

CSO Recommendations to APMED V

1-3 Oct 2019, Bangkok

A. General Recommendations for SDG 4.1 and 4.6:

1. A Framework of the Right to Education, Lifelong Learning and Holistic Education

- Governments are urged to premise their education frameworks and plans on the basis of the right to education of all people, and to ensure their national education policies, including targets SDG 4.1 (primary and secondary education) and 4.6 (youth and adult literacy) are developed within a **framework of lifelong learning**.
- Education needs to be **holistic**. This means that policies related to 4.1 and 4.6 can't be developed without **the interconnectedness of the other targets**, 4.2 (early childhood care and pre-primary education), 4.3 (equitable access to TVET and tertiary education), 4.4 (relevant skills for work), 4.5 (gender equality and inclusion) and 4.7 (ESD and GCED). Policies and programmes for youth and adult literacy can't be designed and implemented without thoughtful consideration of prior learning from school and without pathways for learning beyond literacy, into formal and non-formal education or to work.
- A **holistic education framework** means that curricula for primary and secondary schools include skills, such as problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, teamwork, communication skills and conflict resolution. These are essential, as the learner will find these skills invaluable for the rest of life. Pathways from youth and adult literacy programs need to be developed that provide courses to enable learning of these same life skills.
- Policies related to SDG 4.1 and 4.6 will require **inter-connection and collaboration of many government ministries and require the active participation of communities as stakeholders**.

2. Financing of SDG 4.1 and 4.6

- Governments need to **substantially increase their national education budgets** to achieve SDG 4.1 and 4.6. National governments need to locate additional funds, for example by expanding the tax base and ensuring corporations contribute their fair share of tax.
- Funding for SDG 4.1 and 4.6 is needed for:
 - **New facilities, equipment and mobile training units** in areas of need, both for schools and community learning centres, ensuring these are integrated into existing systems and can function sustainably.
 - **Supportive and inclusive local infrastructure**, including safe public and learning spaces, transport, washrooms, hostels & lodging for girls and women, access for people with disabilities, and facilities in provincial areas, not just urban areas.
 - **Flexible distance literacy learning** opportunities customised to learner needs
 - Funding for **additional teachers and trainers and quality teacher training programs** in primary and secondary schools and also for specialised youth and adult literacy teaching provision.
 - **Donors** need to **support government determined national policies** regarding primary and secondary education, and youth and adult literacy and include **institutional strengthening of government capacity** to implement programs

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B. Target 4.1: Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

1. Policy and Financing

- Governments need to ensure 12 years of free and compulsory primary and secondary education of good quality
- Curricula must ensure awareness and promotion of human rights, tolerance and gender.
- Primary and Secondary education needs to be fee free. Governments need to closely monitor and halt any fees and expenses levied on parents as a condition for children attending school. Reports on the monitoring need to be transparent and available to the public.
- Increased funding is needed to provide for more teachers, classrooms, children's text books, teachers' materials, and teacher training. In many places, the teacher student ratio is still unacceptably high.
- Teacher salaries need to increase. Incentives need to be given to ensure good quality teachers work in remote areas.
- Funds for schools and teachers' wages need to be delivered on time. Too often delays lead to a delay in the provision of school education and a lack of teacher morale.
- Dedicated budget lines for children with disabilities and more teachers trained to teach children with different disabilities

2. Inclusion

- Governments need to ensure access to primary and secondary education for children with disabilities, especially in remote areas.
- Different children have different disabilities and therefore need support customised to their particular disabilities
- Curricula for children with disabilities need to be re-designed to suit the needs of each disability group. Curricula need to address the full range of social learning including reproductive health and protection
- Appropriate learning methods that work with and have the support of people with disabilities
- Education officials need to meet with disability groups and learn from them the problems they experience, what they want and good models of teaching and learning
- Governments are urged to employ teachers with disabilities, as they can be an important role model and alleviate discrimination
- Learning environments for children with disabilities need to be considered, such as accommodation requirements; access to buildings, such as ramps and door width.
- Governments need to develop strategies specific to girls and the reasons for not going to school
- Governments need to scale up measures for protecting and safeguarding of children, for example in relation to bullying and harassment and also, to attend to the psycho-social needs of marginalised groups.
- Alternative learning systems are a tried and proven complement to formal education, (for example in the Philippines) for marginalised groups and children in remote areas.

