



**ED/WEF2015/MD/3**  
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# Incheon Declaration

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



## Preamble

1. We, Ministers, heads and 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 and the people 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. On this historic occasion, 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 and its interrelation with other human rights. We acknowledge the efforts made; however, we recognize with great concern that we are far from having reached education for all.
3. 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 proposed education targets of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 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 as well as the role of governments and regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in galvanizing political commitment for education.
4. Having taken stock of progress made towards the EFA goals 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. Our vision is to transform lives through education, recognizing the important role of education as a main driver of development and in achieving the other proposed SDGs. We commit with a sense of urgency to a single, renewed education agenda that is holistic, ambitious and aspirational, leaving no one behind. This new vision is fully captured by the proposed 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; inclusion; protection; cultural, linguistic and ethnic 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, tolerance, human fulfilment and sustainable development. We recognize education as key to achieving full employment and poverty eradication. We will focus our efforts on access, equity and inclusion, quality and learning outcomes, within a lifelong learning approach.

6. Motivated by our significant achievements in expanding **access** to education over the last 15 years, we will ensure the provision of 12 years of free, publicly funded, equitable quality primary and secondary education, of which at least nine years are compulsory, leading to relevant learning outcomes. We also encourage the provision of at least one year of free and compulsory quality pre-primary education and that all children have access to quality early childhood development, care and education. We also commit to providing meaningful education and training opportunities for the large population of out-of-school children and adolescents, who require immediate, targeted and sustained action ensuring that all children are in school and are learning.
7. **Inclusion and equity** in and through education is the cornerstone of a transformative education agenda, and we therefore commit to addressing all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparities and inequalities in access, participation and learning outcomes. No education target should be considered met unless met by all. We therefore commit to making the necessary changes in education policies and focusing our efforts on the most disadvantaged, especially those with disabilities, to ensure that no one is left behind.
8. We recognize the importance of **gender equality** in achieving the right to education for all. We are therefore committed to supporting gender-sensitive policies, planning and learning environments; mainstreaming gender issues in teacher training and curricula; and eliminating gender-based discrimination and violence in schools.
9. We commit to **quality** education and to improving learning outcomes, which requires strengthening inputs, processes and evaluation of outcomes and mechanisms to measure progress. We will ensure that teachers and educators are empowered, adequately recruited, well-trained, professionally qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient 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, interpersonal and social 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 Aichi-Nagoya in 2014. We also stress the importance of human rights education and training in order to achieve the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.
10. We commit to promoting quality **lifelong learning opportunities** for all, in all settings and at all levels of education. This includes equitable and increased access to quality technical and vocational education and training and higher education and research, with due attention to quality assurance. In addition, the provision of flexible learning pathways, as well as the recognition, validation and accreditation of the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through non-formal and informal education, is important. 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 acquire life skills, and that they are provided with adult learning, education and training opportunities. We are also committed to strengthening science, technology and innovation. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) must be harnessed to strengthen education systems, knowledge dissemination, information access, quality and effective learning, and more effective service provision.
11. Furthermore, we note with serious concern that, today, a large proportion of the world's out-of-school population lives in conflict-affected areas, and that crises, violence and attacks on education institutions, 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 needs of children, youth and adults in these contexts, including internally displaced persons and refugees. We

highlight the need for education to be delivered in safe, supportive and secure learning environments free from violence. We recommend a sufficient crisis response, from emergency response through to recovery and rebuilding; better coordinated national, regional and global responses; and capacity development for comprehensive risk reduction and mitigation 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 of all stakeholders.
13. We call for strong global and regional collaboration, cooperation, coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the education agenda based on data collection, analysis and reporting at the country level, within the framework of regional entities, mechanisms and strategies.
14. We recognize that the success of the 2030 education agenda requires sound policies and planning as well as efficient implementation arrangements. It is also clear that the aspirations encompassed in the proposed 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 and regional benchmarks of allocating efficiently at least 4 - 6% of Gross Domestic Product and/or at least 15 - 20% of total public expenditure to education.
15. Noting the importance of development cooperation in complementing investments by governments, we call upon developed countries, traditional and emerging donors, middle income countries and international financing mechanisms to increase funding to education and to support the implementation of the agenda according to countries' needs and priorities. We recognize that the fulfilment of all commitments related to official development assistance (ODA) is crucial, including the commitments by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for ODA to developing countries. In accordance with their commitments, we urge those developed countries that have not yet done so to make additional concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for ODA to developing countries. We also commit to increase our support to the least developed countries. We further recognize the importance of unlocking all potential resources to support the right to education. We recommend improving aid effectiveness through better coordination and harmonization, and prioritizing financing and aid to neglected sub-sectors and low income countries. We also recommend significantly increasing support for education in humanitarian and protracted crises. We welcome the Oslo Summit on Education for Development (July 2015) and call on the Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa to support the proposed SDG 4.
16. We call on the WEF 2015 co-convenors, and in particular UNESCO, as well as on all partners, to individually and collectively support countries in implementing the 2030 education agenda, by providing technical advice, national 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 financing platform for education to support the implementation of the agenda according to the needs and priorities of the countries, 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 coordinate 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. Countries should seek to improve the quality, levels of disaggregation and timeliness of reporting to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 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 the proposed SDG 4 and on education in the other proposed SDGs, within the mechanism to be established to monitor and review the implementation of the proposed SDGs.
19. We have discussed and agreed upon the essential elements of the Education 2030 Framework for Action. Taking into account the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (New York, September 2015) and the outcomes of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, July 2015), a final version will be presented for adoption and launched at a special high-level meeting to be organized alongside the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO in November 2015. We are fully committed to its implementation after its adoption, to inspire and guide countries and partners to ensure that our agenda is achieved.
20. Building on the legacy of Jomtien and Dakar, this Incheon Declaration is an historic commitment by all of us to transform lives through a new vision for education, with bold and innovative actions, to reach our ambitious goal by 2030.