to other levels of education. It focuses on access at the expense of quality, and ignores inequality. Further, the framework is not perceived as advancing access to education that offers children, youth and

³ UNESCO (2013c) Education for All Global Monitoring Report, Schooling for millions of children jeopardized by reductions in aid. Policy Paper 9 available from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002211/221129E.pdf>

⁴ UNESCO (2012a). The Millennium Development Goals Report 2012. New York. Available from www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202012.pdf

adults the knowledge, skills and values they need to become informed, responsible and active citizens; to find decent work;⁵ and to contribute to sustainable growth and peaceful societies.

A narrow vision of education access

Although multiple stages of the education life cycle are included in the EFA goals, the agenda for implementation has been limited to primary education. It has been argued that the broader EFA agenda has been constrained by the narrower focus of MDG 2. Not surprisingly, as can be seen in appendix I, progress on other EFA goals remains uneven and out of step with progress on universal completion of primary education:

- Progress on early childhood care and education (ECCE) has been too slow. Even in countries with high ECCE coverage, children in poorer areas are more likely to lack access to preschools, or they have access to preschools that are under-resourced and of uncertain quality. In most countries with low pre-primary enrolment, provision is through private preschools that are costly and out of reach for those who need them most.⁶
- Insufficient attention has been paid to childcare and development before pre-primary. Child mortality rates have been reduced since from 88 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 60 per 1,000 in 2010, but the MDG target of 29 per 1,000 is unlikely to be met by 2015. In 2010, there were still 28 countries where under-5 mortality exceeded 100 per 1,000 live births.⁷ As the generally low levels of the ECCE index indicate, many countries are far from achieving acceptable levels of health, nutrition and education for young children.
- The emphasis on universal primary education in MDG 2 has also resulted in the effective de-prioritization of secondary and tertiary education. The Africa MDG Report⁸ identifies investment in secondary, tertiary and vocational education as a priority, with a strong emphasis on building human capital, innovation and growth.
- Adult literacy remains an elusive goal, and the target of halving adult illiteracy between 1990 and 2015 will not be achieved by 2015. More than 400 million of the global total of 775 million illiterate adults live in South and West Asia. Direct measurements of literacy skills reveal large number of adults who are not literate even among those who have completed primary education.⁹

⁵ Decent work, as defined by the International Labour Organization, encompasses opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income; security in the workplace and social protection for families; better prospects for personal development and social integration; freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men. See: 'Decent work agenda', www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/decent-work-agenda/lang--en/index.

⁶ UNESCO (2007). Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007: Strong Foundations – Early childhood care and education. Paris. Available from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2007-early-childhood/>

⁷ UNESCO (2012a). Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2012: Youth and Skills – Putting Education to Work. Paris. Available from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2012-skills>

⁸ African Union Commission (2012). *MDG Report 2012: Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals*. Addis Adaba. Available from www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/publications/mdgreport2012_eng.pdf.

⁹ UNESCO (2012a).

Lack of a focus on quality

Implementation of the current education framework is viewed as limiting the focus to access, thus directing attention away from ensuring quality learning outcomes. As stated by the Africa Progress Panel, “Many of the children in schools are receiving an education of such abysmal quality that they are learning very little.”¹⁰ The focus on access and completion ignores what students actually learn. Among children who reach fourth grade, 250 million could be unable to read or write,¹¹ and the full scale of the crisis most likely underestimated. The measurement of learning outcomes among children and youth is limited and, relative to measurement of access, more difficult to assess at the global level.

In many countries children leave school without having developed literacy and numeracy or other relevant skills.¹² As a result, millions of children and youth are unable to advance to higher levels of education or to move on to gainful employment. Education and training are not meeting the needs and demands of all young people to thrive and participate fully in society. And there is growing concern for transferable skills development. More young people than ever are disproportionately concentrated in the developing world, where they are three times as likely as adults to be unemployed. Too many young people and adults, particularly women, are unable to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes they need for today’s rapidly changing technologies and world of work. Adequate technical and vocational education and training systems should provide young people with the skills to seize economic opportunities and find decent jobs.

Constraints on financial, human capital and infrastructural resources have been significant barriers to achieving all the education goals and providing quality education. Although trained and motivated teachers, for example, are essential for improving education quality, not enough attention has been given to ensuring an adequate supply of teachers. To provide quality primary education for all, 114 countries will need at least 1.7 million more teachers in classrooms by 2015 than there were in 2010. More than half of the additional teachers – 993,000 – are needed in sub-Saharan Africa. Other regions in need of additional teachers are the Arab States (248,000), South and West Asia (114,000), and North America and Western Europe (174,000).¹³

¹⁰ Africa Progress Panel, ‘A Twin Education Crisis is Holding Back Africa’, Policy Paper, September 2012, p. 4; available from <http://africaprogresspanel.org/en/publications/policy-papers/a-twin-education-crisis-is-holding-back-africa1>. The panel is chaired by Kofi Annan and consists of 10 individuals from the private and public sectors who advocate for shared responsibility between African leaders and their international partners to promote equitable and sustainable development.

¹¹ UNESCO (2012a).

¹² Ibid.

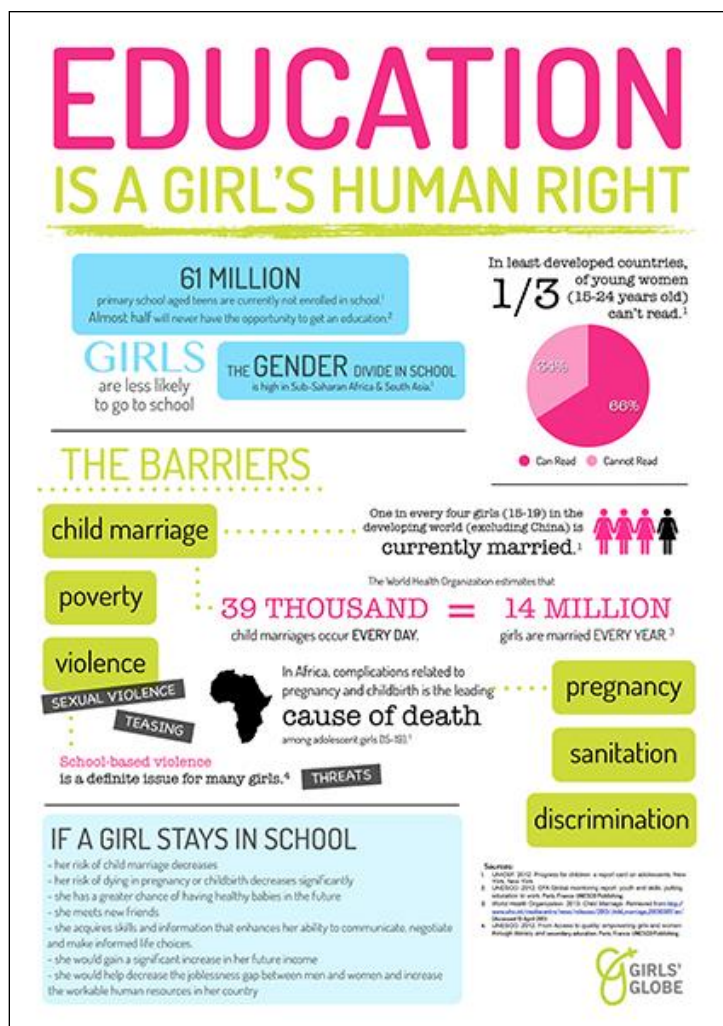
¹³ UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2012a). Opportunities lost: the impact of grade repetition and early school leaving. *Global Education Digest 2012*. Montreal. Available from http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/resources/online-materials/single-view/news/global_education_digest_2012_opportunities_lost_the_impact_of_grade_repetition_and_early_school_leaving.

Gender equality is not yet a reality

Although the gender gap has narrowed, many countries do not provide equal access to education for girls. Girls accounted for 53 per cent of the 61 million children of primary school age who were out of school in 2010. In 2013, they account for 49 per cent of the 57 million children out of school.¹⁴ In surveys of 30 countries with more than 100,000 out-of-school children, 28 per cent of girls were out of school on average, compared to 25 per cent of boys.¹⁵ Completion of primary school is a particular problem for girls in sub-Saharan Africa and Western Asia.

Surveys in 55 developing countries reveal that girls are more likely to be out of school at a lower secondary age than boys, regardless of the wealth or location of the household.¹⁶ Almost two thirds of the world's 775 million illiterate adults are women.¹⁷ In developing regions, there are 98 women per 100 men in tertiary education.¹⁸ There are significant inequalities in tertiary education in general, as well as in relation to areas of study, with women being over-represented in the humanities and social sciences and significantly under-represented in engineering, science and technology.

Gender-based violence in schools undermines the right to education and presents a major challenge to achieving gender equality in education because it negatively impacts girls' participation and their retention in school. In addition, ineffective sexual and reproductive health education inhibits adolescents' access to information and, as noted in a contribution to the online consultations, contributes to school dropouts, especially among girls who have reached puberty.



Source: GirlsGlobe: www.girlsglobe.org.

*Infographic does not contain updated 2013 figures from UNESCO UIS – 57 million children out of school of whom 31 million are girls. However, the barriers and consequences remain the same.”

¹⁴ UNESCO (2013c).

¹⁵ UNESCO (2012b). Education for All Global Monitoring Report: Reaching out-of-school children is crucial for development. Policy Paper 4, Available from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002165/216519E.pdf>

¹⁶ UN (2012a). The Millennium Development Goals Report 2012. New York. Available from www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202012.pdf.

¹⁷ UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2012a).

¹⁸ UNESCO (2012a).

Inequality remains the biggest challenge

Inequality within countries and among specific groups remains a problem. Providing good-quality education to those who are marginalized and vulnerable was thus identified as a significant gap to be addressed. Those living in remote and rural contexts, children involved in armed conflict, those forced to work, migrants and minorities who are discriminated against are some of the marginalized and vulnerable groups that do not have access to quality education.

The World Inequality Database on Education highlights how forms of disadvantage overlap and reinforce each other.¹⁹ In the Niger, for example, there are large educational disparities in wealth, which are aggravated by gender. Among young women in the poorest wealth quintile, 92 per cent have spent less than two years in school, compared to 22 per cent of young men from the richest quintile. In Pakistan, the gender gap is modest for the richest quintile, but in the poorest quintile, 8 out of 10 young women, compared to fewer than 5 out of 10 young men, have less than two years of education.²⁰

In the education consultations, particular attention was given to children and adults with disabilities, who have not been systematically included in development planning, policies or budgeting. Estimates suggest that 30 per cent of all primary age children who are out of school are children with disabilities.²¹

Underinvestment in education

Mobilization of resources for education is identified as an important strength of the goals framework at the national and international levels. The Dakar Framework for Action includes a commitment that no country should be left behind due to lack of resources. Increased spending on education has been a significant factor in positive educational outcomes since 2000, with expanding education budgets in low-income countries making a key contribution to education progress.

Particular mention was also made of the impact of the global education agenda on directing donor strategies, programmes and policies. A global education agenda is crucial to mobilizing partnerships among all actors, including civil society organizations such as NGOs. The building of national NGO coalitions is regarded as a positive outcome of a global education framework. In addition, the involvement of the private sector in the global education agenda is becoming more commonplace, and global frameworks are recognized as important because they facilitate the mutual accountability of all stakeholders.

Nevertheless, the lack of political will to invest in education has been raised as a key concern. Adequate financing and government commitment were often cited as key obstacles to making adequate progress in achieving the global education goals. The commitment made in Dakar to ensure that no country with a sound education plan will be thwarted by a lack of resources has not been realized. In 2010, the EFA Global Monitoring Report estimated that an additional US\$16 billion per year would be needed to provide

¹⁹ The World Inequality Database on Education website is www.education-inequalities.org. The figures in this paragraph are cited from the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012.

²⁰ UNESCO (2012a).

²¹ UNESCO (2008). Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2008: Education for All by 2015 – Will we make. Paris. Available from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2008-mid-term-review/>

basic education for all children, youth and adults by 2015. A more recent estimate found that the stagnation of aid and inflation meant that the funding gap had increased to US\$26 billion.²²

2.3 Suggested improvements from the consultations

A harmonized global education framework

Implementation for each of the eight MDGs has often been treated as an individual project, with little attention to interactions between the goals and how efforts to achieve one would influence others. As a basic right, education is an intrinsic good in itself, leading to broadened individual capacities and freedoms. Further, it is associated with a host of positive development outcomes that contribute to the achievement of other MDGs.