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C. Target 4.6: Ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

1. Policy and Financing - Government Responsibility for Implementation of SDG 4.6

- Youth and adult literacy is a fundamental basic empowering life skill that opens up many more opportunities for learning and for work.
- Youth and adult literacy is one of the more neglected targets in SDG4. Many governments do not fully accept that governments are responsible for ensuring youth and adult literacy, even though it is fundamental to meeting their right to education.
- As duty bearers for ensuring the right to education, **national governments need to take responsibility** for setting in place legislative frameworks, an enabling policy environment and financing for SDG 4.6, ensuring publicly funded widespread access to youth and adult literacy programs, in collaboration with other stakeholders and local communities, ensuring quality provisioning and leaving no one behind.
- Youth and adult literacy programmes can't be implemented in isolation. They need to be embedded in the national education system. For these programmes to be effective, they need to be integrated into pathways of further learning and opportunities for work.
- Governments are encouraged to utilise existing facilities such as community learning centres and expand and fund them.
- Youth and adult literacy programmes need to be learner-centred, context based, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and with built in quality assurance systems and effective monitoring and evaluation. For this to happen, governments need to engage communities and stakeholders in youth and adult literacy, design, planning and implementation.
- Governments need to support the sustainability of and scaling up of customised good practices undertaken by **community based organisations in relation to youth and adult literacy**
- Funding is needed **to link** of youth and adult literacy programs to education and training opportunities and for decent work at local levels
- Financing for **information and awareness campaigns** about youth and adult literacy classes is needed to ensure it reaches out to the marginalized communities
- The **Global Partnership for Education (GPE)** in its next Strategic Plan should align its funding priorities more fully to SDG 4 and accord include youth and adult learning and education in its financing framework.

2. Equity & Inclusion

Governments are urged to:

- Enable the full participation and inclusion of all adults, especially the underprivileged, women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, minorities, learners from rural and remote areas, and other disadvantaged groups, in free, quality and accessible adult literacy leading to further learning, education and employment.
- Public policies and programmes should recognise that learners from marginalised and vulnerable groups face far more barriers in participating in ALE activities.
- **Embed social inclusion youth and adult literacy programs**, including regulatory systems & measures for compliance.
- Develop, fund, implement and monitor youth and adult literacy **gender strategies**
- Governments need to **increase the provision of programs and pathways to learning opportunities** for those who have not completed schooling to have bridging

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youth and adult literacy courses, to enable them to access further learning and training.

- **Pathways from non-formal literacy courses at community level** need to be funded, established (with community participation and ownership), and formalised to access formal learning programs. These need to be well-promoted.

Quality

- Literacy needs to promote critical analytical skills, not just reading and numeracy.
- Governments and stakeholders should provide capacity building for **youth to participate** in education policy planning, and implementation design
- National qualifications frameworks need to include **accreditation of youth and adult literacy courses**.
- **Standardised and specialised teacher training** for youth and adult literacy is needed to ensure quality teaching and training
- A **data bank** needs to be developed of **good models of quality youth and adult literacy teacher training programs, and of accredited literacy courses** which can then be disseminated.
- Contextually appropriate ICT needs to be provided. Mobile phones can be an important literacy tool for youth and adults

Strategies and Implementation

- Indicators and implementation programs need to be **customised to the varying needs and contexts of different marginalised groups**.
- Governments need to ensure the **participation of CSOs and relevant communities** as stakeholders in the formulation of policy indicators and the design of programs. **This will require resourcing** by governments to enable civil society to play this role.

Review, Monitoring, Reporting and Transparency

- Youth and adult literacy programmes require the planning of **milestones and medium-term timelines** between now and 2030 to ensure achievement of the targets.
- **Governments need to ensure regulation and monitoring** of adult literacy providers. This needs to cover curricula, costs to learners, teacher wages and conditions, and transparency of information availability.
- Governments need to ensure the **timely and public release** of outcome reports and data.

3. Monitoring & Data

- Governments need to prioritise **increased and better-quality data collection** including for areas where data is poor, for community based literacy programs
- **Increased funding** is needed to ensure **sustainable ongoing training** for data collection and **'data literacy' at the local level**, and the use of local communities for data collection
- Governments need to invest more to **make data more inclusive**, especially for marginalised groups, with categories **disaggregated according to sex, age, ethnicity, disability, migrant workers, refugees and other marginalised groups**. **Sub-national data** is needed rather than reliance on aggregated national data alone

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- National level tracking studies and data collection are needed in **diverse and remote contexts** to ensure an inclusive approach is implemented
- Funding is needed to develop systems to **track data of individual literacy learners** and their transition to further learning or work, to inform policy making
- Data and reporting should be made **publicly available and in a timely manner**

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