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Education for All: Beyond 2015

Mapping Current International Actions to Define the Post-2015
Education and Development Agenda

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Education for All

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Mapping Current International Actions to Define the Post-2015
Education and Development Agendas

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Index

1. Introduction..... 4

2. Overview of the post-2015 processes..... 8

 2.1. International..... 8

 2.1.1. MDGs + 8

 2.1.2. EFA +..... 9

 2.1.3. Virtual..... 11

 2.2. Regional..... 12

 2.3. National 12

3. Trends in the post-2015 development and education debates 14

 3.1. MDGs +..... 15

 3.2. EFA +..... 16

4. Civil society positions in the post-2015 debates 20

 4.1. MDGs +..... 20

 4.2. EFA +..... 24

5. Strategies for civil society contribution to the education agenda..... 27

 5.1. MDG +..... 27

 5.2. EFA +..... 30

6. Conclusion 32

7. Abbreviations..... 34

8. Endnotes 35

1. Introduction

*'Everyone has the right to education.
Education shall be free,
at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.'*

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

Since the turn of the millennium, there has been tangible progress in human development across the world — 40 million more children have enrolled in schools, 2 billion people have gained access to improved water sources, incidence of new HIV cases are on the decline and fewer children die of malaria. Many of these advances are indirectly attributed to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) inspired² by the Millennium Summit (6-8 September 2000 in New York organised by the United Nations³) which marked a turning point in the evolution of the development debate. The MDGs have emerged not only as a central reference point in development dialogue to draw attention to the multi-dimensional approach to combat human poverty, but have also ensured that world leaders make concrete commitments for their fulfilment.

The MDGs had their origin in a spate of thematic international conferences, meetings and publications in the preceding decade.⁴ In the case of education, the six '*Education for All*' (EFA) goals⁵ committed to at the World Education Forum six months earlier (26-28 April 2000 in Dakar, Senegal organised by UNESCO⁶) were the most influential. Based on a life-cycle approach, the first four of the EFA goals focused on age-appropriate access while the last two goals dwelt on gender equity and quality of education. Inspired by these EFA goals, two of the eight MDG goals⁷ focused on education — universal primary education and gender equality (see figure 1). But, due to flawed design these education goals are technically overlapping and limited in scope.⁸

Figure 1: MDG and EFA Goals for 2015

Education for All (EFA) Goals

- GOAL 1: Expand early childhood care and education
- GOAL 2: Provide free and compulsory primary education for all
- GOAL 3: Promote learning and life skills for young people and adults
- GOAL 4: Increase adult literacy by 50 per cent
- GOAL 5: Achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015
- GOAL 6: Improve the quality of education

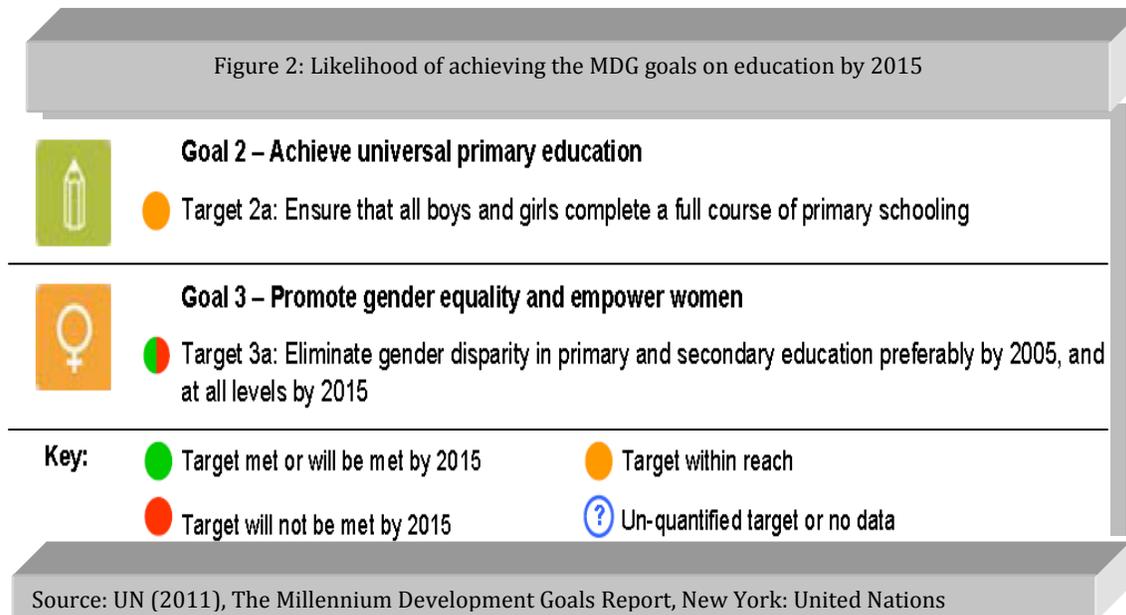
Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

