Global Thematic Consultation on Education and the Post-2015 Development Framework

Making
Education For All
a reality

Beyond2015

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Executive Summary

The education sector has a long history of global goals and frameworks. Since the Jomtien World Conference on Education in 1990, there has been considerable progress in getting more children – including girls – into school, and reducing the number of non-literate adults. Yet there are still 131 million children of primary and lower secondary school age out of school and 755 million non-literate adults[1], and the quality of education is often woefully poor. This failure to ensure that schooling actually leads to education – which is denying hundreds of millions their rights – exists despite quality education being both emphasized in the Jomtien declaration and included in the goals agreed in the Dakar Framework for Action on Education For All (2000). Political will has been missing for those aspects of education – quality, lifelong learning, adult literacy, inclusive education, gender equality beyond parity of access – that were not included in the more narrowly focused Millennium Development Goals. This points to the mobilizing power of those goals, and to the need to recapture the broad understanding of education and its purpose in future goals and frameworks.

The starting point: the right to education

The right to education has been recognized at least since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and has since been reiterated and elaborated through numerous human rights treaties and conventions. These treaties, their use and interpretation have produced a framework through which the right to education is understood to comprise four essential and related components: availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability. This implies that States have a responsibility to ensure non-discriminatory, inclusive education at all levels, including universal primary education; teachers and learning environments to guarantee quality; and finances to guarantee this.

What we want: universal, equitable access to quality education

Despite progress, there is today a crisis in education that can be characterized both in terms of access, and in terms of quality. Inequity and inequality cut across both sets of issues. Hundreds of millions of people still have no access to even basic education, and globally we are 1.7 million teachers short of the number needed to guarantee universal primary education by 2015. And it is the most marginalized and excluded – girls, children with disabilities, people from minorities, those living in fragile states – who are most likely to miss out. Secondly, poor quality education means that many children cannot read a single sentence after even three years of schooling. Neither of these crises can be treated separately – access without quality doesn't produce education; quality without access entrenches inequality. Rather, equity, quality and access must be sought together. Measurement of access must be broader than primary school enrolment (e.g. completion, transition, inclusion, equity) and measurement of quality must include the key elements agreed as essential for a quality education – trained teachers, quality learning environments and relevant curricula – as

well as being careful to consider how approaches to measurement impact on progress towards goals.

What this requires: trained teachers, quality learning environments and relevant curricula

Whilst there have been many attempts to define quality education, there is strong consensus around the importance of teachers, learning environments and curricula. There must be sufficient teachers, who need to be well-trained in their subject area, in pedagogy and in child rights, and well-supported, with high professional standards. The lack of trained teachers – half of all teachers in Africa have low or no qualifications, for example – is a key reason why schooling is not translating into learning. A professional teacher workforce is crucial for quality education, for inclusivity and for child protection. In terms of learning environments, these need to be available, accessible for all including those with disabilities, safe and child-friendly. Curricula must be relevant to the needs of the learners and community (culturally, linguistically, and socially), must promote global citizenship and values such as equality, tolerance, non-discrimination and non-violence, must be non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive, and must include crucial skills such as comprehensive sexuality education and education for sustainable development and the green economy.

How we get there: state responsibility, adequate financing, improved governance

This statement of what we need – equitable access to quality education – and what that involves – in terms of teachers, learning environments and curricula – is not new, but emerges from lengthy study and analysis of what works in terms of quality education. The fact that we are still so far from realizing this in practice – denying hundreds of millions their right to even a basic education – relates to structural factors.

It must firstly be recognized that education is a state responsibility, and that governments must provide free, public education for their citizens. Where state capacity is weak, donors and other stakeholders have a responsibility to help build it. The financing gap for education is huge, which has too often led to cost-cutting (and failed) strategies such as untrained teachers. There must be, at least, sufficient finance to fill the multi-billion dollar gap in external financing for the EFA goals. Funds must be spent transparently and accountably on agreed priorities (such as trained teachers, marginalized populations, children with disabilities, etc). This in turn requires strong and participatory governance, where citizens and civil society have a genuine role in decision-making and in monitoring.

What this means for goal-setting

Whilst this paper does not recommend specific goals, the discussion set out here does lead to clear principles by which goals can be assessed:

- There is a need for global goals to drive action, but varying national contexts may require national (or local) benchmarks and measurement
- Goals and indicators must emphasize equity and equality, with consistent disaggregation of indicators to give a better view of marginalization and diversity.
- Goals should be comprehensive and drive progress on the broad aim of equitable, universal access to quality education. The experience of the MDGs argues against the narrowing of the agenda to, for example, literacy and numeracy (though this may be part of the agenda).
- Goals and measurement should be designed with a view to how to achieve outcomes; this can include key inputs where there is consensus (trained teachers, quality learning environments, etc) and process goals such as citizen participation and financing.
- Goals should be comprehensible and compelling if they are to mobilize the political and social will required for our aims to be achieved.