As noted in the consultations, adoption of the six EFA goals preceded adoption of the MDGs, which include one specific education goal and one related to gender and education. In many countries, the global education agenda includes a commitment to progress towards achieving both sets of goals. The consultations point to the fact that the EFA framework provides a more encompassing approach to education, albeit with shortcomings, as noted in section 2.2. In this context, a key theme in the consultations was the link and coherence between the EFA and MDG frameworks. The CCNGO/EFA consultation pointed to the need for a post-2015 education agenda in which the EFA and MDG frameworks could be “viewed as mutually reinforcing and indivisible.” Accordingly, it is suggested there be a single harmonized global education framework, informed by the successes and challenges of the MDG and EFA agendas.

National ownership of the development framework

Many contributions in the consultation identified the need for global frameworks that are responsive to and reflect regional and national priorities and contexts. A future global framework must achieve a fine balance between international commitments and national priorities, allowing countries to determine specific targets. This is likely to result in greater national ownership of the post-2015 education agenda.

²² UNESCO (2013a). Education for All Global Monitoring Report: Education for all is affordable – by 2015 and beyond. Policy Paper 06, Available from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002199/219998E.pdf>

3.0 Education as a development priority

A key theme in the education consultations was recognition that education is associated with many development outcomes and interacts with other factors to contribute to achievement of the related MDGs. This complex and inextricable relationship was also strongly reflected in other thematic consultations, as summarized in appendix II.

The importance of investing in education emerged as a cross-cutting item throughout the thematic consultations. In the Growth and Employment consultation, for example, an online contributor stated: “Education underpins all social progress. If the general education level worldwide is improved, global unemployment problems can be hugely tackled leading to improvements in poverty and general standards of living.” This comment further emphasized that access alone is not enough, and that good-quality education is the key to national development and individual well-being.

“Without education, we cannot expect to gain innovation and skill to tackle poverty. Even more importantly, if access to education is not equitable, we will lose perspective and effective influence on eradicating poverty.”

– Contribution to online consultations on Growth and Employment

3.1 Addressing inequalities and expanding sustainable development

“All children should have a high quality primary and secondary education that equips them for employment and an enjoyable life. Governments and the private sector should work together to provide opportunities for lifelong learning and skills development for adults.”

– Contribution to online consultations on Education

In commenting on the inseparable link between education and development goals, a contributor to the online Education consultations maintained that if there were only one development agenda beyond 2015, it should be “equitable human development.”

This theme was echoed in the Addressing Inequalities consultation, where comments highlighted two factors – increasing access to secondary education for marginalized and vulnerable groups, and the quality of education delivered – as important considerations for reducing inequity. One contribution to this consultation called for a “new development agenda [which] should ensure sustained action and accountability for universal access to quality, comprehensive, integrated sexual and reproductive health education and services, counselling and information, with respect for human

rights and emphasising equality, equity and respect for diversity.”

Given the extensive and growing participation of women in income-generating activities, education for girls and women becomes particularly important, especially in redressing gendered patterns of discrimination. Not only is it impossible to achieve gender equality without education, expanding education opportunities for all can help stimulate productivity and reduce the economic vulnerability of poor households.

Good governance relies on educated citizens who are able to exercise their democratic rights, and have tolerance and respect for each other. An educated population is able to hold governments to account and to participate effectively in decision making at all levels of society. Education was also noted as having a vital role in developing sustainable communities with regard to understanding and preparing for climate change. Providing children with empowering and relevant education on disasters and climate change in a child-friendly school environment can reduce their vulnerability to risk while contributing to sustainable development for their communities.

“Equipping all citizens with basic skills is the prerequisite for removing obstacles to active participation in society.”

– *The European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning, participant in online consultations on Education*

3.2 Promoting health and nutrition

Universal education was noted as contributing to halving poverty and hunger, as well as creating sustainable societies. Many contributors emphasized the long-lasting impacts of health and nutrition in early childhood, and the connection to child development and education.

In the Health thematic consultation, it was noted that better health enables children to learn, and that such links should be more clearly defined in the post-2015 agenda. For example, one contributor stated, “Ill health is both a consequence and cause of poverty; poor health limiting both the physical ability to attend school and the cognitive ability to learn is one mechanism through which poor people are prevented from escaping poverty.”

“Women who are empowered through education, good health and other means, generally choose to have fewer children and are able to invest more in the health and education of their children.”

– *Report of the Global Thematic Consultation on Health*

The interaction of education and health was also seen in the fact that learning achievement has an impact on combating disease and raising healthy families. Education has positive effects on lowering child mortality, improving child health and nutrition, and lowering the number of children per household. Contributors particularly noted the links between the education for girls and women, and their health and choice of family size. Children of better-educated parents are more likely to go to school and to receive regular health checks. Education can also empower girls in HIV prevention, offering them the knowledge and self-confidence they need to protect themselves.

Contributors to the Hunger, Food Security and Nutrition consultation noted that education is crucial to increasing food security. Malnutrition has an important educational dimension as education is a necessity to facilitate promotion of healthy food choices and nutrition-related behaviours conducive to health. Nutrition, in turn, is determined by many factors that extend beyond food security, including women’s education and income, family planning, access to quality health-care services and education. Female empowerment through education enables women to have control over household resources, including food.

In commenting on the inextricable link between education and development goals, a contribution to the online consultations argued that “...If there is only one development agenda beyond 2015... it [should] be equitable ...human development.”

Additionally, the North-South Institute’s Tracking Post-2015 tool notes education as among the main priority themes in a number of documents reviewed, although less prominent than infrastructure (a category that includes information and communications technology (ICT), water and sanitation, electricity and energy, and transport, in the institute’s methodology), environment, and health and nutrition. As well as being discussed as a theme or goal area in itself, education is mentioned in the proposals under the themes of children and youth, equality and gender equality.

4.0 Principles for the post-2015 education agenda

The consultation generated much discussion about the principles that should underpin the post-2015 education agenda. Contributions echo the principles of the Millennium Declaration and its commitment to strengthening human rights and respect for the international covenants and agreements that gave expression to these rights, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The education consultations reaffirmed the need for a rights-based approach to framing the post-2015 education agenda, identifying the elimination of all forms of inequality as a key principle. In this regard, the consultations identified the obligation of governments as duty bearers to uphold and meet the rights of all citizens without any form of limitation or discrimination.

4.1 A human rights approach to education

One of the strongest themes that emerged in the education consultations was a rights-based approach in which rights are indivisible. This suggests that all aspects of education should be considered from a rights perspective, including the learning environment, the teaching and learning process, government policy, school governance and support for teachers. Overcoming structural barriers to accessing good-quality education is vital for realizing education rights for all. Through omission and a skewed focus, the current global education agenda has tended to neglect the right to education of marginalized and vulnerable groups and has failed to address issues of inequality in education that compromise this right.

Equity is arguably the strongest framing principle of a post-2015 rights-based agenda, and calls attention to the need to redress historical and structural inequalities in order to provide access to good-quality education at all levels. Inequalities are not limited to particular countries, and the principle of equality is applicable to rich and poor countries – drawing attention to the need to understand poverty as a consequence of the relationship between the rich and poor within and across countries. The post-2015 education agenda should therefore be based on the principle of universality, applicable to all countries and underpinned by a strong commitment to education as a public good.

“The post-2015 development framework should address social inequalities and the drivers of poverty, placing inequalities and human rights at the heart of the agenda with a focus on the most marginalised groups in support of programmes which respect and protect rights.”

– *Population and Sustainability Network, participant in online consultations on Education*

In the consultations, equity is affirmed as a fundamental value in education. Several inputs noted that inequality in education remains a persistent challenge. This is connected to a focus in the MDGs on averages without an accompanying consideration of trends beneath the averages. Many contributions in the education consultation, as well as in the other thematic consultations, highlighted the lack of attention to marginalized and vulnerable groups. In the Addressing Inequalities thematic consultation, many contributions relate to educational inequalities – for instance, by level of wealth, ethnicity, gender and disability. Discussions concerning gender equality, economic inequalities, young people and indigenous peoples identified equal access to good-quality education as a top priority.

Equal access to good-quality education requires addressing wide-ranging and persistent inequalities in society and should include a stronger focus on how different forms of inequality intersect to produce unequal outcomes for marginalized and vulnerable groups. In the consultations, many examples were provided of how inequality can be overcome.²³ The consultations suggest that overcoming inequality requires a goal that makes national governments accountable for providing minimum standards and implementing country-specific plans for basic services, including education. Equity in education also implies various proactive and targeted measures to offer progressive support to disadvantaged groups.

4.2 Stakeholders' participation

The consultations identified participation of all stakeholders – including teachers, students, donors, multilateral agencies, corporate entities, civil society and advocacy groups – as a central principle for education. These stakeholders should be part of ongoing dialogue around issues of education and development, and they should be involved in monitoring and analysing progress and identifying best practices and standards. Such participation needs to be institutionalized and occur at the local, national, regional and international levels.

The specific roles of respective stakeholders generated much discussion in the consultations. Frequent references were made to parents' involvement in schools to ensure that schools/teachers are held accountable. There were also strong feelings that parents and local communities should have greater ownership of schools. In addition, teachers and schools should be empowered to take on more responsibility for managing education within clearly specified national frameworks.

Many contributions mentioned the importance of community involvement in raising awareness and engaging in activities that challenge and change the norms that result in the exclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups. Positive examples of community involvement in education include citizen-led

“The business case for corporate engagement is compelling: a well-educated and skilled workforce is crucial to corporate competitiveness and to national growth, particularly in our knowledge-based, globalized 21st century economy.”

– *Brookings Institution, participant in online consultations on Education*

²³ Examples of such policy interventions include improving girls' participation in education in Bangladesh, and cash transfers in Brazil. Proposed ways of including equity in targets include: disaggregation of reported data on progress towards each target; equity-weighted indicators; specific targets for progress among the poorest or most excluded; and framing goals in terms of universal coverage or problem elimination.

assessments of education progress, such as those undertaken by local NGOs. One example is Pratham, which facilitates the Annual Status of Education Report, or ASER, in India.²⁴

To facilitate shared responsibility, a clear framework for decentralizing education is required that recognizes the differentiated role of stakeholders, including policymakers, school administrators, teachers, parents and local community members.

Civil society and civil society organizations, including NGOs, have a crucial role to play in education, particularly in holding governments accountable. They can do this through their watchdog role in policy formation, budgeting tracking and monitoring. However, their involvement must be expanded to lobbying and influencing education policy and improving inclusive, quality education.

Discussions about participation in the consultation broadened to include the private sector's role in providing good-quality, equitable education.²⁵ Partnership between government and the private sector can result in mutual benefits, recognizing that the private sector benefits from good-quality education.

Children, including adolescents, and young people must have a meaningful and continuous say in shaping a new development agenda for their world, starting with their own communities – and in ensuring that governments follow through on their commitments.

– *Key Messages on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, UNICEF (2012)*

Effective public-private partnership requires effective coordination and regulatory mechanisms that enable dialogue and debate between governments and the private sector around a common vision of education. The private sector has an important role in providing financial support to governments and schools, and in providing materials and assistance such as teaching and learning materials, school infrastructure and grants to encourage students to continue studying. The private sector's role, however, should extend beyond direct provisioning to supporting innovation, providing technical assistance, and supporting governments in developing effective assessment systems.

The role of the private sector is also vital within the context of changing labour market trends and the new skills required. To ensure sustainability, programmes for education and training and skills development must endeavour to respond to learners' and labour market demands. This requires

strong ties with employers in order to regularly update course curricula and using appropriate technologies to reflect trends in industry and commerce.

Discussion about the private sector also brought into focus the role of private schools and, in particular, low-fee private schools. While it was noted that governments and donors could improve effectiveness by subsidizing established private schools rather than starting new public schools, the role of government in regulating the private sector was also mentioned. Effective regulation is crucial to ensuring that private schools work with government to deliver equitable and good-quality education. Some contributors noted

²⁴ The annual household survey measures reading and arithmetic levels, and enrolment, of children aged 6–14; for more information, see www.pratham.org/M-19-3-ASER.aspx.

²⁵ Drawn from the consultation with donors and the private sector, hosted by Brookings, 28 February 2013, in Washington, D.C.

that the choice of private schooling, particularly by the poor, is often the result of systemic government failure to provide quality education.