- GOAL 2: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling
- GOAL 3: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015

The mechanisms to monitor these goals were also rapidly put in place. To gauge the progress towards the implementation of the MDGs, the UN Secretary-General issues a yearly

report. In addition, the annual Education for All Global Monitoring Report (GMR)⁹ published by UNESCO diligently tracks global progress towards the six 'Dakar' EFA goals.

While the top line message of the MDGs was to halve world poverty, the sad reality is that global progress has slowed down since the 1990 watermark and the world is likely to miss this particular goal in 2015.¹⁰ On the education front, the goal of gender equality in primary education is within reach. But although many countries have made considerable progress, the other education goals to achieve universal primary completion and gender equality in secondary education will not be met by the 2015 deadline.

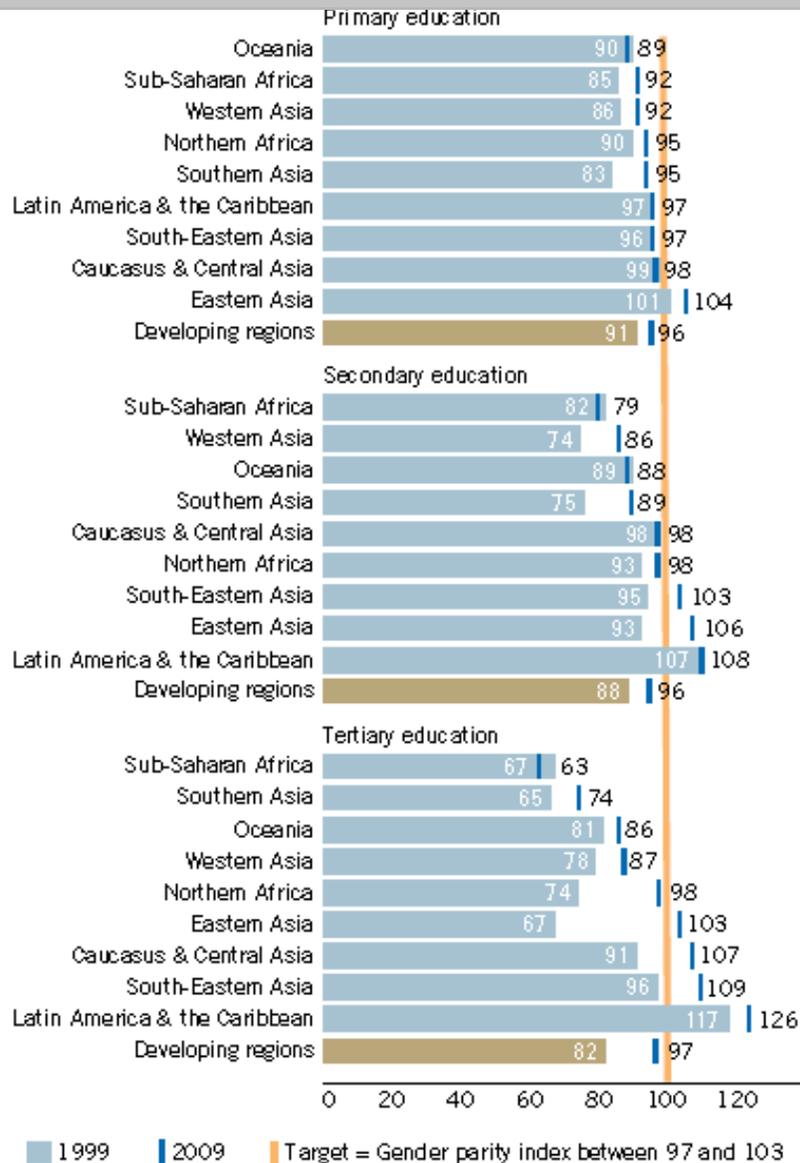


Nevertheless, education is considered to be one of the most spectacular success stories of the MDG framework, with some of the poorest countries having made the greatest strides. With an 18 percentage point gain in primary enrolment rates between 1999 and 2009, sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, has amongst the best records of improvement. Ethiopia, for example, has increased enrolments by 3 million between 1999 and 2007 and out-of-school children have fallen from 63 to 16 per cent — a transformational change which has led to the creation of a newly educated generation.