Introduction: the unfinished business of Education For All

2015 marks the deadlines for achievement of both the Education For All (EFA) Dakar Framework For Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and falls shortly after the end points of the UN Decades on Literacy and on Education for Sustainable Development. Globally, there has been a significant transformation in the education sector since 2000, when the governments of the world agreed both the EFA framework (in collaboration with civil society and other stakeholders) and, subsequently, the MDGs. There has been progress, in particular on access to education. Yet it is important not to overstate this progress, nor to deny the complexity of the challenges remaining, which encompass both the unfinished business of the EFA and MDG agendas, and newly emerging challenges.

In terms of access, the latest data[2] show that there are almost 70 million fewer children missing out on primary and lower secondary school than in 2000. There are also more than 100 million fewer adults who cannot read and write, compared to the early 1990s[3]. But these figures, whilst giving cause for hope, still leave much to be desired: there are still 131 million children of primary and lower secondary school age not enrolled in school, with the numbers missing out increasing at upper secondary level, and hundreds of millions more are missing out on early childhood care and education. Around the world today, UNESCO estimates that there are 755 million young people and adults who cannot read and write, of whom 127 million are aged 15 to 24, and nearly two thirds are women[4]. And recent trends are profoundly troubling. Since 2008, the number of children not in primary school has not shifted, and in sub-Saharan Africa, despite progress in some countries, has in fact grown. Transition to secondary school remains weak, and globally, there were more children missing out on lower secondary school in 2010 than in 2008, an increase that can be attributed to poor progress in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia. Moreover, global indicators can also conceal disparities between and within countries: inequalities in educational access are persistent and can be severe even in the richest countries. Around the world, girls are still more likely to be out of school than boys (including because of early marriage[5]); rural children are twice as likely to be out of school as urban children; an estimated third of the children now out of school have disabilities; and children from the poorest fifth of households are four times more likely to be out of school than children from the richest fifth[6].

The issue is of course not just one of access to school. The figures for school enrolment do not tell us what kind of education children are receiving once they arrive in school. The need to ensure a quality education has long been included in international treaties, was emphasized in the Jomtien World Conference on Education in 1990, and was one of the six EFA goals agreed in Dakar in 2000. It has always been highlighted as a priority by civil society. Yet the narrowing of the education agenda to the access goals included in the MDGs is seen by many as having contributed to the neglect of the issue of the quality of education; the

imminent 2015 deadline is forcing a re-evaluation of this priority.

The narrower MDG framework has also contributed to the neglect of other elements of the EFA agenda, including early childhood care and education, adult literacy and lifelong learning and skills. Whilst they did not always go far enough – for example, gender equality in education should be understood in broader terms than parity in access to primary education – the EFA goals agreed at the World Education Forum are consistent with recognition of an equitable, non-discriminatory, lifelong right to relevant, inclusive, basic education, whether formal, informal or non-formal learning. This vision must not be lost.

In looking forward, the world must take account not only of the unfinished business of the agreements of 1990 and 2000, but also what was missed, and what is new in the current and future context of 2015 and beyond. In this regard, it is crucial that future frameworks are grounded in an understanding of the human right to education, and the implications of that right. Realizing this right is significant as an intrinsic component of human rights and is also crucial for the achievement of many other rights, and personal, societal and economic goals. Education is also critical to tackling many of the current global challenges noted by the UN, including unemployment and underemployment, particularly of young people; the equitable spread and social benefit of increasing technology, particularly in information and communication; democratization, expanding democratic participation and democratic accountability; reduction of national and global inequalities, including gender inequality; social and governmental stability; the achievement of sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) and managing fertility and demographic transition; mitigation of and adaptation to climate change and managing environmental sustainability; increasing urbanization and the challenges it poses for employment; tackling the spread of infectious disease; and building new flourishing economies in the context of the ongoing global economic crisis, with growth strategies that are equitable and seek to overcome unequal distribution of wealth and resources. Given the centrality of education to facing these challenges, it is crucial that specific and concrete education goals are included in any post-2015 development framework.

1. The Right to Education as the framework

The post-2015 goals are to be an initiative of the United Nations, as are the current MDGs. As such, the post-2015 development goals must enshrine and reinforce international human rights standards. Explicit attention needs to be drawn to making the right to education the guiding framework of a post-2015 education goal.

