

Education in an Interconnected World: Ensuring inclusive and equitable development

Concept Note and Provisional Program

Draft – 17 September 2018

1. Background

The Education 2030 Framework for Action stipulates that periodic Global Education Meetings, aligned with the meeting schedule of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development, will be organized by UNESCO in consultation with the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee to review the SDG4-Education 2030 agenda against progress made and to share outcomes with the appropriate overall global follow-up and review mechanisms for the SDGs. As per this stipulation a Global Education Meeting (GEM) will be organized in December 2018 in Brussels, Belgium. The meeting will focus on the HLPF 2019 Theme “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”, and review progress towards the realization of SDG4 and examine the inter-linkages between SDG 4 and Goals 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 13 (Climate action) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), paying particular attention to the issue of migration and forced displacement.¹

Education and development in an interconnected world

We live in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world bringing with it new levels of complexity, tensions and paradoxes. Global economic growth has come at the expense of ecological stress and unsustainable patterns of economic production and consumption. Greater wealth and reduction in global poverty has also seen rising levels of vulnerability, growing inequalities and exclusion. Moreover, growing interconnectedness and mobility is also associated with rising intolerance, division and violence.² Yet, greater interdependency and interconnection also offer new knowledge horizons and opportunities for strengthened solidarity in our collective endeavor for inclusive and sustainable human and social development.

Reciprocal linkages between education and development

Education plays a key role in building sustainable, inclusive and resilient societies and has reciprocal linkages with almost all other goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. On one hand, education contributes to

¹ Note that SDG 17 on strengthening global partnerships for sustainable development will also be reviewed, as it is every year.

² UNESCO. 2015. Rethinking Education: Towards a global common good? Paris.

improved physical and mental health; promotes gender equality and can reduce inequality. It increases the productivity of individuals and strengthens the potential for economic growth by developing competencies and skills needed for decent work and professional skills needed for sustainable development, including water and sanitation, green energy or the conservation of our natural resources. Education helps eradicate poverty and hunger and promotes peace, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Conversely, progress in other areas affects education in many ways. Healthier children are more likely to learn better. Shifts in sustainable production patterns, for example, translate into changed demands on the education system in terms of educational content, as well as competencies and skills development. On the other hand, lack of progress on other SDGs, including economic shocks, environmental degradation and poverty, creates barriers to access to education or to educational outcomes.³

Migration, forced displacement and education

In an era of intensified globalization characterized by profound demographic, socio-economic, environmental and technological change, migration and displacement are emerging as essential development policy issues. While the phenomenon of migration is not new, patterns of migration and mobility in today's world are characterized by their unprecedented scale, intensity and heterogeneity. With over 257 million international migrants crossing international borders in 2017⁴, and internal migration within countries growing to 865 million people, one in seven persons now live outside their region of birth. "Factors underpinning migration are numerous, relating to economic prosperity, inequality, demography, violence and conflict, and environmental change. While the overwhelming majority of people migrate internationally for reasons related to work, family and study, many people leave their homes and countries for other compelling reasons, such as conflict, persecution and disaster."⁵ The number of people forcibly displaced due to conflict, persecution and natural disasters has also increased substantially, reaching 65.6 million people in 2016, including both internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees.⁶ This creates additional barriers to access quality education and places additional pressure on host country education systems, including the challenge of lack of documentation and recognition of educational achievement among refugees. There is insufficient attention to how migration, forced displacement and education interact to influence social and economic mobility. It is therefore crucial to better understand the influence of education on migration and forced displacement, as well as the complex challenges and unique opportunities that movements of people present for education systems and skills acquisition, decent work and the chance for a dignified life.⁷

2. Reviewing progress in education towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals

Ensuring the 2030 principle of "leaving no-one behind" requires that the right to inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities be realized for all children, youth and adults as per the collective commitments outlined in the 2015 [Incheon Declaration and the Education 2030 Framework for Action](#).

³ This paragraph is adapted from the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee submission to the 2018 HLPF:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0026/002628/262882E.pdf>

⁴ IOM 2018.

⁵ World Migration Report 2018.

⁶ UNHCR.

⁷ Note that the Global Education Meeting will take place a few days before the UN member States adopt a New Global Compact for migration.

HLPF 2019: Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality:

As the main UN platform on Sustainable Development, the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)⁸ has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global level. Under the auspices of ECOSOC, the HLPF examines a set of goals annually, as well as their two-way interlinkages - as appropriate. The 2019 HLPF Review will be devoted to the theme “*Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality*”. This includes an in-depth review of SDG 4 together with the following goals:



Ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all



Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all



Reduce inequality in people, within and among countries



Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

This will also be the first four-year cycle against which SDG 4 and its interlinkages with other SDGs are reviewed comprehensively during the 2019 United Nations General Assembly Summit. This process aims to facilitate a more in-depth review on progress of all goals over the course of a four-year cycle.

3. Aim and Expected Outcomes

The 2018 Global Education Meeting will provide a high-level forum for review of progress towards the universal global education commitments since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015. As such, it represents a key milestone in the assessment of effective policies and strategies and of key challenges with regard to the implementation of SDG4 targets and commitments, as well as of education-related targets within other development goals. By drawing largely on data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and analyses in the Global Education Monitoring reports, the review will explore key questions such as what structures and concrete measures, in term of education sector policy, management, monitoring and financing, have been put in place to ensure implementation of education 2030 targets and commitments. In so doing, it seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

⁸ The forum was created at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in June 2012 (Rio+20) to provide high-level policy guidance and promote and review implementation of sustainable development.