But though the EFA and MDG frameworks revolutionised the international development debate and increased the need for government accountability on the human development agenda, it is important not to assume direct attribution for results. The success in education enrolments, for example, has much to do with the policy change adopted by several countries since the late nineties to scrap school 'user fees' and respect the right to free and compulsory elementary education, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948. With the revoking of school fees in the early years of the millennium, there has been a dramatic and immediate increase in school enrolments of 51 per cent in Malawi, 70 per cent in Uganda and 49 per cent in Tanzania. In Kenya almost over-night after the policy change, 1.2 million children entered schools for the first time.

But despite these many gains with only three years left for the 2015 EFA and MDG deadline which also coincide with the culmination of the African Union’s (AU) *Second Decade of Education for Africa*,¹¹ at least 22 countries in Africa are destined to miss key education goals. The hardest to reach children — from the poorest households, living in rural areas and particularly girls — are the most likely to be out of school.

Figure 3: Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio in primary, secondary and tertiary education (girls’ school enrolment ratio in relation to boys’ enrolment ratio), 1998/1999 and 2008/2009 (girls per 100 boys)



Source: UN (2011), The Millennium Development Goals Report, New York: United Nations

Most of the other EFA goals also stand strikingly neglected. The Dakar Framework had a specific target to reduce adult illiteracy by 50 per cent. But it will be missed by a wide margin with 800 million adults worldwide still unable to read or pen their name especially in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.¹²

While the EFA goals on elementary childhood care and education (ECCE), youth skills and quality education lacked specific quantifiable targets, little progress has been registered on these fronts too. Till date, less than half of the children under the age of five worldwide, and only 17 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa, receive any pre-primary education. 74 million adolescents too lie outside the formal education system. And several studies show that the quality of education in developing countries is often so abysmal that even children who complete primary education often lack basic literacy and numeracy skills.

But despite all these limitations opinion surveys consistently show that there seems to be an endorsement in southern countries, especially in Africa¹³, that the MDGs were “*a good thing*” which have positively influenced development.¹⁴ So, as the international community approaches the 2015 deadline, there is a growing momentum to re-shape the future international development agenda. This also offers a historic opportunity to influence the education debates.¹⁵

In this process, UNESCO’s Collective Consultation of Non-Governmental Organizations on Education for All (CCNGO/EFA) as a key platform for dialogue, reflection and partnerships with civil society organizations in the EFA movement, is an important stakeholder. To inform the discussions during the 6th CCNGO/EFA meeting, this discussion paper seeks to map current thinking on the nature, shape and scope of existing post-2015 frameworks and present a set of key influencing priorities, opportunities and strategies.

This discussion paper is based on extensive secondary research and a limited range of interviews (via Skype and email) with key stakeholders in the EFA processes. The next section presents an overview of the official post-2015 processes. Section 3 provides an overview of the thematic trends in the post-2015 development and education debates, while Section 4 maps existing civil society positions. The final section lists strategies for civil society to meaningfully contribute to the education agenda.

2. Overview of the post-2015 processes¹⁶

'My journey (has)....led to my conviction that access to quality education is the social justice issue of our times.'

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, 2011
Nobel Laureate, President of Liberia and
Co-chair of the UNSG's High Level Panel on the
post-2015 framework'

'Because education doesn't just give people the tools to make a good living – it gives them the character to live a good life, to be good citizens.'

David Cameron, 2011¹⁷
Prime Minister of United Kingdom and Co-
chair of the UNSG's High Level Panel on the
post-2015 framework

As the post-2015 processes to determine the construct of the successors to the MDG and the EFA frameworks gather speed, opportunities for influencing and advocacy have arisen at three levels — international, regional and national. This section maps the official processes and platforms for dialogue which have recently been created largely by the United Nations and its affiliates.

2.1. International

At the international level, two parallel processes have emerged for the creation of the post-2015 successors to the MDG and EFA frameworks. For the MDG's most of channels have been spearheaded by the United Nations Secretary General (UNSG). For the post-2015 EFA framework, apart from the UNSG's 'Education First' – Special Initiative on Education, UNESCO has been at the forefront to initiate important processes for official dialogue.