The right to education is not simply a generic notion that people are entitled to some form of education; it is a very specific, well-developed set of norms and obligations that governments worldwide have agreed to through global, regional and domestic accords over more than 60 years[7]. Among the international treaties that have built the right to education into what it is today are[8]:

- The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- The 1960 UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education (CADE)
- The 1966 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
- The 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- The 1989 ILO Convention 169, Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention
- The 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

The articles of these treaties pertinent to the right to education are too numerous to replicate here. These provisions have been extensively practiced, applied and detailed by the U.N. Human Rights Commission/Council, U.N. human rights monitoring committees, U.N. Special Rapporteurs, judiciaries at the regional and domestic level, and academics. From this rich practice, the right to education, as found in articles 13 and 14 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, is considered to comprise four interrelated and essential features – commonly referred to as the "4-As" – stipulating that education must be available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable:

- **Available:** educational institutions and programs must be available in sufficient numbers and free of charge; this includes the availability of trained teachers and adequate infrastructure including buildings and sanitation;
- **Accessible:** educational institutions and programs have to be accessible to everyone, in safety, without discrimination on any grounds. This includes physical, economic and social accessibility with no direct or indirect costs; positive measures must be taken to guarantee equitable and equal access for all;
- **Acceptable:** the form and substance of education, including curricula and teaching methods, has to be relevant, culturally appropriate, of good quality and in accordance with the best interests of every child; this includes a safe

and healthy school environment and professional, trained and supported teachers;

- **Adaptable:** education has to be flexible, so that it can adapt to the needs of changing societies and communities, and respond to the needs of different learners within their specific social and cultural context, including the evolving capacities of the child[9].

This unpacking of the right to education gives helpful guidance on how education rights may be realized in different settings, and includes clear implications for a post-2015 framework, including that states have responsibilities to guarantee:

- Availability of education at all levels, from early childhood to adult literacy; this includes universal, free and compulsory primary education, [10] and increasingly universal and free secondary education[11]
- Education that is non-discriminatory and inclusive at all levels[12]
- Education that is of high quality, requiring sufficient professional, trained and well-supported teachers[13] and continuously improved, safe and protective teaching and learning environments[14]
- Education that is aimed towards the full development of personality, talents, and abilities[15]
- The national and international prioritization of resources for education in order to realize this right[16].

2. Principles for education post-2015

With this context in mind, Beyond 2015 has developed the following principles for a framework on education post-2015. These take in the ultimate goal (an integrated focus on equity and equality, quality and access); how to achieve this (with emphasis on teachers, learning environments and curricula); the structural elements necessary to achieve this (state responsibility, adequate and appropriate finance, and democratic governance including widespread participation); and finally what this means for goal-setting.

What is needed: progress on quality, access and equity as inextricably linked

Despite progress, it is undeniable that an education crisis is continuing in many parts of the world. It is possible to distinguish different aspects of the crisis:

- **A crisis of availability and accessibility**: Net enrolment in primary school reached 89 percent in 2010, up from 82% in 1999[17]. Globally, gender parity in primary and secondary education is close to being achieved [18]. Nevertheless, progress is slowing: 131 million children and young people are still out of school and hundreds of millions of adults still lack opportunities to learn even basic literacy[19]. There is a gap of 1.7 million teachers in order to achieve universal primary education by 2015. And it is the most marginalized – including those living in poverty, girls and women, child laborers, children with disabilities, those from ethnic, linguistic and cultural minorities, children who have lost their parents or are living on the streets, people living

with HIV and AIDS, and children living in fragile and conflicted-affected countries and regions – who most likely to be missing out[20]. Progress in expanding access has slowed precisely because these children, young people and adults are the hardest to reach.

- **A crisis of acceptability and adaptability**: there is a serious crisis in terms of whether those children who are in school are actually learning, and if so what they are learning and what values underpin their education. The current reality is that far too often schooling is not resulting in the acquisition of even basic knowledge, skills, and aptitudes, let alone more complex analytical, critical or creative thinking, or values of collaboration, dialogue and peaceful resolution of conflict. Recent estimates indicate that of the 650 million children of primary school age, at least 250 million are not acquiring even basic literacy and numeracy[21]. The chronic lack of funding, of qualified teachers and of adequate learning environments all undermine quality. Meanwhile, curricula and pedagogical approaches in many parts of the world are failing children, often through an emphasis on rote learning and testing or the lack of mother-tongue instruction. Again, it is the poorest and most marginalized who are least likely to have access to the crucial elements of a quality education, including trained, well-supported teachers.

It is crucial to learn from the experience of the MDG framework (which prioritized access over quality) and address these crises in an integrated way, and to pay attention to equity and equality in doing so. Expansion of access does not guarantee a meaningful education when the services themselves are so poor; and in fact education that is of poor quality or little relevance itself undermines universal provision, since it discourages parents and children, leading to low enrolment, low attendance rates and high drop-out rates[22]. At the same time, a focus on quality without increased efforts to reach all children will only entrench educational – and social – inequalities. We must therefore think in terms of equitable access to quality education for all, without discrimination.

