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Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all

Draft declaration



Preamble

1. We, Ministers, heads and other members of delegations, heads of agencies and officials of multilateral and bilateral organizations, and representatives of civil society, the teaching profession, youth and the private sector, have gathered in May 2015 at the invitation of the Director-General of UNESCO in Incheon, Republic of Korea, for the World Education Forum 2015 (WEF 2015). We thank the Government of the Republic of Korea for having hosted this important event as well as UNICEF, the World Bank, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women and UNHCR, as the co-convenors of this meeting, for their contributions. We express our sincere appreciation to UNESCO for having initiated and led the convening of this milestone event for Education 2030.

2. We recall the Muscat Agreement developed through broad consultations and adopted at the Global Education for All (EFA) Meeting 2014, and which successfully informed the education targets of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. We further recall the outcomes of the regional ministerial conferences on education post-2015 and take note of the findings of the 2015 EFA Global Monitoring Report and the Regional EFA Synthesis Reports. We recognize the important contribution of the Global Education First Initiative in galvanizing political commitment for education.

3. We reaffirm the vision of the worldwide movement for Education for All initiated in Jomtien in 1990 and reiterated in Dakar in 2000 — the most important commitment to education in recent decades and which has helped drive significant progress in education. We also reaffirm the vision and political will reflected in numerous international and regional human rights treaties that stipulate the right to education. Yet we recognize with great concern that we are far from having reached education for all.

4. Having taken stock of progress made towards EFA since 2000 and the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as the lessons learned, and having examined the remaining challenges and deliberated on the proposed 2030 education agenda and the Framework for Action as well as on future priorities and strategies for its achievement, we adopt this Declaration.

Towards 2030: a new vision for education

5. We commit to an education agenda that is holistic, ambitious and aspirational, leaving no-one behind. Our new vision is fully captured by Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 “**Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all**” and its corresponding targets. It is transformative and universal, attends to the ‘unfinished business’ of the EFA agenda and the education-related MDGs, and addresses global and national education challenges. It is inspired by a humanistic vision of education and development based on human rights and dignity, social justice, protection, cultural diversity, and shared responsibility and accountability. We reaffirm that education is a public good, a fundamental human right and a basis for guaranteeing the realization of other rights. It is essential for peace, human fulfilment and sustainable development.

6. We fully commit to implementing the **Education 2030 Framework for Action** after its adoption, to inspire and guide countries and partners to ensure that our agenda is achieved. We will focus our efforts on access, equity and inclusion, quality and learning outcomes, within a lifelong learning approach.

7. Motivated by our significant achievements in expanding **access** to education over the last 15 years, we recommend the provision of at least 12 years of publicly-funded quality formal education for all by 2030, and commit to at least 9 years of free and compulsory quality primary and lower secondary education. We also recommend the provision of at least one year of free and compulsory quality pre-primary education. We also commit to providing meaningful education opportunities for out-of-school children and adolescents.

8. **Inclusion and equity** in and through education is vital to ensure a transformative education agenda, and we therefore commit to addressing all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparities and inequalities in

education. We are committed to the principles of non-discrimination in education and recognize the importance of gender equality as well as of girls' and women's empowerment for sustainable development.

9. We commit to **quality** education and to improving learning outcomes, which requires strengthening inputs, processes and measuring progress. We will ensure that every learner is taught by qualified, motivated and professionally-supported teachers within well-resourced and effectively governed systems. Quality education fosters creativity and knowledge, and ensures the acquisition of the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy as well as analytical, problem-solving and other high-level cognitive and interpersonal skills. It also develops the skills, values and attitudes that enable citizens to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, make informed decisions, and respond to local and global challenges through education for sustainable development (ESD) and global citizenship education (GCED). In this regard, we strongly support the implementation of the Global Action Programme on ESD launched at the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in Nagoya in 2014.

10. We commit to supporting **lifelong learning opportunities** for all, in all settings and at all levels of education. This includes the equitable expansion of technical and vocational education and training and higher education and research, and the strengthening of science, technology and innovation; flexible learning pathways as well as the recognition, validation and accreditation of knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through non-formal and informal education; and the use of information and communication technologies. We further commit to ensuring that all youth and adults, especially girls and women, achieve relevant and recognized functional literacy and numeracy proficiency levels, and that they are provided with adult learning, education and training opportunities.