2.1.1. MDGs +

- **UNSG's High Level Panel of Eminent Persons**

The UNSG has appointed an influential high level panel to advice on the post-2015 framework. The panel will commence its work after Rio +20. The co-chairs selected are Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and UK Prime Minister David Cameron

The UN secretariat has also announced the names of the 26 members of this panel.¹⁸ Though most of them have extensive experience in government, academia or the private sector, Queen Rania of Jordan and Graça Machel of South Africa, stand-out as long-standing high-profile civil society advocates on education. The high level panel is expected to submit its report to the UNSG in the first quarter of 2013.

- **UN System Task Team**

A team of dedicated technical experts from all UN agencies, the World Bank, IMF and the WTO, have been selected to coordinate UN-wide preparations and propose a vision and road map. The team is co-chaired by Jomo Kwame Sundaram, Assistant Secretary General of UNDESA and Olav Kjørven, Assistant Secretary General of UNDP.

Its major tasks are to evaluate experience with the MDGs, review recent trends, assess ongoing UN efforts and initiatives, and make proposals for the post-2015 framework. This group had submitted an initial report in May 2012 based on the work of 6 six working groups.¹⁹

- **UN Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser**

The UNSG has announced his plans to appoint a new Assistant Secretary-General for post-2015 development planning who will be responsible for coordinating “constituencies and work streams” inside and outside the UN system.²⁰

In addition, Amina Mohammed,²¹ a prominent education activist, has officially been appointed as the UN Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning. This will be a pivotal role to coordinate with the entire UN system and she will also participate in the High Level Panel as an ex-officio member.

- **UN General Assembly 2013 ‘Special Event’**

The UN General Assembly’s ‘special event’ in September 2013, will follow up on efforts made towards achieving the MDGs and is expected to forge the basic principles for a new international framework in 2015.²²

- **G20 Working Group on Development and G8**

In the last two years, the G20 has gained in prominence in the international stage but has understandably focused its efforts largely on the economic crisis, especially in Europe, rather than development. But Barry Carin, Senior Fellow at the Canadian Centre for International Governance has recommended that in future years it would be useful for education advocates to engage with the G20 as, “*it will be easier to get an agreement on a tough task requiring tradeoffs in a smaller group than the UN which tends to lowest common denominator*”. For this, he recommends that it is important to lobby with the G20 Working Group on Development, co-chaired by Alan Hirsch of South Africa, Deputy Head of The Presidency.²³ The G20 meetings will be held in Russia in 2013, Australia in 2014 and Turkey in 2015.

Elizabeth King, Education Director at the World Bank²⁴ also endorses the need to advocate with the G8 which will be chaired by the UK in 2013. Food security has risen high on the agenda in recent years with its L’Aquila commitment in 2009 and the Camp David food security and nutrition initiative in 2012 and the Hunger Summit hosted by David Cameroon o the side-lines of the Olympics.²⁵

2.1.2. EFA +

- **UN Secretary General’s ‘Education First’**

This special initiative on education by the UNSG is not formally part of this post-2015 processes, but could have a significant impact on its debates. The UNSG has highlighted that the initiative has been specially created to address the need to ‘*put education at the heart of the social, political and development agendas*’. Its three thematic pillars are i) every child in school, ii) quality education and iii) global citizenship.

The Initiative has two formal structures, a Steering Committee and a Technical Advisory Group. Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and Education International (EI) have been invited to represent civil society in the former. The technical advisory group which seeks to develop the substantive content, including strategies, targets, benchmarks, frameworks, monitoring and recommendations, is chaired by Rebecca Winthrop of Brookings Institute and has only Uwezo, the East African initiative, to represent civil society organizations.

'Education First' will be officially launched in New York on the margins of the General Assembly on 26 September 2012. But the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has already presided on the first meeting of the High-Level Steering Committee of the initiative in July. The meeting gathered heads of UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA, the World Bank, the Global Partnership for Education and representatives from civil society, the private sector, the teaching profession and youth organizations. UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova serves as Executive Secretary of the 15-member Committee.²⁶ The Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Global Education – Gordon Brown, former British Prime Minister, is also a prominent member.²⁷

- **UNICEF**

In April 2012, UNICEF organized a meeting with Save the Children, Caritas, ATD Fourth World, Civicus and other partners for a full-day session to review what worked well in the Millennium Declaration and MDG agenda, from a children's rights perspective and assess the risk and opportunities to pursue a shared child-focused global advocacy strategy. The group met again in July 2012 to discuss how to take forward the results from Rio+20. While still under discussion, there is an idea to host global online conversations on the post-2015 themes with significant avenues for civil society to define its role and influence.²⁸

- **Global Partnership for Education**

Though, the Global Partnership for Education has not yet announced any special consultative processes to craft and influence the post-2015 agenda, its ongoing Strategic Planning Exercise for the 2012-2014 period and the priorities chosen will be key platform for donors and other stakeholders to influence the carve the post-2015 strategies.