Token forms of participation and processes were identified as obstacles to genuine forms of empowerment and involvement. Stakeholder participation should thus occur at all levels in education, from national to institutional, and in all aspects, from setting the agenda to monitoring and evaluating outcomes and effects. At the international level, calls were made for a greater national voice in global decision making, as well as for the participation of civil society organizations and coalitions, particularly from the global South.

4.3 Accountability

Meaningful participation is closely associated with accountability, and the accountability of education ministries to citizens, donors to national governments, and schools to parents requires processes and structures that are transparent. Transparency is important in overcoming corruption and abuse of power, and in enabling stakeholders to have access to information to better understand the outcomes of education investments and hold governments accountable.

“Giving more authority to head teachers, continuous training provision on school management, more involvement of parents who are highly motivated, and much more frequent supervision should be the keys to strengthen school management, which is surely led to more efficient use of resources and higher learning outcome.”

– Daisuke Kanazawa, participant in online consultations on Education

The consultations frequently called for mechanisms and processes to hold all stakeholders to account, including international agencies, donors and the private sector. Transparency is not possible without national, regional and international monitoring systems that are comprehensive and reliable, and provide disaggregated data for tracking progress in promoting equity. Whatever the final education goals for a post-2015 agenda might be, effective monitoring systems are required to enhance education accountability as well as to ensure that education investments are effective and equitable. Suggested methods of accountability include peer review mechanisms, report cards and budget transparency initiatives.

The consultations noted that the international community, including the United Nations and donors, should actively support governments in meeting their national and international commitments to fulfil the right to education.

Suggestions include: (a) facilitating global discussion and consensus on education by developing indicators for fulfilment of the right to education; (b) defining a minimum percentage of gross domestic product that a country is required to invest in education, for example, 6 per cent; (c) disseminating and supporting best practices for improving education quality, and increasing access, equity and sustainability; and (d) providing technical and financial assistance to national governments, civil society and communities when implementing education policies, reforms and programmes.

There is a commitment by donors to meet the 0.7 per cent of gross national product aid target allocation and to ensure that education remains a priority.²⁶ Support to government implies delivering predictable aid and adherence to such internationally accepted principles as those stated in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. At the same time, some concern was raised about the need to ensure that the policy and programmes of international financial institutions are adjusted to provide countries with enough 'fiscal space' to invest in education.

Underlying these principles is the idea that good governance is important in education. Good governance is about deep and far-reaching forms of democracy in education and creating effective spaces for citizen participation, including children. The emergence of children's councils in India was given as one example of grass-roots democracy that develops the children's capacities to become effective citizens.

Good governance is manifest in stakeholder participation in education planning, delivery and implementation, and is embedded in robust and reliable forms of monitoring progress at the national, regional and global levels. It also supports the realization of education rights, empowers local communities to advocate for equity, and exposes corruption and the abuse of power.

4.4 Flexibility and harmonization

In the current context, the EFA goals and the MDGs stand as separate frameworks for education. The consultations noted that only occasionally do they operate as a coherent global education framework. Often this is the result of a reporting framework that privileges some targets and indicators above others. A new post-2015 education framework should, at a minimum, bring the two frameworks together within a unified architecture, buttressed by unified reporting mechanisms and processes. At the same time, a global goals framework should be responsive to and reflect regional and national priorities and contexts. Thus, it would have common goals with some broad common targets, which allow for regional and national modification and interpretation of targets and, by implication, indicators.

²⁶ 1970 UN General Assembly Resolution (*International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade*, UN General Assembly Resolution 2626 (XXV), October 24, 1970, para. 43. This commitment has been subsequently reaffirmed in many international agreements and meetings over the years (see <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/the07odagnitarget-ahistory.htmf> for a brief history of the target).

5.0 Priorities for a post-2015 education agenda

Education priorities established in the Millennium Declaration remain as relevant today as they were in 2000: the completion of a full course of primary school for all; equal access to all levels of education; and gender equality in education. Moreover, the Millennium Declaration makes it clear that protecting the marginalized and vulnerable, particularly those who suffer from natural disasters and conflict, is a priority. Considerable convergence has emerged from the thematic consultations regarding the broad direction of education priorities for the post-2015, and these priorities differ from the Millennium Declaration in significant ways, as discussed in this section.

A stronger commitment to good-quality education, with a focus on learning, can be construed as perhaps the most important priority for a post-2015 education agenda. It is argued that the focus on physical access in the current education and development agenda has come at the expense of quality and learning. Good-quality education is equitable, relevant and responds to learners' diverse needs. Future education goals should focus on measuring learning and include a wide range of indicators. For effective learning to take place, it is crucial to have conducive learning environments, including adequate and safe school buildings, school sanitation, participatory school governance structures and school-level policy that challenges all forms of discrimination.

“While we accept the need for schools and politicians to be able to document achievement, we also believe that new approaches are required for assessment and that measures of achievement must be broader than just academic scores.”

– Anna-Sophie Trolle, participant in online consultations on Education

This expanded vision of education reflects discontent with the current narrow focus on access to primary education to the detriment of other priorities. Particular attention is drawn to the importance of ECCE in ensuring that young children are ready for school and addressing inequities in education achievement at an early stage. Post-primary and post-basic education are seen as crucial for enhancing skills for work, and for promoting national growth and development. Access to good-quality literacy for adults remains an important aspect of the broader concept of education access, and neglect of adult literacy in current education development approaches should be rectified.

Cross-cutting issues underpin both increased access and good-quality education. They emphasize gender equality, the inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable groups, and the education needs of those affected by natural disasters and conflict situations.

Collectively, these proposals form a vision for education that is holistic, comprehensive and realizes the potential of all, paying particular attention to those who are discriminated against. It is a vision that accords priority to quality learning as fundamental for people to be able to lead productive and meaningful lives as active citizens.

5.1 The unfinished education agenda

Although education is central to many country education plans and there have been noticeable gains in access, significant challenges remain. The current global education agenda remains unfinished, and

there is still a long way to go in meeting the Education for All goals agreed on at the World Education Forum in 2000 and affirmed in the Millennium Declaration – particularly in extending opportunities for marginalized and vulnerable groups.

It is important to recognize, as noted in section 2.0, that while there has been significant progress, many of the commitments made in 2000 – including access for all – are far from being fulfilled. The gaps point to vast disparities between and within countries concerning access to schooling, equity and quality of education, and levels of learning achievement. And there are millions of children who are not in school. People from war-torn zones and remote communities, those suffering natural disasters, ethnic minorities, and women and girls still face barriers to accessing good-quality education. Despite considerable progress in improving youth and adult literacy, both youth employability and adult literacy have not been adequately advanced.

For these reasons, the consultations emphasized the need to accelerate progress on the current education goals. The post-2015 agenda must concentrate and continue efforts to meet the commitments made in 2000, as well as subsequent goals and targets. Continuing the focus on fulfilling these promises will bolster confidence in setting future global goals and sustain concern for those who have not been well served by the current global education agenda.

Participants highlighted the need to consider current global trends while defining the post-2015 agenda. These trends include population growth, the ‘youth bulge’, consequences of climate change and other environmental threats, knowledge-based societies and shifting inequalities. This context makes attention to quality learning outcomes, skills development and equitable education more relevant and urgent than ever for all countries, developed and developing alike, in a globalized, interconnected world. Given the magnitude of the challenges faced in implementing proposed goals, responses at this stage focused on identifying the issues rather than establishing ways to address them in the future.

5.2 Access to education at all levels

A post-2015 education agenda should offer access to more than primary education. The narrow focus on universal primary education arguably has not kept pace with national changes, where basic education incorporating lower-secondary education is becoming the norm. The education access target should, at minimum, extend to eight or nine years of basic education, as is already the case in many countries. There are also calls for the goals for access to encompass secondary education and lifelong learning opportunities.

Access to good-quality education for children, youth and adults at all levels, as well as access to all types of education (formal and non-formal) – including at the pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary levels, and vocational and adult education – is a consistent thread across all the consultations. There were numerous references to a holistic and integrated education framework, implying the provision of equitable education at all levels. Many contributions pointed to the importance of ECCE, stressing the early years of a child’s life as crucial. Save the Children, for example, noted that “in order to achieve equity objectives during primary school, more children from disadvantaged backgrounds must start early to learn.”

Many contributions pointed to the need to make, at the least, lower-secondary education a right. This argument acknowledges a national shift in education policy and practice, with many countries moving

towards a system of eight–nine years of basic education, which would have major implications for institution-building and curriculum reform.

Extending the right to access education to post-secondary education is also a priority, although financing remains a challenge for many, if not all, countries. While several contributions highlight the importance of upper-secondary and tertiary education, there is some variation in understanding across regions and countries. For those countries with nearly universal basic education, upper-secondary and tertiary education become top priorities. For others, basic education remains a priority.

Notwithstanding the differences in emphasis, there is shared consensus concerning the value of access to higher levels of education for advancing equality and national development. Post-basic and post-secondary education access is important in confronting inequalities, since access to such levels is often restricted to the wealthy and privileged, disadvantaging girls and women in particular. Moreover, creating the conditions for growth and innovation requires countries to invest in upper-secondary and tertiary education.

The challenge for the post-2015 agenda is to reach a balance between meeting the right to basic education and the need to invest in higher levels of education for equality and for sustainable and inclusive growth. While the consultations have understandably focused on equitable access and quality, several contributions point to the need to redress the neglect of adult literacy and vocational education, the latter identified as crucial to the skills-for-work agenda.

5.3 Quality education

There is a widespread consensus that quality should be a core priority of any post-2015 education framework. The quality of education should be holistic, comprehensive, context-specific and inter-sectoral. The numerous references to good-quality education in the consultations reflect a view that physical access is only part of what counts: What people learn was considered to be more important by several contributors. Along with emphasizing its importance, many contributions identified obstacles to providing good-quality education (*see text box ‘Frequently mentioned obstacles to good-quality education’, below*).

Despite being highlighted in EFA Goal 6, quality has been a somewhat elusive goal in education. The consultations, however, indicate a growing understanding of the links between what people learn and economic growth; increasing evidence on inequities in academic achievement; and a more concerted focus on skills development for youth has resulted in a growing emphasis. All of this places good-quality education and learning at the centre of the post-2015 education agenda.

Good-quality education was defined as equipping people with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to: obtain decent work; live together as active citizens nationally and globally; understand and prepare for a world in which environmental degradation and climate change present a threat to sustainable living and livelihoods; and understand their rights.

Given the dramatic shifts in the labour market and the influence of new technologies, the need to develop higher-order skills, including digital skills, is undeniable. It was noted, however, that a cautious approach in advocating for new curriculum areas should be taken in contexts where basic literacy and numeracy skills are lacking. Acquiring such basic skills for all remains a necessity, and has a profound effect on labour market participation and unemployment. Developing an integrated policy on education content and

assessment – a complex process – remains the best way forward to develop the wide range and depth of skills and competencies children and adults need for life and work.

Learning

There was widespread consensus across all of the consultations that learning should be at the heart of future goals, supported by clearly defined measures of learning achievement that incorporate equity and inclusion. Several contributions suggested that learning goals should target and measure the basics of numeracy and literacy acquisition, also referred to as ‘learning proficiency’. Other contributions suggested the inclusion of critical thinking, problem solving, general knowledge and life skills. Proposed indicators include the ability to use and apply knowledge in different contexts and encompass cognitive, meta-cognitive and non-cognitive interpersonal skills.

Accordingly, there were calls for a holistic learning framework that extends beyond literacy and numeracy to encompass other factors that are important for all children and youth, from early childhood through post-primary education. The Learning Metrics Task Force, for example, suggested inclusion of physical well-being, social and emotional well-being, culture and the arts, learning approaches and cognition, and science and technology.