What is equitable and non-discriminatory access? And how do we measure it?

Access to education has typically been measured in terms of enrolment in school, particularly primary school. Even this basic measure reveals the deep inequalities in education systems: for example, a 30-country survey revealed that children from the poorest quintile of households are four times more likely to be out of primary school than children from the richest quintile[23]. Having a disability more than doubles one's chances of never enrolling in school in some countries[24]. Children living with HIV face problems of school enrolment, attendance, behavior, performance and completion[25]. Of the 61 million out-of-school children, 28 million (46 percent) live in fragile or conflict-affected countries[26]. In sub-Saharan Africa, one out of four girls is not accessing primary education[27]. As many as one quarter of girls in some sub-Saharan African countries drop out of school due to unplanned pregnancy[28]. This implies need for a renewed focus on access that takes into account marginalization and exclusion so as to overcome them.

Moreover, enrolment in primary school is generally a poor indicator of meaningful access, and indicates little about completion of a full cycle of early childhood education and primary education, transition to secondary school, or equitable, non-discriminatory access to quality teaching and learning while in school.

A response that tackles the crisis in access to education must therefore include at least:

- A strong focus on **full inclusion** of the groups and populations that are most marginalized, discriminated against and hardest to reach, without segregation[29]. This includes not only continuing attention to gender equity and equality, to specific populations and locations and to the inclusion of disabled children in mainstream schools, but also effective training of teachers for working with children with differing needs, appropriate curricula, a diversity of teaching and learning methods, and bilingual, intercultural education where appropriate. There should be a particular focus on those facing discrimination on multiple grounds (e.g. girls with disabilities).
- Indicators of **access** that are more meaningful than enrolment – which is typically measured once at the beginning of the year and can often mask low attendance rates and high dropout rates. Access should take in not only enrolment but also attendance and completion.
- A clearer **link**, as discussed above, between access and quality – the relevant access is not to schooling or classrooms, but to quality education.

What is quality education?

Education was described by the Delors 1997 report for UNESCO – and again in the World Education Forum in 2000 – as "learning to know, to do, to live together and to be". There have been various efforts to define "quality education", including the 2011 report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, the 2005 Education For All Global Monitoring Report, the UNICEF report on *Defining Quality in Education* (2000), the Global Campaign for Education's World Assembly resolutions (2004, 2008, 2011) and *Quality Resource Pack* (2008) and the definition provided by the Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE) [30].

The consensus emerging across these definitions is that quality education is one which provides individuals and their societies with the ability to develop and thrive personally, socially, politically and culturally; that develops the learner's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest; and is geared towards the strengthening of citizenship, human dignity and a culture of peace, as proclaimed in Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This means it must results in the acquisition of knowledge (including in areas such as gender, health, nutrition), values (including non-discrimination, cooperation and dialogue, peaceful resolution of conflicts), skills (including but not limited to literacy, numeracy and life skills), capabilities, and active

participation in society. Three key elements that also feature in each definition as crucial to achieve this are:

- **Teachers and teaching**: a well-qualified and well-supported teaching workforce, sufficient to guarantee reasonable class sizes and pupil-teacher ratios, who are knowledgeable in their subject areas and in pedagogy (some argue for child-centered, participatory methods of teaching and learning), with assessment designed and used to facilitate learning and reduce disparities;

- **Curriculum and content**: comprehensible, relevant and meaningful curriculum that promotes learners' rights, makes use of mother tongue languages, is inclusive, and includes play, sport and creative activities in addition to areas such as literacy, numeracy, natural, human and social science, as well as life skills including comprehensive sexuality education, health, nutrition, etc.

- **Learning environment**: adequate school infrastructure, facilities and environments which are healthy, safe, inclusive, protective, gender-sensitive and well-managed. There is a need for particular sensitivity to the learning environment in fragile or post-conflict situations.

Quality education, therefore, builds knowledge, capabilities and life skills and values, and develops the creative, social and emotional capabilities of learners. It fosters broad cognitive and personal development, including critical and higher order thinking, problem-solving, self-discipline, and can support active citizenship, leadership, and more[31]. Quality education must also be non-discriminatory; equality is in itself a key component of quality education.

What is learning?

Quality education encompasses learning. At its most basic, this must include literacy and numeracy: it is unacceptable that millions of children and young people are attending school without even learning these foundational skills. Beyond these minimum requirements, broader and deeper learning is both required to realize the right to education, and recognized as crucial by experts and international bodies.