- **UNESCO**

In its role as lead EFA convening agency, UNESCO will bring together the different stakeholders that can contribute to an agenda for education. The key milestone events are:

- 1) **UNESCO's EFA High-Level Forum (HLF)**

For the purpose of high-level advocacy, the annual HLF, organized on the sidelines of a major high-level meeting such as the United Nations General Assembly, aims to bring together a few world leaders and champions of education to increase the visibility of EFA beyond the education community and place education at the centre of international development agenda. In 2012, it is

scheduled for September in New York, to coincide with the launch of the UNSG's 'Education First' special initiative.

2) UNESCO's Global EFA Meeting (GEM)

The reformed EFA architecture²⁹ includes an annual GEM scheduled for 21-23 November 2012 in Paris. The main purpose of the GEM is to critically assess progress towards EFA and agree on tangible follow-up actions. The outcomes of the GEM will guide the agenda of the HLF. Civil society participation will be invited through the CCNGO/EFA mechanism.³⁰

3) EFA Steering Committee

The first meeting of the Education for All Steering Committee was held on 11-12 June 2012 in Paris. It consists of 18 members representing UNESCO Member States, the E-9 Initiative, EFA convening agencies, the OECD, the civil society and the private sector. The role of the Steering Committee is to provide strategic direction to the EFA partnership, monitor progress, and advice on meeting the six EFA goals. A major task is also to discuss the development of the post-2015 education agenda.

4) UNESCO's CCNGO/EFA

The 6th meeting of the CCNGO/EFA has been postponed from July to 24-26 October 2012 to be held in Paris to reflect on the achievements of EFA to date and to strategize on how civil society, and the CCNGO/EFA in particular, can contribute to shaping the post-2015 EFA agenda.

5) 2015 World EFA Conference

The international education community has not organised a Jomtien+20, twenty years after the World Conference on Education for All, in the manner of Rio+20. But the 2015 World EFA Conference could capitalize on the spirit of the 25th anniversary to propel education high on the international agenda in time for the development post-MDG 2015 framework.

2.1.3. Virtual

- **UN Millennium Campaign's 'The Global Conversation'**

The UN Millennium Campaign (UNMC) has been given the mandate *to launch 'The global conversation'* is envisioned as a wide-ranging initiative, using new technology and social media to engage the general public.³¹ One of its early initiatives is the creation of the web platform www.worldwewant2015.org co-hosted by civil society launched on 31 July 2012. In coming months, its interactive features will increase to host a lively and active exchange of civil society opinions and experiences.

- **UNDG's 9 thematic consultations**

These virtual thematic consultations coordinated by the UNDG will include education (primary, secondary, tertiary and vocational) and will take place between May 2012 and February 2013. In addition, a website will be created to exchange information by August 2012. A Post-2015 Help Desk has already been launched to respond to all queries within 48 hours (post2015consultations@undg.org)

2.2. Regional

- **UNESCO Regional Consultations**

UNESCO, through its regional bureaux,³² plans to organise a number of consultations on the post-2015 education agenda. The Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, has already held a high level regional expert meeting attended by ASPBAE on the post-2015 education agenda in Bangkok, 9-11 May 2011. In the Arab region, the Education for All Regional Forum is scheduled for October in Lebanon. The Education for All: Technical Regional Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean will be organised in Chile in September 2012.

- **UN Regional Commissions' Report**

In 2013, the five UN regional commissions are planning to publish a report entitled '*Beyond 2015: A Future UN Development Agenda*'. This report is expected to provide the main elements for a global development agenda from a regional perspective.

- **Regional Inter-Governmental Bodies**

In Africa, the prime opportunity for advocacy on education is the African Union (AU) and its bi-annual Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF) where Ministers from 54 countries regularly deliberate on global and sub-regional developments in education. But the main limitation of the AU's Second Decade for Education (2006-2015) is that it is confined to a narrow vision of higher education. According to Gorgui Sow of ANCEFA, other influencing opportunities also present themselves in the regular meetings of the sub-regional economic bodies such as Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and Southern African Development Community (SADC).

2.3. National

Despite varied regional and international dialogues, the post-2015 agenda is likely to be politically determined and heavily influenced by the preferences of the most engaged and active national governments. The Colombian government, for example, has nurtured the idea of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and world leaders have committed to it at the Rio+20 Summit.³³ Similarly, the Japanese government seems to be very keen to influence the post-2015 agenda, but its framework is in the early stages of development with a heavy focus on well-being and growth.