To make comparisons possible at the international level, global targets and indicators to assess learning outcomes should be defined. It was emphasized, however, that such targets and associated indicators should be contextually relevant to specific countries’ educational plans and objectives. Several contributions noted that this is a challenging task. Engaging in a comprehensive consultative process involving all stakeholders

FREQUENTLY MENTIONED OBSTACLES TO GOOD-QUALITY EDUCATION

- *Social context:* Poverty was the major reason for children not accessing or dropping out of formal education. Tuition fees and indirect costs of education (learning materials, uniforms, school meals), malnutrition, poor living conditions and parental literacy levels were also connected to participation and learning levels.
- *Narrow focus on universal primary education:* Failure to consider all levels of education, particularly ECCE, was mentioned.
- *Inequity:* Key barriers included discrimination against marginalized and socially excluded groups, and failure to include and respond to the needs of children and young people with disabilities. Lack of attention to children living in contexts of political instability, conflict, disasters and emergencies – and the lack of schools in remote and rural areas – were also identified.
- *Inputs and infrastructure:* Poor learning conditions (shortages of desks, classrooms and adequate school buildings); lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials and books; and poor school environments (particularly inadequate sanitation) were noted.
- *Governance:* Lack of good governance – closely linked to lack of political will to invest in education, and to develop and implement curriculum and policy reforms – was mentioned.
- *Education process:* These items included a narrow focus on assessment leading to a narrow curriculum, shortages of qualified teachers (and inadequate support or professional development for teachers), outdated curricula, absence of linkages to employment, and gender-based violence in schools.

to facilitate the development of global and national targets and indicators was suggested as a way forward. It was also acknowledged that to be effective in improving learning outcomes and opportunities, a system of global measurement needs to focus on improving national policies and practice.

The aim of learning should be “to develop self-directed learners who can address their own wants and concerns and can advocate for their goals and aspirations.”

– *Contribution to online consultations on Education from a participant in the Philippines*

Teachers

Effective systems for assessing learning can improve students’ learning achievements, and the discussions included contributions on pedagogy. Various inputs recommended teaching methods that are process oriented, with a focus on collaborative learning and the development of critical thinking.

The consultations highlighted teachers’ central role in ensuring good-quality education and learning. Teachers’ qualifications, competence, commitment and motivation to deliver quality education are central in achieving any goal related to education. Several inputs mentioned teacher shortages at such levels as ECCE and secondary education. The contributions also underscored the following essentials for supporting teachers’ effectiveness:

- Good conditions of employment, including duration of contracts and salaries, and prospects for career progression and promotion.
- Good conditions in the work environment, based on creating school contexts that are conducive to teaching.
- High-quality pre- and in-service training for teachers, based on respect for human rights and the principles of inclusive education.
- Effective management, including teacher recruitment and deployment.

The International Labour Organization stated that teachers are “key partners in designing performance appraisal systems that can capture quality teaching and progress towards learning outcomes.” Several inputs accentuated that teachers should participate in national policy dialogue and in determining their conditions of service, as well as in defining appraisal and performance systems.

A focus on quality and learning implies changes to how teachers assess learning and the skills that students require. Several inputs point to the need to support teachers to use assessment for improving learning. In this respect, contributions cautioned against a narrow view of assessment that could potentially encourage ‘teaching to the test’. Contributions also mentioned that learner-centred teaching should involve learners as active agents in the learning process.

“Comprehensive sexuality education, both in and out of school, is part of the basic ‘life literacy’ that all young people require.”

– *International Conference on Population and Development*

Relevance

The consultations identified two interrelated dimensions of relevance. The first related to enabling people, particularly

youth, to acquire the skills and competencies necessary for leading economically productive lives and in securing decent work, thereby contributing to national development and growth. The second facet related to the skills and competencies needed to raise individuals' awareness and appreciation of their rights, and for learning to live together in society and the world at large. This dimension includes sexuality education, education for sustainable development, and national and global citizenship education.

Taken together, these dimensions can be conceived of as equipping individuals with the skills and competencies to become informed, responsible and active citizens, find decent work, and contribute to sustainable growth and peaceful societies.

Skills for decent work

The consultations noted that a major challenge in education and training was to establish better links with employment opportunities and employability. One recurring theme was that education systems are failing to equip children, particularly youth, with the relevant skills and competencies for securing decent work. Several inputs spoke about an education system that was not responsive to the labour market and an outdated curriculum that did not provide skills for the twenty-first century²⁷ – resulting in such problems as widespread youth unemployment and reduced productivity. Poor skills development affects the poor in

PROGRAMMES FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT: SELECTED COUNTRY EXAMPLES FROM THE ONLINE CONSULTATIONS

- The Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency (formerly the National Youth Employment Program) and Local Entrepreneurial and Skills Development focus their efforts to reach poorly educated youth or those who have had no education at all. The youth receive training in several fields. Upon successful completion, they are provided with start-up kits to enable them to set up their own business.
- In India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, Aide et Action International is implementing a seven-year programme called 'iLead' (Institute for Livelihood Education and Development) to enable marginalized youth without qualifications to access training that is relevant to local labour market needs and to acquire the life skills that are necessary for economic integration.
- SOS Children's Villages Belarus resource centres, called 'IT4You' were established for young people without parental care or at risk of losing such care. The centres are described as enhancing "capabilities and employment possibilities of young people" and are intended to become a "basis for living a self-supporting life in dignity and with respect within their families and communities."
- The Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education network has "innovative youth and adult education programs such as community-based sustainable livelihoods education and community-industry apprenticeship programs, green skills and organic agriculture". The UNESCO e-discussion moderator noted that there were examples from a UNESCO International Project on Technical and Vocational Education discussion on TVET in countries emerging from conflict and disasters.

²⁷ There was a degree of vagueness about how this concept is used and understood by contributors to the consultations.

particular, and people in rural areas and young women often fare the worst. Across other thematic consultations, particularly Growth and Employment, the jobs crisis was acknowledged as a major challenge and youth unemployment as a priority concern. Contributions emphasized that the employment and employability crisis could not be addressed without improving opportunities to improve knowledge and skills crisis and, hence, good-quality education and training are crucial.

Education programmes and curricula that are more responsive to market demands are needed, and such programmes and curricula should be linked to access to decent jobs. They could offer, for example, work-based programmes through apprenticeship. Solutions were more difficult to generate, although contributions included various ideas. The text box below lists some of the programmes that were mentioned as ways to bridge the education-work divide.

Sexual and reproductive health education

The education consultations recognized the right to sexual and reproductive health, and noted that educational status and sexual and reproductive health status are closely linked. Comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education is important in preventing early and unwanted pregnancy, violence and abuse, and in ending gender-based violence. Thus, it was argued that the post-2015 development framework should include universal access to comprehensive sexuality education within a rights-based approach to education.

Several inputs also identified appropriate training for teachers and access to youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services as essential elements of a quality education.

Education for global citizenship

All of the consultations underscored the importance of an education agenda that prepares children, youth and adults for being active citizens, able to engage with and transform their societies and the world, thus affirming the commitment made in the Secretary-General's Education First Initiative. Good-quality and relevant education has to emphasize human rights and respect for diversity in a global context.

While these intentions were expressed in different ways, the meaning of the concept has both a national resonance in terms of curricula that responds to local needs and a global dimension focused on preparing people for living in a changing global context. The moderators of the e-discussion on Global Citizenship, Jobs and Skills which was the third theme of the online consultations on Education, defined the broad orientation of global citizenship as being underpinned by the principles of human rights, gender equality, peace, justice, tolerance and diversity. This orientation, they said, must facilitate "critical thinking, understanding of inequality and impoverishment, and transformative action towards sustainable development."

Education for global citizenship
"means embracing a more holistic
view of what kind of skills and
attitudes are needed in our world
today. While skills for jobs are
important, so are skills for living
together."

– Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo,
participant in online consultations on
Education

Contributions to the consultations conceived of a global citizenship curriculum as emphasizing social and civic competencies (including functions of government, human rights, peacebuilding and conflict resolution); global understanding (including inequality, impoverishment, social and economic crises, care of the environment, food production, sustainable development, world geography and values, and interconnectedness); and intercultural education and tolerance and understanding (understanding different cultures within each country, familiarity with and acceptance of other ways of living, and empathy).

Several inputs identified various pedagogies, approaches and programmes that promote global citizenship, including programmes offered by civil society, youth organizations and non-formal education providers. The text box below lists some of the global citizenship programmes that were noted in the online consultations.

SELECTED COUNTRY PROGRAMMES EXAMPLES FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

- In India, Parisar and Asha (environment and hope) states that its work “transforms the government-designed standardised learning menu for government-aided schools into an experiential learning system, for intelligent internalization of concepts, skill development for applied learning, sensitive growth in attitudes and values that make the learner a conscientious conservator of our global ‘parisar’.”
- Roots of Empathy, Canada, is a school-based parenting and family literacy programme “that helps children grasp empathy [which] has helped reduced bullying in schools.”
- The NGO Aide et Action highlights a programme in India in which a series of short films for local communities were made about such values as diversity, multiculturalism, gender equality, the environment and human rights.
- The non-profit organization Fondazione L’Albero della Vita (Tree of Life Foundation) describes its project in Italy as offering training for teachers and global education to 20,000 children of different ages.

“Twenty years ago this was a beautiful place. When I see teachers who teach ecology I ask them how they can look their students in the eye when they teach their subject. Everything in the area is destroyed, the lake has dried. Environmental degradation did not happen by itself. It is a result of people’s attitude towards nature.”

– Contribution to online consultations on Education from a participant in Kazakhstan

Education for sustainable development

Education for sustainable development was frequently identified as a core education priority: It enables a shift towards more sustainable behaviours; promotes effective mitigation and adaptation strategies for environmental crises; and supports learners in understanding the value of preserving cultural and biological diversity. Several inputs noted that such development can provide the knowledge, skills and perspectives needed to address current and future social and economic challenges within the global constraints of climate change, and environmental degradation.

Contributions to the consultation on Population Dynamics noted that sustainable population planning would be

impossible without quality education that provides individuals with “population-environment-sustainability concepts, principles and understandings.”

Several contributions pointed to two other issues:

1. *Language*: In addition to teaching in local indigenous languages, it is necessary to offer education in students’ mother tongue and the national language. National language as a form of power and exclusion was raised in the Addressing Inequalities thematic consultation: “Those who do not learn the majority language in their country often have less opportunity to participate in public life, access higher education, influence political decisions and embrace economic opportunities. Hence different forms of inequality ... can be linked to the root cause of an exclusionary language and education policy in relation to linguistic minorities.”
2. *Information and communication technologies (ICT)*: ICT was linked to several aspects of education. The context was often in relation to the global spread and reach of technologies and to ensuring that learners are equipped with relevant skills for the twenty-first century. In addition to teaching these skills, education should go beyond conventional methods to closely integrate ICT in learning and teaching processes. Several contributions noted possible uses of technology to complement or be part of education, such as supporting teachers’ professional development and equipping learners to explore new sources of information. Moreover, ICT may strengthen teacher motivation and might also enhance the capacity for educational assessment and monitoring. Such technology was also argued to be applicable to a range of areas – for example, using open and distance learning technology to make education available to remote villages in Africa and Asia, or using technology – such as talking computers – to assist people with disabilities. However, effective utilization relies on bridging the digital divide, training teachers in ICT skills and securing adequate financing, among other factors.

Learning environment

Understandably, the emerging priorities about education quality have focused on learning and relevance. Yet, providing an enabling and positive learning environment – including ensuring basic minimum facilities such as adequate classrooms – remains a larger priority for many, particularly the poor.

Numerous contributions identified the learning environment as fundamental to good-quality education, including safe, healthy and protective physical and social environments for students and teachers to learn and work. This includes infrastructure such as safe/disaster-sensitive and accessible school buildings and classrooms (including proper desks and availability of first aid kits); and separate toilets in sufficient numbers for boys and girls, as well as safe drinking water. Moreover, textbooks, uniforms, free meals and school transportation were all identified as aspects of the learning environment that should be in place to enhance good-quality education.

“In the experience of Partners for Prevention... education settings have been key sites to engage both boys and girls around issues of gender equality, non-violence and healthy relationships, to prevent gender-based violence and promote more gender equitable beliefs and practices....”

– Partners for Prevention, participant in online consultations on Education

“It is highly desirable that the context in which the learning is developed is the same as the context in which the knowledge is to be used. If at all possible, in-school learning should be related to out-of-school learning and other experiences.”

– Md. Zillur Rahman Siddiki,
participant in online consultations
on Education

However, conducive learning environments are more than physical infrastructure and facilities: They should encompass enabling institutional policies that promote and protect human rights. Several contributions noted the need for effective policies to prevent abuse, physical or psychological violence, homophobic bullying and gender-based violence, to name a few. To this end, some inputs identified policies such as a code of conduct for teachers and students as important tools for protecting and promoting rights.

Some contributions suggested the development of measurable indicators for effective learning environments, including both quantitative and qualitative indicators – as well as indicators relating to physical infrastructure, safety and health, management (child participation, empowerment of school authorities, partnership with parents and community) and the availability of equipment and teaching materials.