While many of the efforts to define learning are still subject to debate and critique, there is consensus at least about the need for a broad conception. For example, UNESCO, in its EFA Global Monitoring Report, has distinguished three main types of skills that all young people need: foundation, transferable, and technical and vocational skills[32]. The Learning Metrics Task Force convened by UNESCO and the Brookings Institution has defined seven learning domains: physical well-being, social and emotional, culture and the arts, literacy and communication, learning approaches and cognition, numeracy and mathematics, and science and technology[33]. All of these domains need to be included in any future learning objectives. The U.N. Secretary-General's Global Education First Initiative includes a pillar on 'fostering global citizenship' that explicitly aims to

champion comprehensive learning, stating that "It is not enough for education to produce individuals who can read, write and count. Education must be transformative and bring shared values to life… It must give people the understanding, skills and values they need to cooperate in resolving the interconnected challenges of the 21st century."[34]

How can we measure quality education?

The desire to improve the outcomes of education, including learning outcomes, necessarily leads to a concern with targets, goals and measurement. This is a complicated and contentious area, but there are some important principles to bear in mind:

- Educational objectives must be broad enough to capture what we mean by quality education, and the approach to measurement must incentivize progress towards realizing the right to education. Benchmarks and targets should therefore allow us to monitor whether the purposes of education are actually being met – whether education is available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable to all.
- There needs to be careful thought about measurement of key components of quality education – e.g. not just teachers but trained teachers (training levels as well as pupil to trained teacher ratios); and not just schools but safe and effective learning environments[35].
- Any measurement of learning must be based on meaningful evaluation mechanisms; tests should be used carefully so that achieving good test results does not become an end in itself disconnected from the overall quality objective (e.g. encouraging "teaching to the test"). The primary goal of testing – reflected in its design and use – must be to diagnose progress at the classroom level, and inform improvement in teaching and learning[36]. Global testing schemes can be insensitive to local (e.g. linguistic) context and run the risk of skewing national priorities to a reductive or external agenda.

3. What is needed: quality teachers, learning environments and curricula

Making progress on equitable access to quality education requires attention to how such quality education is achieved, with a particular focus on the elements of quality education about which there is strong consensus: teachers, learning environments and curricula.

Teachers

There is overwhelming consensus that the most important factor in ensuring a quality education and strong learning outcomes is the presence of adequate numbers of skilled, valued, well-trained, knowledgeable and well-supported teachers[37]. At the primary level, 1.7 million additional teachers are needed to deliver Universal Primary Education by 2015. In total, 114 countries have primary teacher gaps[38]. Inequality in teacher provision is striking, even within

countries; in Malawi, for instance, the number of pupils per teacher ranges from an average of 36 in some districts to 120 in others.

Moreover, millions of the teachers who are in place are untrained or under-trained: half of all teachers in Africa, for example, have no or low qualifications[39] and more than 20 percent of teachers in India are not professionally qualified[40]. Low status and low pay for teachers, along with poorly functioning systems, mean that teachers around the world are receiving inadequate salaries that arrive days, months or sometimes years late. This contributes to poor teaching, teacher absence, attrition, failures in child protection, and poor learning environments[41]. If governments truly care about quality education and learning, they must attract and retain the best possible candidates in teaching, by treating it as a respected profession, with clear professional standards, good quality training and adequate compensation. Training must include appropriate pre-service training as well as routine in-service training, linked to professional development, so that teachers are up-to-date on the most recent curriculum content and pedagogy, have an understanding of child rights, non-violence and inclusion, and understand a professional code of conduct. Truly inclusive education requires a well-resourced system for providing support to classroom teachers to ensure they are effective, and can facilitate both access to education and quality learning experiences for all children.

Learning environment

With the increase in enrolment, many countries have successfully put children into rooms; it is now time to put students in classrooms – that is, effective spaces for learning, for collaboration, for critical thinking, for fostering ethics and democracy. Many schools are lacking the most basic of teaching and learning materials: textbooks, notebooks, science kits, pens, even chalk. Textbooks, including large-print books and Braille books, as well as sign language, must be provided for children with disabilities. An enabling learning environment is also one embedded with values of inclusiveness, dialogue and collaboration, peaceful resolution of conflict and an ethic of care. It implies the possibility of democratic governance, where those in education may have direct participation over the processes that impact them. Finally, it implies recognizing that crucial learning takes place outside the classroom, where play and conviviality are recognized as key.

Schools (and transport) need to be available so that children can reach them without walking long distances or separation from families. A rights-based, child-friendly school also requires a healthy, hygienic and safe learning environment. Infrastructure should be adequate to ensure quality teaching for all, requiring, for example, adequate water and sanitation, sufficient separate toilets for girls, ramps and accommodation for persons with disabilities, and adequate infrastructure adapted to local climatic and security conditions[42].