- **50 national 'The Future We Want' consultations**

These country consultations on the post-2015 framework will be led by UN Resident Coordinators, between June 2012 and March 2013, based on guidelines issued by United Nations Development Group (UNDG).³⁴ Only fifty countries have been chosen due to limited funding. These consultations will feed into a global UNDG report by June 2013.³⁵

- **Geneva Dialogue by NORRAG**
Network for Policy Research, Review and Advice on Education and Training (NORRAG) held a discussion on education post-2015 for Geneva-based organizations on 1 June 2011, as a preliminary step to a 2013 launch of a *'Policy Dialogue Forum on the Future and Past of International Education and Training Policies'* — with possible support from the Swiss Development Corporation.
- **Washington Roundtable by Basic Education**
The Basic Education Coalition www.Basiced.org in the United States is organizing a roundtable discussion with various thought leaders at the end of July in Washington D.C.

3. Trends in the post-2015 development and education debates

'For any of you who have watched the miracle of a child learning to read in your own family, you know how special this moment is.'

Yet in Soumaila's world (grade 3 school child in Mali), and for tens of millions of other children, this moment is rare indeed, for, even after many years of schooling they cannot read.'

Bob Prouty, 2012
Head, Global Partnership for Education³⁶

'The post-2015 EFA agenda for all southern countries... (should not) be reduced to early grade reading skills'

Gorgui Sow, 2012
Regional Coordinator, ANCEFA³⁷

'There seems to be a push to spawn a whole industry of statisticians and educationists to test learning outcomes rather than making concrete investments in improving learning.'

Maria Lourdes-Almazan Khan, 2012
Secretary General of ASPBAE
and Board Member of GCE³⁸

The world looks very different in 2012 from that at the turn of the millennium. The post-2015 development debates too are very different in timber and tone from those in the mid-nineties. Their main strands of disparity are:

Most importantly, in this decade there is an increasing recognition of the fact that there is a concentration of poor people in middle-income countries and fragile states³⁹ rather than low-income countries.

Second, in the late nineties, the development community had a clear focus on poverty reduction and the human development agenda, while today in light of multiple crisis — financial, food and climate — which have impacted both the global North and the South the focus of the debate has shifted to economic growth, jobs, food security. Climate change as a term did not even exist in popular parlance till a few years ago.

Third, while the millennium framework evolved organically after many years of preparatory work in the nineties, even with only three years to go for the MDG deadline the post-2015 debate is still only in the early stages.

Fourth, the distinction between donors and recipients, developed and developing countries is collapsing with the rise of emerging economies. Growth in emerging economies has in fact become the key driver of global growth. The GNI per capita of a few upper middle-income countries has outscored some European member states.⁴⁰

Fifth, non-traditional actors are beginning to play a bigger more influential role in education development, including private actors and foundations from the new economic powerhouses. This time around, civil society, think tanks and southern governments are more eager to get involved with greater expectations for inclusive participation.

Lastly, the future also beholds unprecedented opportunity for poverty reduction. In the coming decades many African countries are likely to be blessed with a demographic

dividend and they have shown their mettle by being able to maintain high growth even as the rest of the world has slowed down due to the global economic crisis.

These differences will undoubtedly influence the direction of the post-2015 development and education debates and the collective aspirations for human development.

3.1. MDGs +

In the post-2015 framework, there seems to be overwhelming support for the preservation of the current MDG policy areas, since many of which have not yet been achieved.⁴¹ In addition, many new thematic areas have emerged as entrants for inclusion. They include:

- **Sustainable Development**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – a proposal originally from Colombia – has emerged as the cornerstone of the Rio+20 Summit in June 2012. The Summit endorsed the need for these goals, but no specific targets, goals or financing mechanisms have been finalised. By the September 2013 UN Special event, there will be a lot of preparation to choose the specific SDG goals. There was initially a lot of concern that the SDGs would be treated separately from the MDGs from 2015 onwards. But the UNSG Ban Ki-Moon has clarified that they would be a unitary processes and has emphasised, that, *“Rio is not the end of the road, it is a beginning. A beginning of a process to define sustainable development goals that build on the Millennium Development Goals, to safeguard people and our planet, to create the future we want.”*⁴² The UN General Assembly (UNGA) at its 67th session in September 2012 is expected to establish a 30-member Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).⁴³

