

Newly constituted SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee defines its work

25-26 May, Paris, France



The SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee is tasked with providing strategic guidance, reviewing progress drawing on the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR), and making recommendations to the education community on key priorities and actions to achieve the new education agenda.

With global agreement forged in 2015 on a new development and education agenda, attention now turns to organising the modalities to concretise and contextualise the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A core part of this new international agenda is Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on education which aims to “*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*”, together with its associated targets.

Implementation of SDG 4 is guided by the SDG4-Education 2030 Framework for Action (FFA), adopted by 184 Member States in November 2015. This FFA mandates

UNESCO, as the specialized UN agency for education to continue to lead and coordinate SDG4-Education 2030. Further, as part of this role, and in order to ensure strong global coordination, UNESCO has been tasked with convening a multi-stakeholder **SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee** (SDG-Education 2030 SC) as a key structure for coordinating the support to global education efforts within the wider 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development architecture.

The first meeting of the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee was organised in UNESCO Paris. As the Framework for Action defines, this Steering Committee shall “*provide strategic guidance, review progress drawing on the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR), and make recommendations to the education community on key priorities and catalytic actions to achieve the new agenda; monitor and advocate for adequate financing; and encourage harmonization and coordination of partner activities.*”

In this meeting, the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee (SC) was formally constituted following a consultative process among the different constituencies represented in the Committee. Civil society has three slots in the Committee – two for NGOs and one representing teachers organisations. The Collective Consultation of NGO (CCNGO) nominated the two NGO representatives to the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee -



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The participants affirmed that the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee will be the body to endorse the Thematic Indicators developed by the Technical Cooperation Group.

Maria Lourdes A. Khan, Secretary-General of ASPBAE, and Camilla Croso, President of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). David Edwards, Deputy Secretary General of Education International, represents teacher's organisations.

The majority of the members of the SC are representatives of member states. For the Asia Pacific, the representatives are:

China: Tao Zhan, Director-General, Education Management Information Center, Ministry of Education

Japan: Kazuhiro Yoshida, Director/Professor, Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education, Hiroshima University

Republic of Korea: Eun-Pyo Hong, Professor, Sangmyung University; Special Advisor, Ministry of Education

An additional slot for the Asia Pacific – for a regional inter-governmental organisation – remains open.

The current TOR of the Steering Committee calls for greater linkages between the member states and regional organisations in the Steering Committee with the regional SDG-Education 2030 architecture in their respective regions. These modalities require working out further, but one suggestion is that the three regional representatives from Member States, as well as the regional organisation, be part of regional coordination mechanisms.

The SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee also defined its modes of coordination and work as contained in its Terms of Reference (TOR). As part of this, it elected 1 Co-Chair and 3 Vice Chairs. Maria Khan of ASPBAE was elected as one of the Vice Chairs. Dankert Vedeler (Norway) was elected as Co-Chair, and Qian Tang (Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO) was confirmed as the other co-chair. UNESCO has a permanent seat as Co-Chair.

During the meeting, participants discussed global SDG developments, including the UN architecture for supporting the SDG agenda and reviewing progress. Steering Committee representatives recalled the importance of engaging with the formal SDG process and architecture that oversees and debates financing, which is the Financing for Development mechanism.

A dedicated session was also devoted to updating on the status of the SDG-Education 2030 global and thematic indicators. A number of issues in this regard were raised by civil society and other members of the Steering Committee: Clarity on the relationship between the Steering Committee and the newly created 'Technical Cooperation Group on Thematic Indicators for SDG 4' was sought. It was agreed that close collaboration and dialogue between

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the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee and the Technical Cooperation Group on Indicators (TCG) be ensured. The SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee will be the body to endorse the thematic indicators developed by the Technical Cooperation Group, noting that technical discussions already undertaken in the Technical Cooperation Group should not be re-opened in the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee deliberations.



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Civil society also raised its concern that the position of the EFA Steering Committee, with respect to the global indicator for Target 4.1, was not correctly communicated to the Inter Agency Experts Group on the SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDG). In its meeting in October 2015, the EFA SC agreed that the proposed global indicator for target 4.1 should be kept unchanged – not incorporate a proposal allowing early grade assessment in the proposed indicator, while the thematic indicator should provide for learning assessment ‘in and during primary’ in order to give flexibility on when to test young children. This consensus is reflected in the text of the Framework for Action Annex. It was agreed that a letter be sent to UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) by the Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee underlining this position. The ECOSOC and UN General Assembly, were sites for opportunities, albeit slim ones, to advocate for a revised indicator.

The Committee shared updates on activities initiated for SDG-ED 2030 implementation by UNESCO and the different constituencies (as presented by Members of the SC). Civil society representatives shared plans of the UNESCO Collective Consultation of NGOs to convene a meeting of its members over the next 9 months to deliberate on civil society strategies for participation in the implementation and monitoring of SDG 4-Education 2030 and its Framework for Action. They also advised that a new Education and Academia Stakeholder Group had been formed under the UN SDG architecture, linked to follow up and review, that allows for the civil society constituency on education to engage in these processes.

The SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee is expected to convene again in the latter part of 2016 to discuss its strategies in greater detail, including plans for Global Education Meetings.

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