Curriculum

In addition, the education itself must be relevant to the needs of the students and community. A relevant curriculum that is culturally, linguistically, and socially understandable and applicable, and that promotes equality, tolerance, an understanding of rights, non-discrimination and non-violence, is the keystone of a quality education that supports learners in becoming active, contributing citizens. Civic education and health education need to be included in curricula from early years onwards. Gender-sensitive and culturally-sensitive curricula in schools are important in challenging stereotypes and combating gender-based violence. Education for sustainable development can help support development of the Green Economy. Curricula should also provide such necessary life skills as comprehensive sexuality education, which should not only provide young people with knowledge but also help them to understand and address their rights, explicitly addressing gender and power[43].

4. How we get there: government responsibility, finance and governance

This stated objective - equitable access to quality education for all without discrimination – and its requirements – trained teachers, safe and quality learning environments, and relevant, broad curricula – are well accepted. Yet these are not universally available – with the result that hundreds of millions of children, young people and adults are being denied their right to even the most basic education – because of structural factors connected to political will, financing, and governance.

State responsibility for education as a human right and a public good

The principles and requirements outlined above are stipulations of the right to education. According to international treaties, these are responsibilities of national governments, who must therefore progressively realize their achievement. Country-owned and country-led education policy, for which governments are accountable to their citizens, is a pre-requisite of achieving quality education for all. International assistance should be aimed toward strengthening government systems – particularly where these are weak – and supporting national education plans. Concerted international efforts to advance education worldwide should focus on improving public education systems.

Private education and privatization of parts of the education system must be adequately regulated and monitored, and development of private education should not take place unless the government has such regulatory capabilities. With public education as the focus, civil society should likewise be supported, as their advocacy holds governments accountable for upholding the right to education.

Adequate and appropriate financing

One of the factors that has led to the harmful trade-off between quality and access – whether in terms of sacrificing quality to expand access, or limiting access in order to improve quality and learning – has been the drastic shortage of funding to fully finance the right to education. UNESCO estimates the funding gap between the current financing levels (both domestic and external) and what is needed to achieve basic education at $38 billion. Despite this gap – and ambitious commitments by donor countries such as the promise to devote 0.7% of GNI to development assistance and that no country with a credible plan to achieve EFA shall fail for lack of financing – aid to education, particularly for low-income countries, is low and falling; it fell 17% in 2011. This doesn't bode well for low-income countries, where, on average, aid amounts to as much as one-fifth of education budgets[44].

If we are to deliver the right to education, as is required to advance so many other global priorities, there must be sufficient, well-designed public financing. This must include sufficient domestic financing, alongside international support. Within the international human rights framework, governments are obligated to allocate the maximum of their available resources to fulfill economic and social rights, in particular education.

- Governments should allocate sufficient finance for education and in particular basic education, paying attention to recognized international targets of a minimum of 20 percent of national budgets or six percent of GDP[45] to education[46].
- Governments should take steps to increase domestic revenue, including spending on improving revenue collection, an end to tax exemptions for TNCs, and consideration of instruments such as diaspora bonds.
- Bilateral donors should increase substantially the share of Official Development Assistance going to basic education (early years, primary, lower secondary and adult literacy), up from a current average of less than 3 percent among DAC donors[47],
- The international community should close tax loopholes and tax havens that allow TNCs to avoid making their contributions, implement pro-poor debt and trade policies, and use revenues from financial transaction taxes to support education around the world.

Moreover, it is not just about more money, but also money well spent. Investment should be in the priority areas of addressing the trained teacher gap, ensuring sufficient and high-quality schools, and reaching the out-of-school including by addressing structural inequality in the education system.

Democratic governance

Guaranteeing equitable and equal access to quality education for all requires attention to governance. Transparent and accountable systems must be in place (locally, nationally and globally) to ensure oversight of spending and avoid leakages, misdirection, and under-spending. Civil society must participate in decision-making and oversight at all levels, from local to national to

international. The engagement of learners, teachers and other stakeholders is a crucial check on the use and direction of funding, and on the adaptability and acceptability, as well as the accessibility and availability, of education.

Monitoring

Finally, for quality education to be implemented in practice, States need to implement a transparent and effective monitoring system that examines and measures compliance and progress – and allows for redress. Quality norms and standards should inform education systems throughout a country, within a framework that provides guidelines whilst being sufficiently adaptable to allow for regional difference (e.g. in language) and trusting professional teachers to make decisions about teaching and learning. States must have support to ensure that they are able to monitor both private and public educational institutions across the country so that quality education becomes a tangible reality for all.