5.4 Cross-cutting issues

No education framework anchored within a rights-based approach would be complete without attention to the cross-cutting issues of gender, inclusion and emergencies.

Gender

There was strong consensus that gender equality in education is, and should remain, a priority for the post-2015 education agenda.

Several inputs pointed out that inequalities in general, and gender equality in particular, need to be addressed on multiple levels – economic, social, political and cultural – simultaneously. A response on behalf of the International Women’s Health Coalition maintained that “all girls, no matter how poor, isolated or disadvantaged, should be able to attend school regularly and without the interruption of early pregnancy, forced marriage, maternal injuries and death, and unequal domestic and childcare burdens.”

Several inputs pointed to the importance of ensuring access to post-basic and post-secondary education for girls and women. Regarding secondary education, DSW (Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung, or the German Foundation for World Population) noted that the “completion of secondary education has a strong correlation with girls marrying later and delaying first pregnancy.” Moreover, the completion of secondary education results in increased income.

“Barriers to educational opportunity for marginalized groups are the result of a complex set of factors involving social, economic and political systems and the way in which schools engage with children and families from these groups.”

– Sightsavers, participant in online consultations on Education

While access to good-quality education is important for girls and women, preventing gender-based violence and equality through education also remains a priority.

Inclusion

Consistent with a focus on inequalities, the consultations argued for priority attention to the inclusion of all, particularly marginalized and vulnerable groups. The inclusion agenda must address core structural problems responsible for the exclusion of marginalized and vulnerable groups (including those living in remote and rural contexts; ethnic groups, indigenous peoples and other minorities; persons with disabilities and special needs; refugees; migrants; internally displaced people; children at risk of, or removed from, hazardous work or armed forces; and those who are living with HIV, without parental care and in institutions). It must also address the lack of quality and equitable education, exploitative economic/social relations and inequitable societal structures.

Several inputs noted the importance of a participatory approach involving local communities to identify and remove obstacles to inclusion and learning for all. The Intervida Foundation suggested a specific goal of inclusiveness that encompasses: (a) a policy on inclusive education prohibiting all kinds of discrimination, whether based on gender, cultural origin, social status, religious beliefs and any other factor; (b) training programmes for teachers that explore the implications of gender, cultural or other kinds of discrimination; (c) programmes for children with special educational needs and special circumstances (learning and physical disabilities, working children); and (d) a working/functional student government that addresses students' school and community concerns.

Many contributions to the consultations highlighted the importance of equitable access to good-quality education for children with disabilities. The lack of a disability focus in the current frameworks, including in targets or indicators, has often resulted in the effective exclusion of children with disabilities from schools and education mainstreaming in general. A response on behalf of the Task Force on Inclusive Education-Global Partnership on Children with Disabilities submitted evidence on the feasibility and benefits of providing education services for children with disabilities within existing schools.

Emergencies

"In conflict-affected and fragile settings... education programmes must be conflict-sensitive and both minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts [of conflicts]."

– Noemi Gerber participant in online consultations on Education

Several contributions to the online consultations underscored the importance of including disaster preparedness, peacebuilding and conflict resolution in education. A global context marked by natural disasters, violent conflicts and displaced populations requires a comprehensive education response to mitigate the impact on children, youth and adults. The thematic consultation on Conflict, Violence and Disaster noted that a comprehensive education programme is one characterized by school safety, school disaster management and risk reduction, resilience education, disaster risk reduction, and conflict resolution and peacebuilding curricula.

6.0 The post-2015 education vision

This report has provided an overview of the main ideas and suggestions emerging from an exceptionally extensive consultation process. The contributions made to date express optimism and resilience in moving forward, while providing powerful reminders of why the promises that made in 2000 have not been realized for all, particularly for the marginalized and vulnerable groups. In looking forward, this section discusses the main areas of convergence and issues requiring further consideration of the shape and form for the post-2015 education agenda.

Section 6.1 outlines the main messages on the nature of goals that arose from the consultations and the concrete post-2015 frameworks proposed by NGOs, think tanks and academics. It discusses issues relating to the post-2015 education architecture, the prioritization of goals in relation to priorities emerging from the consultations, and measures for monitoring progress.

Section 6.2 reflects discussions at the Global Thematic Consultation on Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda meeting in Dakar, 18–19 March 2013, which endorsed the emerging principles outlined in section 4.0 and proposed an overarching education goal for further discussion and consultation.

6.1 Transforming principles and priorities into goals

The starting point for prioritizing goals in the post-2015 development framework should be a rights-based and equity perspective. Priority goals would aim to mitigate the historical and structural causes of inequalities, which have resulted in the marginalization of particular groups – including minorities, people with disabilities, and people living in underserved areas such as urban slums and remote rural locations.

The list of thematic priorities described in section 5.0 is long and comprehensive, arguably making agreement on goals difficult. However, it reflects a holistic vision of education, incorporating and

EMERGING MESSAGES ON EDUCATION GOALS

- There is clearly a need to agree on global education goals that set worldwide priorities and universal standards, yet are adaptable to specific national contexts and address local challenges.
- The goals should be clear and easy to understand and communicate – and they should convey the power of the MDG agenda effectively, with a strong emphasis on eradicating inequities that result from education, as well as on securing equity of access to and the quality of education.
- As statements of ideals and aspirations, education goals are not necessarily intended to encompass means. However, defining the means to reach the goals is a crucial step towards accomplishing the goals.
- Any education framework for the future should prioritize important goals, whether or not they are within easy reach.
- The goals framework should be tied more closely to a new and streamlined Education for All framework, featuring complementary indicators and building on the EFA goals that have not been met.
- Every goal should have clear targets and indicators. What gets measured gets done – and what gets done should be valued and meaningful. The measurement of goals needs to be addressed when goals are set, and agreement should be reached on which organization(s) will be responsible for monitoring progress.

extending the current EFA goals and the MDGs. Collectively, these thematic concerns represent the broad aspirations and ideals for the future. The goals that must be agreed on are central to the post-2015 education agenda. Several clear messages about setting goals have appeared in the discussions to date (see text box 'Emerging messages on education goals', above). While there is consensus on the broad direction, there are important strategic issues that require further discussion and agreement.

Developing a framework for education goals

Although thematic priorities, rather than goals, have been more fully articulated in the consultations to date, a number of education goals have been suggested by organizations, think tanks and advocacy groups (see table 2, p. 33). There are three distinct ways in which the education goals have been expressed.

First, many organizations, particularly NGOs, have proposed education goals as part of a broader development framework, similar to the MDG+ approach. In such frameworks, the key MDG policy areas and EFA goals are retained, but with important changes and additions to reduce gaps in learning outcomes – for example, school readiness and early childhood interventions. Typically, a single education goal has been suggested. Save the Children proposes: “By 2030, all children and youth are receiving a quality pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary education.” The Global Campaign for Education, United States Chapter (GCE-US) has one education goal within its overall MDG+ framework: “By 2030, all children and youth receive a quality pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education.” The underlying rationale is that the promises have not yet been achieved, and a renewed commitment to the current MDGs needs to be established, encompassing expanded and revised goals.

Second, there have been numerous proposals for a post-2015 development framework arranged as themes rather than a series of sectoral goals. These thematic approaches arise mainly from a focus on sustainable development. The framework for the Sustainable Development Goals, for example, sets out principles for development as universal – covering all countries, rich and poor reflecting equally the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and the interconnections between them. In ‘Realizing the Future We Want for All’, the UN System Task Team report to the Secretary-General, four themes are identified – inclusive social development, inclusive economic development, environmental sustainability, and peace and security.²⁸ In this type of framework, education becomes a cross-cutting goal and is usually subsumed within other thematic categories.

Third, a few proposals have focused exclusively on elaborating education goals and do not attempt to describe an entire post-2015 development framework. Commonwealth Ministers, for example, proposes three ‘principal’ goals: (1) completion of nine years of education; (2) expansion of post-basic education; and (3) elimination of inequality in learning outcomes, as well as six subordinate goals. The EFA Global Monitoring Report proposes one ‘super goal’ – by 2030, everyone has an equal opportunity to learn the basics, whatever their circumstance, with five sub-goals.

A key issue for further deliberation on the education goals is whether there should be a two-tier linked framework: One or two education goals in the post-2015 framework would capture the essence of emerging thematic priorities, and these would be complemented by a more specific education framework

²⁸ United Nations (2012b).

such as EFA. Also to be resolved is the question of how many goals should be included in the education framework. Agreement on these issues could advance future dialogue and discussion.

Table 2 outlines the education goals and sub-goals in selected proposals, and indicates that quality, access and equity are common fundamental elements in all of the proposals. However, there are different ways in which these imperatives are articulated. The majority of proposals are explicit about linking access to quality, with only the Commonwealth Ministers and the Global Monitoring Report separating these as sub-goals. All the proposals mention quality or learning outcomes in their main goals and incorporate it into sub-goals, targets or indicators. The Save the Children proposal is unique in making learning outcomes the primary aim of its sub-goals.

Table 2. Summary of education goals in selected proposals²⁹

Proposal	Overall goals for education	Position in development and education agendas	Access	Quality/ learning	Equity
Bellagio	Education and skills for productive participation in society, achieved through high-quality education for all	One overall goal, three sub-goals, seven targets – all brought within the development agenda ³⁰	Implied in overall goal and explicit in one sub-goal; indicators focus on primary level	Quality mentioned in overall goal and one sub-goal	Targets on socio-economic and gender equality as part of access sub-goal
Save the Children	Ensure children everywhere receive quality education and have good learning outcomes	One goal in development agenda, three targets: learning outcomes and equity; early childhood education; youth skills	Early childhood development access implied in target 2; primary and secondary completion in indicators	Quality and good learning outcomes in overall goal and target 1; achieving literacy, numeracy and skills in target 3	Explicit in target 1; target 2 focuses on poorest young children; indicators include gaps in learning, completion rates, access to and levels of early childhood development

²⁹ Based on material from the education consultations, the Overseas Development Institute's 'Goal Tracker' and the North-South Institute website, www.nsi-ins.ca

³⁰ The Bellagio report (Bates-Eamer et al. 2012) lists both a broader set of 'targets' and a more specific, longer set. This report refers to the former as sub-goals for consistency with other reports.

Basic Education Coalition	All children and youth complete primary and lower-secondary education that enables them to meet measurable learning standards and acquire skills relevant to becoming responsible, productive members of society	One goal in development agenda, with four indicators corresponding to four post-EFA goals: early childhood education; completion of basic education with learning and skills; adult literacy; strong education systems	Primary and lower-secondary completion in overall goal and one sub-goal; ECCE, lifelong learning and adult literacy in sub-goals	Meeting learning standards and acquiring skills in overall goal	Marginalized and vulnerable groups mentioned in sub-goals
Commonwealth	<p>1. Every child completes minimum nine years free basic education and demonstrates learning achievement consistent with national standards</p> <p>2. Post-basic education expanded to meet needs for knowledge and skills related to employment and livelihoods</p> <p>3. Reduce and seek to eliminate differences in learners' educational outcomes associated with household wealth, gender, special needs, location, age and social group</p>	Three education goals in development agenda, plus six (partially overlapping) post-EFA sub-goals: community-based early childhood education/development and preschool; basic education, with achievement of national learning outcomes; post-basic and tertiary-level education and training; literacy, numeracy and second-chance education; reducing and eliminating disparities; learning infrastructure	Basic education (nine years) and post-basic education in main goals; adult literacy and numeracy, second-chance education, and ECCE in the sub-goals	Part of all three main goals	Reducing differences in outcomes is a main goal in itself
GCE-US	By 2030, all children and youth receive quality pre-primary, primary and lower-secondary education	One education goal with indicators on enrolment, quality learning environments and learning outcomes	Pre-primary, primary and lower-secondary named in main goal	Quality in main goal	Enrolment rates disaggregated in indicators
EFA Global Monitoring Report	Ensure that by 2030, everyone has an equal opportunity to learn the basics, whatever their circumstances	One goal in development agenda, divided into five sub-goals	Implicit in main goal: access to ECCE, primary and lower-secondary education, literacy and skills explicit in sub-goals	"Learn the basics" in main goal; references to quality, literacy, numeracy and skills in sub-goals	"Equal opportunity" in main goal; eliminating inequalities is a sub-goal

Prioritizing emerging education themes as goals

Whatever the form and architecture of the post-2015 development framework, it is unlikely that a long list of education goals can be included. Thus, a key area requiring agreement is what the education priorities/goals should be. Specifically, what are the goals that should define the post-2015 education agenda? Which aspects of the thematic priorities discussed above are important enough to turn into specific education goals?