- **Food Security**

Food security has risen high on the international development agenda after the food crisis of 2008-10, when for the first time 1 billion people were faced with hunger. At the Rio+20 Summit, the UNSG Ban Ki-moon even unveiled a five-point food security campaign⁴⁴ aimed at a future where all enjoy *“a fundamental right to food”*. The campaign has five objectives: i) 100 per cent access to food for all, all year round; ii) an end to stunting among children under two because of a lack of nutrients during pregnancy and in the early days of life; iii) ensuring food systems are sustainable; iv) doubling smallholder productivity and income; and v) a reduction in food waste, at the farmer level, through lack of suitable storage and among consumers. Food security has also captured prominent space in the G8 agenda in recent years with the L’Aquila commitment in 2009 and the Camp David food security and nutrition initiative in 2012.⁴⁵

- **Employment**

One area which has sorely been neglected in the MDGs is the needs of young people. This has been exacerbated by the recent phenomenon of jobless growth⁴⁶ and low skill base, especially among youth, and the rise in vulnerable employment⁴⁷ contributing to the amplification of social exclusion and undermining social cohesion.⁴⁸ Job creation and decent work have therefore emerged as two important

new areas of attention, especially in the wake of the recession in Europe⁴⁹ and the United States⁵⁰ and the aftermath of the Arab Spring.⁵¹

- **Zero Poverty**

The MDGs focused on halving world poverty from a multi-dimensional perspective. Some analysts are therefore now advocating for the post-2015 framework to push for new goals to carve a vision for “*getting to zero*” poverty within a generation — i.e. to mark the sustainable end of extreme poverty by 2030.⁵² In addition, on the theme of education for all, the following zero targets have been proposed, ‘*zero target for illiteracy, target for universal secondary education and learning outcomes*’.

3.2. EFA +

As with the MDGs, since many of the EFA goals have yet to be achieved, educationists are clear that the prospective new post-2015 framework chosen needs to incorporate existing goals without dropping them off the radar. Camilla Croso, President of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and Coordinator of the Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education (CLADE), succinctly describes it as an ‘EFA +’ agenda.

In Africa, for example, though primary enrolments have catapulted upwards, 10 million children drop out of school every year and there are around 30 million out-of-school children⁵³. In particular, first generation learners with little pre-school preparation in their growing years, poor teaching environments and little scope for additional support at home, are confronted not only with weak learning outcomes but many pupils also feel that they are being ‘pushed out’ from the education system. Therefore it is essential that all the EFA goals, including elementary childhood care and education (ECCE) and education quality are first fulfilled in letter and spirit.

Adult education, in particular, is one of the most neglected areas of the EFA agenda with more than 800 million illiterate youth and adults worldwide.⁵⁴ Alan Tuckett, President of International Council for Adult Education emphasises, “*although adult learning is a good thing, it is also a fundamental prerequisite for achieving a range of other social policy objectives. Few, if any, of the MDGs can be fully achieved without investing in adult learning.*”⁵⁵ Educationists are also keen to ensure that beyond functional literacy, the role of learning throughout life as set out in successive declarations of International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) and the Delors Committee is appreciated as the pillars of lifelong learning, i.e., *learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together*.

The education for all agenda (EFA) also has important new thematic areas of focus which are emerging as important trends. They are:

- **Learning**

In recent years, the learning discourse is increasingly gaining traction in international education circles. Within the education sphere there has been increasing recognition that gains in access have not been matched with gains in quality of education. Many analysts worry that the emphasis on quantity in the

previous EFA and MDG framework has diluted efforts at ensuring quality. Hence, most recently the global agenda is shifting towards a focus on learning outcomes and the way we measure such outcomes.⁵⁶

There has been a spate of publications from influential bodies to support this trend. They include, the Global Partnership for Education Strategic Plan ‘Learning for All’ 2012, DFID’s 2010 ‘Learn for All’ education strategy, World Bank’s ‘2020 Learning for All’ education strategy, USAID’s ‘Opportunity Through Learning’ and ‘All Children Reading’ Grand Challenge, the Brookings’ Institute’s ‘A Global Compact on Learning’ initiative. Private foundations have also recrafted their portfolios in this direction with Hewlett’s Quality Education in Developing Countries (QEDC) and MasterCard’s Youth Learning emphasis. The research survey publications by Uwezo in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda and Pratham’s ASER in India, which reveal the acute lack of learning within classrooms, have been particularly influential to trigger this trend.