- An assessment of current progress towards the implementation of SDG4-Education 2030 targets and commitments at global, regional and national levels, and identification of bottlenecks impeding progress
- An identification of recommendations for strategic areas requiring political guidance and/or intervention for the effective achievement of the global Education 2030 Agenda
- Agreement on key policy messages to input into the global 2019 HLPF Review and UN General Assembly 2019
- Strengthening of coordinated support for implementation of SDG4-Education 2030

Format

The three-day event will consist of:

1. A Senior Officials' Meeting (1.5 days) including a Forum of parallel sessions;
2. A Leaders' Meeting for Ministers, Vice-Ministers and/or heads of delegations (1.5 days).

	Day 1 Mon 3 Dec	Day 2 Tue 4 Dec	Day 3 Wed 5 Dec
09:30-12:30	<p>Introduction Welcome and presentation of expected outcomes and working modalities.</p> <p>Review of progress on Education 2030 targets and commitments</p> <p>1. Global perspectives: Review of progress based on most recent UIS data, the 2019 Global Education Monitoring report and other sources</p> <p>2. Regional perspectives: Review of outcomes of regional SDG fora and Education 2030 consultations</p>	<p>Synthesis of Open Forum Review of key conclusions and recommendations from Open Forum workshops of Day 1</p> <p>Education and the 2030 Agenda Plenary panel debate focused on inter-linkage between education and development</p> <p>Policy Recommendations Identification of key policy recommendations</p>	<p>Policy recommendations Presentation of draft Outcome Statement</p> <p>Looking back to look forward Reviewing progress – perspectives across countries</p> <p>Ministerial Round Table 1 Key challenges and policy responses</p> <p>Ministerial Round Table 2 Key challenges and policy responses</p>
			Ministerial lunch
14:00 18:00	<p>Open Forum Parallel workshops</p> <p>Three consecutive series of 4 parallel workshops (75 min each) running from 14:00 to 18:15 (Total of 12 workshops). Organized by partners, the first two series of workshops will address SDG4 targets and policy focus areas and the interlinkages with other SDGs. The third series will address system-wide issues. [See below for more detail].</p>	<p>Opening Ceremony [H.E.M. Queen Mathilde of Belgium] Opening statements from key high-level representatives of constituencies</p> <p>Panel Debate 1 Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and gender equality</p> <p>Panel Debate 2 Migration, Forced Displacement and Education</p>	<p>Panel Debate 3 Teachers and educators in a changing landscape</p> <p>Panel Debate 3 Skilling and reskilling for the future of the economy</p> <p>Adoption of Outcome Statement and Closing</p>
19:00		Dinner Gala	

Forum [Day 1: 3 Dec 2018]

The Forum (Day 1) will offer three consecutive series of parallel workshops (75 min each). The first two series of workshops will be focused on progress in and lessons learnt from implementing Education 2030 targets and policy commitments, including the interlinkages between education (SDG4) and the other SDGs which will be the focus of the 2019 High-Level Panel Review. The third series of workshops will be devoted to system-wide issues relative to the governance and management of integrated learning systems. An equity lens will cut across all themes in line with SDG 10 focus on reducing inequalities within and across countries.

	Parallel Workshop I	Parallel Workshop II	Parallel Workshop III	Parallel Workshop IV
Forum Session I 14:00 – 15:15	The teaching profession	Validating education achievements - key to opening doors to refugees and migrants	Girls' and women's education	Climate change education and sustainable development
Forum Session II 15:30 – 16:45	Early childhood education & development	Global Citizenship Education: Learning content, methods and assessment	Technical and Vocational skills development and youth employment	Higher education
Forum Session III 17:00 – 18:15	Financing of education	Technology, innovation, and the future of learning	Civil society, public reporting and accountability	Lifelong learning and multiple learning pathways

References and sources

Deliberations will be informed by a range of sources including:

- The outcomes of Regional Education 2030 consultations undertaken throughout 2018⁹
- Voluntary National Reports completed or underway, with a particular focus on how education is addressed
- The Global Education Monitoring Reports (2016,2017/18,2019)
- A range of products (publications, technical guides, data tables) by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and partners on the various themes of Agenda 2030
- SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee deliberations and outputs, including the draft submission to HLPF 2019

Participants: Total of 300 participants comprising:

- Representatives of Member States

⁹ Pan-Africa High-Level Conference on Education (Nairobi, 25-27 April 2018); Asia-Pacific Education 2030 Consultation (Bangkok, 12-14 July 2018); Latin American and Caribbean Ministerial Conference (Bolivia, 25-26 July 2018); Europe and North American Education 2030 consultation (Strasbourg, 24 October 2018) and Arab Regional Meeting (Venue TBD, 6-8 November 2018).

10 countries for each of the 6 regions, including the 3 countries representing each region on the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, [3 representatives per delegation led by their respective Ministers of Education], as well as representatives of the E-9 countries.

- World Education Forum co-conveners and affiliated organizations
- Multilateral and bilateral agencies
- Regional organizations
- Civil society organizations, the teaching profession
- The private sector and foundations
- Youth and student representatives
- Academia

Venue Egmont Palace, 8, Place du Petit Sablon, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium.

Working Languages: The working languages for the plenary sessions will be English, French, Spanish and Arabic with simultaneous translation. For parallel sessions during the Open Forum (afternoon of Day 1), interpretation will be arranged in as many of these languages as possible.