Two main imperatives for any global education agenda are apparent in the discussions to date: equitable access and equitable quality. Once further developed and refined, these areas would reflect the main goals that might be included in a post-2015 development framework. They capture a life-cycle approach to providing opportunities and pathways to progress in education that subsume different levels and types of education delivery, as described in more detail below.

Equitable access: A foundational commitment should be made in the post-2015 education framework to some form of goal focused on equitable access, conceived of as universal coverage of ECCE and basic education for all children and youth, particularly marginalized and vulnerable groups. Basic education is understood as covering nine years of schooling, thus including lower-secondary education. ECCE is understood as a provision for children from birth to school entry (0–8 years old).

Although conceiving a goal in this way could extend access, and accords with evolving practice in many countries, it leaves open the issue of access to post-basic and post-secondary education. One way to articulate this is to suggest that post-basic and post-secondary opportunities should be progressively extended, prioritizing access for marginalized and vulnerable groups within a country's available means. Progressive and equitable extension of post-basic and post-secondary education would be a valued priority, but it would not necessarily become a specific goal in a post-2015 MDG framework.

Equitable quality education: Good-quality, equitable education and learning emerges at the heart of the post-2015 education agenda, and there is an emerging consensus that learning as a proxy measure of quality should be a separate goal. This could be expressed in broad terms, for example: ensuring that all children, particularly marginalized and vulnerable groups, are prepared for school entry and leave school with measurable learning and the skills, knowledge and values to become responsible, active and productive members of society and the world. In this formulation, features that have been identified as significant in the consultations are captured as outcomes of learning; specific targets could be developed at the national level.

Other aspects of quality identified in the consultations could be conceived as a set of enabling conditions for the realization of good-quality education, including:

- Educational environments that are safe, healthy and conducive to learning – including disaster-resistant school buildings and classrooms, clean drinking water, school feeding programmes, and gender-sensitive sanitation and hygiene.
- The presence of trained and motivated teachers in adequate numbers.
- Participatory governance structures that empower parents and local communities to be effectively involved in school decision making.

To fully address inequalities in education, two additional areas require attention. The first is gender equality, which should cover all aspects of education. The marginalization and overlapping inequalities that girls and women face are essential issues to redress, and gender has been proposed a goal on its own, as well as organically tied to all aspects of quality and access. Further discussion is needed, however, about whether gender should be a separate goal in itself or a goal within a larger post-2015 development framework.

The second priority area is focusing on the needs of children, youth and adults in emergency contexts, including natural disaster and conflict. Equitable access and quality in such contexts is a priority that needs to be addressed across the board. Again, more discussion is needed regarding whether this is to be a separate goal.

The inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable groups is incorporated in the above priorities. In focusing on children and youth, however, there is a risk of de-prioritizing the learning need of adults. One way to capture this and include post-secondary opportunities is by developing a commitment to eradicating illiteracy and ensuring that lifelong learning opportunities are in place to support youth and adults.

Developing education targets and indicators

At the current stage of the consultations process, more attention has been paid to identifying priorities instead of agreeing on goals with related targets and appropriate indicators. This is understandable, as setting targets and indicators follows agreement on a set of education goals. Several general points of convergence can be discerned from the consultations:

- Targets and indicators should be globally aspirational but contextually specific and relevant.
- The measurement of targets should include both quantitative and qualitative measures.
- Indicators to measure targets should place emphasis on processes, and on outcomes as well as inputs.
- Targets and indicators should capture, to the extent that is practically possible, the fullness of the ideals and aspirations expressed in the goal.
- Targets and indicators need to provide disaggregated data using an equity lens. National aggregates of achievement do not provide a full and complete picture of progress.

Target dates and characteristics

Many of the proposals suggest a target date in the range of 10–15 years from 2015 (2025–2030). The advantages of a longer target date for education are clear: Many of the priorities identified for the post-2015 education agenda require a longer time period for their achievement. Whatever the target date that is agreed, discussion is needed regarding whether more specific intervening targets should be set within an agreed time range. For example, is there a need for five-year milestone targets for education goals within a 15-year cycle? Any discussion of targets and targets dates must consider whether they are binding agreements. The gender goal for 2005 in MDG 3, for example, was missed, with no obvious consequence.

The expansion of educational priorities also raises issues pertaining to assessing progress. Currently, some measures of progress towards EFA goals and the education MDGs are more developed than others. For example, the current indicators measuring physical access to primary education, such as the net enrolment ratio, are more developed than most others, although comprehensive coverage remains a problem.

Another issue is whether targets should be absolute and universal – for example, the elimination of illiteracy, or all children reaching an agreed benchmark level of proficiency in literacy or numeracy by a certain age. An alternative, as formulated in some proposals, is a linked target. Commonwealth Ministers, for example, links the learning achievement of the rich with that of the poor as a learning target.

One possible way forward is to agree on the global goals and set broad and general targets as articulated above, leaving the exact determination of targets and indicators to be established at the national level.

The risk of such an approach is that monitoring may be a problem, and it may not be possible to assure national targets that are consistent with the articulated principles.

New or additional indicators will need to be developed for some of the priorities, which will require additional data. In relation to ECCE sub-goals, for example, stunting and mortality are presently used as proxies for determining achievements in advancing early childhood development. But there are no commonly used worldwide indicators to assess the coverage and quality of early childhood education, and there are no agreed global measures to assess school readiness. Thus, a focus on the ECCE sub-goals requires more developed measures that assess the extent and quality of such provisions.

Global vs. national outcome measures

The inclusion of a focus on quality and learning outcomes raises several operationalization challenges. First, should the learning outcomes be set globally or nationally? One line of argument is that learning proficiency should be set by national governments according to national curricula expectations. The risk is that such a national metric may not make it possible for global goal setting. The alternative is to set a global learning outcome that all countries should achieve by the target date of 2030, with national governments setting intermediate benchmarks. These national benchmarks could be linked to baseline starting points, with a view to achieving the global target by 2030. But this raises a further question: Should the global metric be measured using cross-curricula global tests such as the Programme for International Student Assessment, national forms of assessment such as Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, or both?

The difficulty of assessing learning outcomes globally is that there is currently no single organization with such a mandate. Instead, large-scale international assessments are spread across several organizations, including PASEC (the CONFEMEN Programme on the Analysis of Education Systems), the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality, the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the World Bank. At the least, measuring global outcomes would require coordination across the different organizations that are collecting information about learning.

A further issue is whether the global learning outcome measures should cover only literacy and numeracy and leave other outcomes to the national level. The risk of this is that other outcomes become effectively de-prioritized, as has occurred with several of the current global education goals. Moreover, there is a strong argument that learning outcomes in any sub-goal should extend beyond basic proficiencies to encompass transferable, flexible skills that promote active citizenship. There is as yet no global consensus on the precise definition of such skills, what the measures might be, or how the data might be generated. Although it is likely that achieving consensus will be a complicated process, the Learning Metrics Task Force offers one resource for resolving this issue.³¹

³¹ More information on the Learning Metrics Task Force can be found at the Brookings website, www.brookings.edu/about/centers/universal-education/learning-metrics-task-force, or UNESCO, www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/learning-metrics-task-force.aspx.

Measuring learning inputs

Measuring quality in a holistic way requires qualitative assessments to complement quantitative data. While measuring learning outcomes is important, there are several other equally important aspects. The consultations have called for measurement of learning inputs (such as infrastructure, including availability of classrooms, learning resources, and water, sanitation and hygiene facilities) and processes (percentage of time spent on instruction, and approaches to teaching and learning). These measures also need to consider teachers, who are vital to realizing quality education, and could include such indicators as teacher-pupil ratios, teacher qualifications, and sufficient numbers of trained and motivated teachers.

Linking education to employment

Certain output indicators have been suggested that are consistent with a lifelong education perspective, measuring progress across different levels of the education system. These include transition rates between different levels of the education system and outcomes relating to employment and work, and they would provide a more outcomes-focused approach, linking education access and quality to progression and work opportunities. Various contributions to the consultation have mentioned including education financing and expenditure indicators to measure progress in achieving the agreed goal. This includes expenditure across different levels of education and, crucially, from an equity perspective, education spending on marginalized and vulnerable groups.

There is a clear consensus that all indicators should be disaggregated to address inequities. Depending on the indicator, this disaggregation would include such markers as gender, location, disability, wealth, ethnicity, migrant status, sexual orientation and age. The disaggregation of data should occur at the global, national and sub-national levels to make inequities more visible and allow for development of proactive equity policies and strategies. In addition, disaggregation of data should pay particular attention to emergency contexts.

The consultations cautioned against developing too many targets and indicators that place inordinate reporting pressures on countries and may detract from other national priorities. Thus, an important implementation issue is the need to strengthen national data collection systems.

6.2 Defining an overarching goal

The discussion at the Global Thematic Consultation on Education meeting in Dakar continued the conversation on emerging priorities and goals. Emerging principles for a post-2015 education agenda were endorsed at the meeting, and it was noted that there is still a long road to travel in fulfilling the commitments made in the EFA goals and the Millennium Declaration in 2000, despite unprecedented progress in education.

An expanded vision of education is needed to address the outstanding issues and respond to a changing global context characterized by increasing interconnectivity, climate change, knowledge-based societies, and shifting demographic dynamics and inequalities. Accordingly, an overarching goal for education focused on expanded access and quality, with a strong focus on equity was proposed – ‘Equitable, Quality Education and Lifelong Learning for All’. The strength of this overarching goal is that it is consistent with ideas in many of the contributions; the challenge lies in operationalization. Within the

current MDG framework, and even in the proposals for a thematic restructuring of the MDGs, it is difficult for a single goal to encompass the complexity and scale inherent in this overarching concept.

The discussion in Dakar resonated with earlier conversations on access and quality, particularly in the following points:

- *An expanded vision of equitable access, including access to ECCE, post-basic and higher education* – Although access to post-basic and post-secondary education is a priority, financing remains a challenge. Therefore, expanding such opportunities should be progressively extended within a country's available means, prioritizing access for marginalized and vulnerable groups. Moreover, a commitment to eradicating illiteracy by ensuring that lifelong education opportunities are in place to support youth and adults is a key priority.
- *Equitable quality education, with a focus on learning* – Good-quality, equitable education and learning are at the heart of the post-2015 education agenda, and there is an emerging consensus that learning outcomes as a measure of quality should be part of any expanded vision of access. The commitment to quality education and measurable and recognized learning outcomes focuses attention on the need for all children, youth and adults to acquire the skills, knowledge and values to become responsive, active and productive members of society and the world. Equitable lifelong education requires attention to enabling conditions – conducive learning environments with the proper and necessary infrastructure; the presence of sufficient numbers of trained and motivated teachers; and participatory governance structures that empower parents and local communities to be effectively involved in school decision making.

FOUR FOCUS POINTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OVERARCHING GOAL

1. Access and complete quality pre-primary education of at least one year for all girls and boys.
2. Equal access to and completion of a full course of quality primary schooling, with recognized and measurable learning outcomes, especially in literacy and numeracy.
3. All adolescent girls and boys able to access and complete quality lower secondary/secondary education with recognized and measurable learning outcomes.
4. All youth and adults, particularly girls and women, able to access post-secondary learning opportunities to develop knowledge and skills, including technical and vocational, that are relevant to work and life and necessary for further learning and forging more just, peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies.

The proposed overarching goal echoes the key points of discussions on all education goals within the post-2015 development framework: It should challenge all forms of historical and structural education inequities – including recognition of the overlapping inequalities that affect girls and women. It requires a strong statement on the needs of vulnerable groups – including those living in remote and rural contexts and urban slums; ethnic, indigenous and other minorities; persons with disabilities; refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons; and children at risk of hazardous work or recruitment and use by armed forces and groups, as well as those who have been released. The goal would also focus attention on the needs of children, youth and adults in emergency contexts, including natural disaster and conflict.

7.0 Fulfilling the post-2015 education agenda

Some key ideas for fulfilling the education agenda have been highlighted in the consultations, and they are described briefly in this concluding section.

Developing an enabling environment, which draws on the lessons of the current education global agenda, is suggested for the realization of any goals agreed on. It is essential to consider financing and other factors that will support implementation of the new agenda's goals.