5. Setting our goals: global, aspirational and inspirational

The following requirements should be taken into account when developing education goals:

Global targets to drive action, with national sensitivity: Post-2015 education goals should represent global targets. This requires sensitivity to context: political, economic and environmental factors may make certain goals far harder to achieve in some countries or regions than others. Nevertheless, the politically unifying powers of the current MDGs have proven invaluable to their successes, and there is more to gain from the galvanizing forces offered by such global goals. Global goals rally commitment, focus political will and inspire monitoring, ensuring that ambitious actions are taken towards them. While global goals are essential, specific targets and monitoring need not necessarily take place at the global level; some goals may need national benchmarks, and aspects such as learning may be more appropriately measured at the national level, where testing can be designed in a culturally and linguistically appropriate way, responding to local needs.

Goals and indicators that emphasise equity and equality: the lesson of the MDGs is that goals that focus only on aggregate progress without taking into account diversity, difference and exclusion can allow space for the most marginalized to be left behind, increasing rather than decreasing inequality. For this reason, goals should include indicators that disaggregate progress (e.g. by gender, income, disability, living situation, etc). There should also be room for national and sub-national goal-setting in this process, whilst still sitting within a global framework.

Comprehensive goals: Goals should be designed to encourage significant progress in equitable access to quality education, including in learning. The lesson of the MDGs is that a narrow focus can lead to perverse outcomes by encouraging the neglect of other important targets. This argues strongly against a narrowing of the focus to literacy and numeracy – leading to the danger that

the countries with the furthest to go on this will concentrate on this alone. There is need rather for a framework that will emphasize quality in education more broadly, and that (whether or not it measures learning directly) will support progress in all learning domains and taking in critical skills, non-discrimination, global citizenship, etc.

A focus on how to achieve outcomes: where there is consensus on the conditions needed to achieve quality education, these must be prioritized in goal-setting. So, for example, targets relating to improved standards of teacher training, pupil-to-trained-teacher ratios, improved learning environments, and education systems will be crucial on driving progress on quality education for all. There should also be consideration of process targets relating to citizen participation.

Comprehensible and compelling: Finally, a post-2015 education goal needs to be aspirational and inspirational – that is, clearly understandable to all. There should be a top-line message that can inspire governments and citizens alike. The psychological, moral, and political salience of the post-2015 goals may have considerable impact on their success[48]. Global goals on education must be presented in such a way that they are immediately comprehensible and compelling to citizens as a whole, in order to be able to mobilize the political and social will required for them to be achieved.

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Annex 1. Some human rights requirements for the content of education

UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)
Article 5.1: The States Parties to this Convention agree that: (a) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; it shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)
Article 7: States Parties undertake to adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information, with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups, as well as to propagating the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and this Convention.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
Article 13.1: The States Parties to the present Covenant [...] agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace [...]

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)
Article 10: States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on the basis of equality of men and women ... (c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging co-education and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods [...]

Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
Article 29.1: States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential; (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the

Charter of the United Nations; (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate and for civilizations different from his or her own; (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin; (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008)
Article 24.1: States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and life long learning directed to: (a) The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity; (b) The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;(c) Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.

Annex 2. **About this paper**

This paper is issued on behalf of the Beyond 2015 campaign and drew on inputs from across the platform. The original draft was produced by a drafting team led by the Global Campaign for Education and with significant support from Results.

The full drafting team included the following organizations:

- Global Campaign for Education
- Right to Education Project
- Results
- Education Dialogue Group
- Basic Education Coalition (US)
- Sightsavers
- Alliance 2015
- Save the Children International
- Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi
- VSO
- International Disability Alliance
- Leonard Cheshire Disability
- Commonwealth Medical Trust
- Institute of Education (UK)
- Nigeria YCC
- Pina Palmera
- Lumos
- Arrow

Many of these organizations drew on broader consultations and discussions within their network, including a Global Campaign for Education Survey involving 18 coalitions and networks and 29 organizations across more than 40 countries.

- Thanks also go to additional Beyond 2015 members who contributed to subsequent drafts: International Women's Health Coalition
- Oxfam International
- EuroNGOs
- Commonwealth Human Ecology Council
- CBM
- Family for Every Child
- Academics Stand Against Poverty.

1 UIS (2012) *Global Education Digest*

2 UIS database, assembled from government-reported data
http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx

3 UIS database http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx

4 UIS database http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx

5 ICRW (2006) *Too young to wed*

6 Education For All Global Monitoring Report (2012) *Policy Paper 04 – June 2012*, UNESCO: Paris

7 For example, there are 193 State parties to the CRC, 187 State parties to the CEDAW, and 160 State parties to the ICESCR.

8 This list is not comprehensive. There are many other international treaties and declarations that enshrine the right to education, in particular as it applies to specific groups, such as the 2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP).