11. Furthermore, we note with serious concern that, today, more than one-third of the world's out-of-school population lives in conflict-affected areas, and crises, natural disasters and pandemics continue to disrupt education and development globally. We commit to developing more inclusive, responsive and resilient education systems to meet the education needs of children, youth and adults in these contexts, including internally displaced persons and refugees. We recommend multi-year funding for crisis response; better coordinated national, regional and global responses; and capacity development for comprehensive risk reduction to ensure that education is maintained during situations of conflict, emergency, post-conflict and early recovery.

Implementing our common agenda

12. We reaffirm that the fundamental responsibility for successfully implementing this agenda lies with governments. We are determined to establish legal and policy frameworks that promote accountability and transparency as well as participatory governance and coordinated partnerships at all levels and across sectors, and to uphold the right to participation.

13. We call for strong regional coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the education agenda within the framework of existing regional entities and mechanisms, building on current and planned regional strategies and frameworks.

14. We recognize that the success of the 2030 education agenda requires sound policies and planning and efficient implementation arrangements. It is also clear that the aspiration of SDG 4 cannot be realized without a significant and well-targeted increase in financing, particularly in those countries furthest from achieving quality education for all at all levels. We therefore are determined to increase public spending on education in accordance with country context, and urge adherence to the international benchmarks of allocating 4 - 6% of Gross Domestic Product and/or 15 - 20% of total public expenditure to education.

15. Noting the importance of development cooperation for filling the remaining funding gaps, we call upon donors and international financing mechanisms to increase funding to education and to support the implementation of all the targets according to countries' needs and priorities. We urge developed countries

to increase official development assistance (ODA), with a view to implementing by 2020 the commitment to allocate 0.7 per cent of gross national income (GNI) as ODA to developing countries [including 0.15 per cent to 0.20 per cent of GNI to LDCs]¹. We also call upon emerging donors to contribute to this effort. We recommend increasing aid to education and improving aid effectiveness through better coordination and harmonization. We further recommend significantly increasing the percentage of funds earmarked for education in humanitarian appeals and increasing the support for education in protracted humanitarian crises.

16. We call on the WEF 2015 co-convenors and all partners to collectively support countries in implementing the 2030 education agenda, by providing technical advice, capacity development and financial support based on their respective mandates and comparative advantages, and building on complementarity. To this end, we entrust UNESCO, in consultation with Member States, the WEF 2015 co-convenors and other partners, to develop an appropriate global coordination mechanism. Recognizing the Global Partnership for Education as a multi-stakeholder education financing platform, we recommend that it be part of this future global coordination mechanism.

17. We further entrust UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialized agency for education, to continue its mandated role to lead and co-ordinate the 2030 education agenda, in particular by: undertaking advocacy to sustain political commitment; facilitating policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and standard setting; monitoring progress towards the education targets; convening global, regional and national stakeholders to guide the implementation of the agenda; and functioning as a focal point for education within the overall SDG coordination architecture.

18. We resolve to develop comprehensive national monitoring and evaluation systems in order to generate sound evidence for policy formulation and the management of education systems as well as to ensure accountability. We further request the WEF 2015 co-convenors and partners to support capacity development in data collection, analysis and reporting at the country level. We also request that the Education for All Global Monitoring Report be continued as an independent Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR), hosted and published by UNESCO, as the mechanism for monitoring and reporting on SDG 4 and on education in the other SDGs, within the mechanism to be established to monitor and review the implementation of the SDGs and its means of implementation. Countries should continue to report accurate and complete data in a timely manner to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in its role as the global depository for education data.

19. Taking into account the UN Special Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2015 (New York), the outcomes of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, July 2015) and the Oslo Summit on Education for Development (July 2015), a final version of the Framework for Action will be presented for adoption at a special high-level meeting to be organized alongside the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO in November 2015.

20. Building on the legacy of Jomtien and Dakar, Incheon is a historic commitment by all countries to transform lives through a new vision of education and bold and innovative actions to reach our ambitious goal by 2030.

¹ As proposed in the Zero Draft of the Outcome Document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, July 2015).