Strengthening national education systems should continue to be a top priority for the post-2015 education agenda. This should include ensuring sufficient national funding for education; improved education human resource management and leadership; and capacity development for all those involved in education, including teachers and parents. Without a strong education system, many existing structural deficiencies and inequalities will persist.

Proactive and targeted interventions and programmes to support marginalized and vulnerable groups, such as additional learning support in basic education for children from the lowest socio-economic status, were indicated to be essential in many of the consultation suggestions. Moreover, in measuring progress, there should be a linked equity measure, for example, the percentage of the top 20 per cent of household income accessing quality basic education compared to those from the lowest 20 per cent.

Assuring adequate financing as education ambitions for the post-2015 education agenda grow in scale and scope becomes a major challenge. The lack of political will on the part of national governments and international agencies to provide adequate financing was regarded as a crucial factor that could hinder implementation, and innovative financing strategies need to be identified for the education agenda to achieve its vision.

Effective participation in education policy formulation was highlighted in several contributions. Moreover, it is important that discussions leading to agreement about goals should involve broad participation, which has been a central feature of the discussions to date. Only through extensive participation in developing the post-2015 education agenda can there be ownership of the goals and, consequently, their realization.

Strengthening the capacities of national monitoring and evaluation systems is vital to making progress on any agreed education goals. A core part of national monitoring and evaluation should be the development of an evidence base to inform policy development, identifying what works and what does not, and under what conditions. Moreover, effective monitoring and evaluation systems that provide reliable and valid information strengthen accountability and system capacities for change.

Effective and well-regulated public-private partnerships are needed to ensure a common and united vision of education for the common good. Such partnerships should identify points of convergence, focused on strengthening national education systems.

Continuing the dialogue

This report of the Global Thematic Consultation on Education, 'Making Education a Priority in the Post-2015 Development Agenda', offers a summary of the education consultations to date. It identifies areas of convergence while outlining issues that need further discussion and deliberation. The conversation on the post-2015 development framework has, thus far, focused on sectoral or thematic interests. Going forward, it will be essential to discuss how the sectoral and other thematic conversations converge.

Education is a powerful catalyst for development and has significant impacts on other sectors, just as those sectors affect education. This was emphasized in the Global Thematic Consultation on Education and in all other thematic consultations – especially Addressing Inequalities, Environmental Sustainability, Health, and Conflict, Violence and Disaster. Good-quality education that addresses inequities remains a vital priority in promoting sustainable development and creating a more equitable world for all.

Appendix I. Summary of EFA and MDG progress

EFA goal and related MDG	Notes on progress
<p>EFA 1 Early childhood care and education (ECCE)</p> <p><i>Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children</i></p>	<p>ECCE is broadly defined as including all care and education for children 0–8 years old; the quantitative monitoring of the goals, however, focuses mainly on pre-primary education. Globally, considerable progress has been made in achieving ECCE. Early childhood well-being is improving, and child mortality and malnutrition rates have declined in many countries in all regions of the world. The MDG target for child mortality, on the other hand, is unlikely to be met. Under-5 mortality remains high, at 123 per 1,000 in sub-Saharan Africa and 88 per 1,000 in South and West Asia. The figures are also high for moderate and severe stunting, at 29% for all children aged 5 or under and 40% in low-income countries.</p> <p>Enrolment in preschool programmes has expanded over the past decade. Many countries, such as in Latin America and the Caribbean and in sub-Saharan Africa, have developed ECCE policies, and more and more of these, including many in Asia and the Pacific, understand that such policies must be multi-sectoral and comprehensive. Gross enrolment ratios in pre-primary education are 49% in East Asia and the Pacific and 68% in Latin America and the Caribbean. Since 2000, the ratios have increased in South and West Asia, from 25% to 42%, and in Central Asia, from 22% to 29%. Progress has been slowest in low-income countries, with low rates and little improvement seen in sub-Saharan Africa (from 12% to 17%) and the Arab States (from 16% to 19%).</p> <p>The ECCE index measures overall progress by averaging the percentage of children who survive beyond their fifth birthday, the percentage who do not suffer from moderate or severe stunting, and the percentage of children aged 3–7 enrolled in school. Of the 68 countries for which data are available for 2010, only Belarus achieved a score over 0.95. The 25 countries with an ECCE index score between 0.80 and 0.95, viewed as achieving a middle ranking, are mostly middle-income countries in Central Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The remaining 42 countries, with an index score below 0.80, are mostly low- and lower-middle income countries, and the majority are in sub-Saharan Africa.³²</p>

³² Low income (36 countries): Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tajikistan, Togo, Tokelau, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

<p>EFA 2 Universal primary education</p> <p><i>Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality</i></p> <p>MDG 2 Achieve universal primary education</p> <p><i>Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling</i></p>	<p>On current trends, the target for universal primary education will be missed – although the number of out-of-school children of primary school age was reduced from 108 million in 1999 to 61 million in 2010, with more than half of this improvement seen in sub-Saharan Africa. The rate of reduction was rapid between 1999 and 2004, but then started slowing, and progress has stalled since 2008. Out of 124 countries, the number with a primary net enrolment ratio of more than 97% increased from 37 to 55, between 1999 and 2010. Dropout remains a problem in low-income countries, where an average 59% of children starting school reached the last grade in 2009. The problem is particularly acute for children who start late, and the drop-out rate is highest during the first few years of schooling.</p> <p>Similarly, the MDG Report 2012 finds that the net enrolment rate for primary-school-aged children rose from 82% to 90% in developing world regions between 1999 and 2010, but progress has been slow since 2004. The MDG on primary education also monitors completion rates and literacy rates for young people aged 15–24. In 2010, the global primary completion rate reached 90%, compared with 81% in 1999. Girls and boys have similar chances of completing primary education in all regions except sub-Saharan Africa and Western Asia. Globally, the youth literacy rate reached 90% in 2010, an increase of 6 percentage points since 1990. Gender gaps in youth literacy rates are also narrowing; globally, there were 95 literate young women for every 100 young men in 2010, compared with 90 women in 1990.</p>
<p>EFA 3 Youth and adult learning needs</p> <p><i>Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes</i></p>	<p>Monitoring progress is difficult, not least due to the absence of quantifiable targets and consensus on benchmarks. Recent developments will not produce sufficient data in time to measure EFA goal 3 adequately before 2015. Despite a global increase in the number of children enrolling in secondary school, the lower secondary gross enrolment ratio was just 52% in low-income countries in 2010. Although the number of out-of-school adolescents of lower secondary school age was reduced from 101 million in 1999 to 71 million in 2010, it has stagnated since 2007. Three out of four out-of-school adolescents live in South and West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.</p>
<p>EFA 4 Improving adult literacy</p> <p><i>Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults</i></p>	<p>Most countries will miss EFA goal 4, some by a large margin. There were still 775 million adults who could not read or write in 2010, about two thirds of them women. Globally, the adult literacy rate has increased over the past two decades, from 76% in 1985–1994 to 84% in 2005–2010 but, partly because the world's population has grown, the number of illiterate adults has decreased modestly, from 881 million to 775 million.</p>

<p>EFA 5 Assessing gender parity and equality in education</p> <p><i>Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality</i></p> <p>MDG 3 Promote gender equality and empower women.</p> <p><i>Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015³³</i></p>	<p>Convergence in enrolment between boys and girls has been one of the successes of the EFA since 2000, but more needs to be done to ensure that education opportunities and outcomes are equitable. Of 138 countries with data available, 68 have not achieved gender parity in primary education, and girls are disadvantaged in 60 of them. The Arab States and sub-Saharan Africa, each with a gender parity index (GPI) of 93, have yet to achieve parity, while South and West Asia reached parity in 2010. The number of countries with severe gender disparities halved between 1999 and 2010, from 33 countries to 17. At the pre-primary level, gender parity has been achieved on average, although this reflects low enrolment rates for both boys and girls. At the secondary level, 97 countries have not reached gender parity; in 43 of them, girls are disadvantaged. In sub-Saharan Africa, the GPI in secondary education is only 83. At the tertiary level, there are large regional disparities, with 10 boys for every 6 girls studying at this level in sub-Saharan Africa, compared to 8 boys for every 10 girls in North America and Western Europe.</p> <p>The 2012 MDG Report presents similar results. The primary education GPI for developing regions grew from 91 in 1999 to 97 in 2010, falling within the range 100±3 that is considered to represent parity. Boys' participation rates were higher than those of girls in 53 out of 131 countries, while the opposite was true in 7 countries. Girls from the poorest households face the biggest barriers to education. The GPI for the developing world in 2010 was 96 at the secondary level and 98 at the tertiary level. Gender parity at the tertiary level hides both large regional disparities and gender differences in areas of study. The 2010 MDG Report notes that women were over-represented in the humanities and social sciences and significantly under-represented in science, technology and, especially, engineering. Completion rates also tend to be lower among women than men.</p>
<p>EFA 6 The quality of education</p> <p>Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills</p>	<p>Of around 650 million children of primary school age, as many as 250 million either do not reach Grade 4 or, if they do, fail to attain minimum learning standards. Pupil-teacher ratios at the primary level improved globally between 1999 and 2010, especially in East Asia and Latin America. But they worsened in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia. Of 100 countries with data at the primary level, in 33 less than 75% of teachers were trained to the national standard. Even those who have received training are not always well prepared to teach in early grades.</p>

Source: For EFA, Education for All Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO GMR 2012a) and for the MDGs, United Nations 2010, 2012a.

³³ The gender MDG also includes the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector and the proportion of seats held by women in the national parliament, as indicators.

Appendix II. Education as featured in other thematic consultations³⁴

Theme	Links to education
Addressing Inequalities	<p>Increased access to education is key to reducing inequity in the quality of education delivered, and particularly in access to secondary education for marginalized and vulnerable groups. The root causes of marginalization and discrimination should be addressed through education campaigns.</p> <p>Non-formal education and learning that takes place outside the classroom is crucial, particularly peer education, so that young people become aware of their rights.</p> <p>The new development agenda should ensure sustained action and accountability for universal access to quality, comprehensive, integrated sexual and reproductive health education and services, counselling and information, with respect for human rights. It should emphasize equality, equity and respect for diversity.</p>
Conflict, Violence and Disaster	<p>In contexts of conflict and disaster, there is an urgent need to attend to the needs and rights of children, youth and adults through conflict-sensitive education. Education is vital for peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Schools, and the curricula, should promote understanding and knowledge of tolerance and conflict resolution.</p> <p>Education has an important role in creating a safer world for children through provision of comprehensive school safety, school disaster management and risk reduction programmes; raising awareness about existing hazards; and promoting resilience education for children, youth, and adults.</p> <p>Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction across development planning and social sectors, such as education, is essential to mitigating the adverse impacts of disasters on education.</p>
Environmental Sustainability/Energy	<p>Education is key to supporting environmental sustainability. In a global context of dwindling natural resources, education is vital in creating 'green' economies, and more sustainable and equitable societies, whether in rural or urban settings.</p> <p>Providing education in a variety of situations, through an equitable access framework, is required to redress inequitable access to environmental resources.</p>
Growth and Employment	<p>Better-quality education is directly linked to income growth and employment. Education also needs to be linked to work-based programmes through apprenticeships to help young people learn practical problem-solving and workplace skills.</p>

³⁴ Further analysis of the thematic priorities will take place in the next iteration of this report. Appendix II does not include the thematic consultation on Governance because that synthesis thematic report was not yet finalized.