9 Coomans, F., Ph.D. (2007, June). Identifying the key elements of the right to education: A focus on its core content. CRC Day of General Discussion. Geneva, Switzerland. http://www.crin.org/docs/Coomans-CoreContent-Right%20to%20EducationCRC.pdf. See also UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment. See Right to Education Project, www.right-to-education.org

10 UDHR §26(1), ICESCR §13(2), CADE §4, CRC §23, 28(1), CRPD §24(2)

11 ICESCR §13(2), CADE §4, CRC §28(1)

12 ICESCR §2(2), CADE, CEDAW §10, CRC §2, CRPD §24, DRIP §14(2)

13 CRPD §24(4), CADE §4 ; , ICESCR §7

14 ICESCR §7, 13(2)

15 UDHR §26(1), ICESCR §13(1), CRC §29(1), CRPD §24(1)

16 ICESCR §2(1), CRC §4, CRPD §4(2)

17 UNESCO (2012). EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012: Youth and skills: Putting education to work. Paris: UNESCO. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002180/218003e.pdf

18 UNESCO (2012). EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012: Youth and skills: Putting education to work. Paris: UNESCO. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002180/218003e.pdf

19 UIS database http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx; 2010 data

20 See eg UN (2010) *Keeping the Promise*; Consortium for Street Children (2009) *Street Children Statistics*; UNESCO (2012) *Education For All Global Monitoring Report*

21 UNESCO (2012). EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012: Youth and skills: Putting education to work. Paris: UNESCO. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002180/218003e.pdf

22 http://www.unicef.org/pon95/educ0002.html

23 http://www.uis.unesco.org/FactSheets/Documents/fs-18-OOSC-2.pdf

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25 Guo Y. et al. The impact of HIV/AIDS on children's educational outcome: a critical review of global literature. *AIDS Care*, 2012, 24 (8): 993-1012.

26 UNESCO (2011). EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011: The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education. Paris: UNESCO. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001907/190743e.pdf

27 UIS (2012). UNESCO eAtlas of Out-of-School Children. http://www.app.collinsindicate.com/uis-atlas-out-of-school-children/en-us

28 http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/gpr/11/3/gpr110313.html

29 Disabled children are frequently placed unnecessarily in residential care when they are excluded from mainstream schools; see Save the Children (2009) *Keeping children out of harmful institutions.*

30 http://sphereprototype.conted.ox.ac.uk/cases/learningistheirfuture/pdf/Minimum_Standards_English_2010.pdf

31 Klees. http://www.campaignforeducationusa.org/blog/post/principles-for-a-post-2015-efa-and-education-mdgs

32 UNESCO (2012). EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012: Youth and skills: Putting education to work. Paris: UNESCO. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002180/218003e.pdf

33 http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Centers/universal%20education/learning%20metrics%20task%20force/LMTF_Measures_Prototype_for%20consultation.pdf

34 http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/files/EdFirst_G29383UNOPS_lr.pdf

35 On this, work is being done by Save the Children on "Quality Learning Environments"

36 As highlighted by the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, quality assessments must "be driven by a promotional spirit with emphasis on creating equitable educational and learning opportunities for all, rather than further marginalising poorly endowed schools in remote areas".UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Kishore Singh, "Normative action for quality education" A/HRC/20/21, 2 May 2012, paras. 51-52.

37 See eg the review of evidence in GCE & EI (2012). Closing the Trained Teacher Gap. Johannesburg: GCE. http://www.campaignforeducation.org/docs/reports/ECNAT%20Report_RGB.pdf

38 UIS as in GCE & EI (2012). Closing the Trained Teacher Gap. Johannesburg: GCE. http://www.campaignforeducation.org/docs/reports/ECNAT%20Report_RGB.pdf

39 UNESCO BREDA, Concept Note: 'Induction Workshop on the Development of National and Regional Qualifications Frameworks in the Teaching Profession' June 2012

40 2011 report of the Indian Right to Education Forum, http://www.rteindia.com/

41 For more, see *Closing the Trained Teacher Gap* (2012) Global Campaign for Education and Education International

42 UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Kishore Singh, "Normative action for quality education" A/HRC/20/21, 2 May 2012, paras. 51-52.

43 UNFPA (2010) Comprehensive Sexuality Education: Advancing Human Rights Gender Equality and Improved Sexual and Reproductive Health.

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46 GCE & EI (2012). Closing the Trained Teacher Gap. Johannesburg: GCE. http://www.campaignforeducation.org/docs/reports/ECNAT%20Report_RGB.pdf. http://www.globalpartnership.org/media/library/EFA_FTI_A_fast_track_to_2015_10-1-09.pdf

47 Ibid.

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