Health	<p>Education is a determinant of health and has an essential role in improving health.</p> <p>Education for girls and women is crucial for improving women's and children's health and choices of family size. Women who are empowered through education and good health generally choose to have fewer children and are able to invest more in the health and education of their children, thereby creating a positive cycle for growth and development.</p> <p>A stronger focus on early childhood development and care is needed to reduce health inequalities in adolescence and adulthood which affect access to education and quality of learning.</p> <p>Greater focus is needed on health, literacy and education.</p>
Hunger, Food Security and Nutrition	<p>Among both children and adults, unequal access to education is a barrier to achieving food and nutrition security. Education is a necessity to facilitate promotion of healthy food choices and nutrition-related behaviours conducive to health.</p> <p>Hunger needs to be addressed in a comprehensive way. Although adequate nutrition is strongly linked to food security, nutritional status is determined by many factors, including women's education and income, family planning, access to quality health-care services and education. Further, it is acknowledged that women's empowerment through education enables them to control household resources, including food.</p>
Population Dynamics	<p>Education transforms population dynamics, and demographic change is strongly influenced by human development, notably investment in the education and health of the population.</p> <p>Human development, including education, is an important end in itself as well as a crucial means to socially, economically and environmentally sustainable development. However, efforts to strengthen human development should extend throughout the entire life of a person, rather than focus only on the early stages.</p>
Water	<p>Clean water is essential for personal health and well-being, and the development of communities. Studies by WaterAid show illnesses due to waterborne diseases impede educational attainment, which in turn has a significant impact on health, well-being and poverty over a lifetime and potentially over multiple generations.</p> <p>Education is crucial to understanding the importance of water and forest conservation and the negative effects of pollution.</p> <p>Principles of sustainable environmental development in the twenty-first century call for water education for all, which goes beyond the technical knowledge of water (e.g., types, sources, uses, treatment, management and its associated problems). It includes raising people's awareness of water usage, their civic responsibilities towards water, and cultural beliefs and practices in relation to water.</p>

Appendix III. Summary of discussions during the regional EFA consultations

EFA regional/global meeting	Concepts for the post-2015 framework
<p>Arab Region (Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, 16–19 October 2012)</p>	<p>The starting point for any discussion of education post-2015 should be a vision of society. Basic education as a human right should be reaffirmed. Education reform needs to be closely coordinated with political, social and economic reform.</p> <p>Any future international agenda needs to be flexible to reflect regional and national realities, perhaps through common ‘aspirational goals’ at the global level and more context-specific regional or national target-setting. There is a need for more effective regional cooperation and coordination frameworks, and partnerships need to be strengthened and should include NGOs, the private sector and academia.</p> <p>The six EFA goals remain valid as a framework for post-2015, but equitable access to basic education for all will not be ensured by 2015. There is a need to focus on youth education of youth, in terms of skills development for work and life, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and general secondary education. The importance of ECCE was reaffirmed.</p> <p>There is a need for external bodies to monitor education quality; for increased focus on quality results and their equitable social distribution; and to consider private education, ‘shadow’ education (activities outside of school) and private tutoring.</p>

<p>Africa Region (Johannesburg, 16–20 October 2012)</p>	<p>East African Community participants called for an extended and expanded vision of Basic Education for All, incorporating ECCE, primary education and lower secondary education. Equity is a prime concern. A third priority is to improve education management. Applying information and communication technologies (ICT) in teaching and learning, and in education management, was commonly recommended.</p> <p>For Southern African Development Community countries, the post-2015 agenda should seek to prioritize quality, focusing on improving learning outcomes. But access should remain a priority for minorities, children with special needs and the poor.</p> <p>Countries in the Economic Community of West African States were concerned mainly with equitable access for all, from ECCE to primary and lower secondary education of good quality. Participants from the Economic Community of Central African States noted the tendency regionally to focus on 8–9 years of basic education.</p> <p>Priorities include teachers, teacher training, learning needs of youth and adults, quality and improved learning environments, and reaching out to marginalized communities, including minorities and children with disabilities.</p>
<p>Latin America and Caribbean (Mexico City, 29–30 January 2013)</p>	<p>Reaffirm education as a human right. Acknowledge progress in the region towards meeting the EFA goals and MDGs, as well as remaining challenges. Recognize inequity as the major ‘pending task’ for the region and agree that reduction of inequity and poverty should be a guiding principle for the post-2015 educational agenda, through quality education for all.</p> <p>Advocate for integrated post-2015 development agenda with a large role for education. The new agenda should also take into account national and sub-national contexts. Strategic alliances and coalitions are needed to support educational progress. Convergence of educational and development agendas was recommended, along with calls for strengthening South-South and North-South cooperation.</p> <p>Trends that affect educational development beyond 2015 include: innovative programmes and curricula on citizenship education; expansion of ICT; programmes that focus on lifelong learning; expansion of tertiary and higher education; intercultural or multicultural education; education for sustainable development; and improved educational planning.</p>

<p>Asia and Pacific Region (Bangkok, 27 February –1 March 2013)</p>	<p>Post-2015 goals must recognize unfinished business as well as emerging regional and global challenges. The emphasis is on learning, whether through formal or non-formal channels. National EFA coordination mechanisms, and links with regional and global mechanisms, need to be strengthened in the run-up to 2015.</p>
<p>EFA Side Meeting (Paris, 22 November 2012)</p>	<p>Education has slipped in the international development agenda, partly because of perceived success. There is a need to prioritize and answer the question: If only one education goal can be included in a post-2015 development framework, what should it be?</p> <p>A simple and pragmatic approach to goal formulation and target setting is a necessity. Goals must be achievable and measurable. The new framework must be more flexible to reflect country contexts, without being too flexible to be used for resource mobilization and advocacy.</p> <p>Reference to education needs to: be rights-based; go beyond primary schooling to include youth and vocational skills, as well as skills for lifelong learning; and foster global citizenship with relevant types of knowledge, skills and values for positive citizen engagement.</p>
<p>CCNGO/EFA (Paris, 24–26 October 2012)</p>	<p>Unaccomplished goals should be addressed in the post-2015 agenda. The agenda should be founded on education as a human right, with universal goals and contextualized targets, particularly to meet the needs of marginalized groups. Principles of equity, inclusion and non-discrimination must underpin policies and practices, with gender equality at the centre.</p> <p>A holistic lifelong learning framework is called for, with initiatives identified at every stage from ECCE to higher education and workplace learning.</p> <p>The fundamental role of teachers should be given a higher priority.</p> <p>Member states should increase domestic financing for education, including through progressive taxation and revenue from natural resources. The private sector must meet its obligations, both fiscally and in providing training. Donors must keep their promises.</p> <p>Education for citizenship must be a central feature of new goals, and governments should guarantee mechanisms for civil society participation.</p> <p>UNESCO should strengthen its leadership role, secure and disseminate quality data and analysis and help ministries strengthen databases; and secure funding for sustained participation of the CCNGO/EFA.</p>

Appendix IV. Resources on proposed education goals, by framework type

Education goals in MDG+ frameworks

Bellagio Goals

Resource title: 'Post-2015 Development Agenda: Goals, targets and indicators – Special report' (Bates-Eamer et al. 2012); http://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/MDG_Post_2015v3.pdf

Overall goal: Appropriate education and skills for productive participation in society.

Target date: 2030

Save the Children

Resource title: 'Ending the Hidden Exclusion: Learning and equity in education post-2015' (Save the Children 2013); <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/ending-hidden-exclusion>

Overall goal: Ensure children everywhere receive quality education and have good learning outcomes.

Target date: 2030

Education-specific frameworks

Basic Education Coalition (2013)

Resource title: 'Each Child Learning, Every Student a Graduate: A bold vision for lifelong learning beyond 2015' (Basic Education Coalition 2013); <http://www.basiced.org/2013/01/basic-education-coalition-releases-recommendations-on-global-education-goals>

Proposed post-MDG goal: All children and youth complete primary and lower secondary education that enables them to meet measurable learning standards and acquire relevant skills so they may become responsible, productive members of society.

Target date: 2030

Commonwealth Secretariat

Resource title: 'Commonwealth Recommendations for the Post-2015 Development Framework for Education' (Commonwealth Secretariat 2012); http://www.thecommonwealth.org/document/181889/34293/35144/254282/commonwealth_recommendations_for_the_post_2015_dev.htm

Main goals: Every child completes a full cycle of nine years continuous, free basic education and demonstrates learning achievement consistent with national standards; strategic expansion of post-basic education to meet needs for knowledge and skills related to employment and livelihoods; reduction and elimination of differences in learners' educational outcomes associated with household wealth, gender, disabilities, location, age and social group.

Target date: 2025

Global Campaign for Education, United States Chapter

Resource title: 'Total Reach, Total Learning: Education beyond 2015 – Preliminary messages' (GCE-US 2012); <http://www.campaignforeducationusa.org/news-and-resources/press-room/gce-us-releases-post-2015-policy-paper-total-reach-total-learning-educ>

Overall goal: By 2030, all children and youth are receiving quality pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education.

Target date: 2030

UNESCO

Resource title: 'Education for All Global Monitoring Report: Proposed post-2015 education goals – Emphasizing equity, measurability and finance (Initial draft for discussion)' (UNESCO 2013b);

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/post-2015>

Overarching goal: Ensure that by 2030, everyone has an equal opportunity to learn the basics, whatever their circumstances.

Target date: 2030

Education goals in thematic frameworks

Sustainable Development Goals

Title: 'From Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals' (Sachs 2012); <http://jeffsachs.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/From-MDGs-to-SDGs-Lancet-June-2012.pdf>

Overall goals: Education to be included under SDG 3 – every country will promote the well-being and capabilities of all citizens, enabling all to reach their potential, irrespective of class, gender, ethnic origin, religion or race.

Target date: 2030

UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda

Resource title: 'Education and Skills for Inclusive and Sustainable Development Beyond 2015' (2012); [http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Think Pieces/4_education.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Think%20Pieces/4_education.pdf)

Goals: Not specified but education is mentioned as an important part of social and economic development.

Documents without full goal frameworks

African Union, African Development Bank Group, Economic Commission for Africa and UNDP

Resource title: *MDG Report 2012: Assessing progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals – Emerging perspectives from Africa on the post-2015 development agenda* (African Union Commission, et al. 2012);

http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/publications/mdgreport2012_eng.pdf

Centre for Global Development

Resource title: 'MDGs 2.0: What goals, targets, and timeframe?' (Karver et al. 2012); http://international.cgdev.org/files/1426271_file_Kenny_Karver_MDGs_FINAL.pdf

Centre for Universal Education, Save the Children, and Women Thrive Worldwide (2013)

Resource title: Equitable Learning for All in the Post-2015 Development Agenda

<http://womenthrive.org/media-resources/resources/new-brief-equitable-learning-all-post-2015-development-agenda>

Education International

Resource title: 'Education for All and the Global Development Agenda beyond 2015: Principles for a post-2015 education and development framework' (2013);

http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCwQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fsustainabledevelopment.un.org%2FgetWSDoc.php%3Fid=785&ei=LmX8UY_4JbK54AOPuoH4Dw&usg=AFQjCNE4xPg13VEkmqooT0rxAgRX7s5ibQ&bvm=bv.50165853,d.dmg&cad=rja

Global Campaign for Education (2013)

Resource title: Making education for all a reality: Beyond 2015;

<http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/340073>

Global Partnership for Education

Resource title: 'Statement by the Global Partnership for Education at the Post-2015 Education Global Meeting in Dakar, March 18–19, 2013';

www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&cad=rja&ved=0CDgQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.worldwewant2015.org%2Ffile%2F327388%2Fdownload%2F355685&ei=KGT8UZvKNZO54AOrm4DQAw&usg=AFQjCNElKKd8Bo8tFwN_a8zOvQRHGCupkA&bvm=bv.50165853,d.dmg

German Development Institute

Resource title: 'Post-2015: How to reconcile the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?' (Loewe 2012);

<http://post2015.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/loewe-2012-post-2015-mdgs-and-sdgs-english.pdf>

International Network for Education in Emergencies

Resource title: 'INEE Statement on the Post-2015 Framework' (2013)

http://www.ineesite.org/uploads/files/resources/INEE_Statement_on_the_Post-2015_Framework_2013-03-14.pdf

North-East Asian Youth Declaration

Resource title: 'North-East Asian Youth Conference: The world we want – A North-East Asian youth vision' (2013); <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/file/299201/download/324588>

Oxfam

Resource title: 'How Can a Post-2015 Agreement Drive Real Change?: The political economy of global commitments' (Green, Hale and Lockwood 2012);

<http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/dp-politics-post-2015-mdgs-revised-211112-en.pdf>

Second Asia-Pacific High-Level Meeting, November 2012

Resource title: 'What Education for the Future? Beyond 2015 – Rethinking learning in a changing world' (UNESCO 2012d); <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/315627>

United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI)

Resource title: 'Post-2015 Development Agenda UNGEI Statement' (2013);
http://www.ungei.org/infobycountry/247_3150.html

UNESCO

Resource title: 'Education for All: Beyond 2015 – Mapping current international actions to define the post-2015 education and development agendas' (Narayan 2012);
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/temp/Mapping_post_2015-Swati_Narayan.pdf

UNESCO Bangkok

First Asia-Pacific High Level Meeting, May 2012

Resource title: 'Towards EFA 2015 and Beyond – Shaping a new vision of education' (UNESCO 2012c); <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/315625>

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