Unfortunately though, in most cases, the overwhelming emphasis has been on measuring ‘learning outcomes’ rather than making concrete investments to improve ‘learning’. The Bank, for example, has developed a new tool — SABER (System Approach for Better for Education Results)⁵⁷ which provides detailed, internationally comparable, learning-focused assessments of the quality of each country’s education policies including student learning assessments. The logic is that countries are unlikely to make sustained progress toward learning for all unless they measure student learning and target it for improvement. The motto seems to be that delivering on results requires measuring the right results. But there is a danger, that this overemphasis on outcomes can divert energies and resources from investments in quality inputs which are crucial to deliver quality learning outcomes.

- **Teachers**

The GMR has estimated that 1.9 million more teachers need to be recruited and trained to teach in schools across sub-Saharan Africa by 2015.⁵⁸ An appreciation of the crucial role of teachers has also been steadily increasing in the international post-2015 education agenda. There is an increasing realisation that effective teachers are the most important contributor to student learning within the schooling system and that they need better training, motivation, and support. Under SABER, the World Bank for instance has carried out detailed, internationally comparable analyses of teacher policies in nearly 50 countries to collect detailed data on teacher policies—from recruitment and pay to training, support, and incentives. This effort has produced detailed diagnostics of where teacher policies fall short of international benchmarks.

However, it is unclear if this marks a subtle shift in the Bank’s policies, which previously encouraged the recruitment of ‘para-teachers’ on cheaper, short-term contracts in favour of more trained, qualified and permanent recruitment of the teacher cadre to fill the enormous teacher vacancies in developing countries. The Bank is also helping countries analyze the quality of teaching in the typical classroom, for example, by carrying out classroom observation studies and creating concrete measures of teaching quality, especially in Latin American countries.⁵⁹

- **Secondary Education**

A persistent challenge for education policies is to assist youth in learning skills for successful transitions between learning and work.⁶⁰ The emphasis of the EFA and MDGs on primary education has been justly criticized for diverting attention away from secondary education, which is now gaining traction for inclusion in the post-2015 framework. Especially following the Arab Spring, increased attention has been placed on the needs of youth and the importance of ensuring that youth gain critical life skills. Investing in youth is gaining importance due to its inherently strong economic and security implications. Greater attention is also particularly being placed on its role in building relevant skills to prepare youth to join the workforce. But the US-based Basic Education Coalition is of the opinion that, *“what seems to be missing in this conversation is the linkage between primary and secondary education: that success in secondary school requires a strong foundation in the primary years.”*

Life skills are also increasingly being emphasised as the notion of what constitutes a minimum threshold of functional literacy in a knowledge society has expanded manifold. There has been a subsequent increase in critical skill requirements for job entry and life skills. And secondary education is increasingly recognised as a necessary component to build foundational skills. Gorgui Sow, Regional Coordinator of ANCEFA aptly quotes ADEA Triennale, *“Africa’s education demands go beyond primary schooling we need critical skills for youth and adults for Africa’s sustainable development.”*⁶¹

- **Pre-Primary**

Every child has the right to education, and these rights begin at birth. But, due to a poor start in life, 200 million children in developing countries, under the age of five years have insufficient access to elementary childhood care and education (ECCE), giving them less of a chance to achieve their potential and end the cycle of poverty. Infants and young children are particularly vulnerable to malnutrition. Research indicates the life-long impact of nutritional deprivation in the crucial early growing years, to reduced cognitive achievement and poor learning outcomes.⁶²

ECCE also provides a unique opportunity to fulfil the nutritional needs of children, when they need it the most. The 2012 Global Action Week of the Global Campaign for Education called on world leaders to keep their promises and ensure early childhood care and education for every child. Since the publication of the EFA GMR on ECCE in 2007, and the recent food crisis in 2009, the role of ECCE and pre-primary education has climbed higher on the radar of international educationists.

- **Equity**

The EFA and MDGs on primary school completion has not yet been achieved, and there is an increasing recognition of the fact that most of those left behind in the last mile are from the poorest households, often with physical or learning disabilities, living in rural areas, urban slums and streets, and often girls and those from marginalized communities.⁶³ Many therefore argue that the starting point for the focus in education should therefore be *equity*. This could imply that each of the

education goals should have an equity focused target (e.g. measuring progress for the bottom 20 per cent, by rural/urban and gender).

4. Civil society positions in the post-2015 debates

'Education advocates need to align with other sectors and the larger development debates to ensure that we are not treated as irrelevant dinosaurs. Because we are relevant, but we need to ensure that we don't only work in silos but engage with the big picture on poverty reduction.'

*Elizabeth King, 2012⁶⁴
Education Director
The World Bank*

'The new post-2015 EFA agenda must be EFA+ since the previous goals have yet to be achieved and must include issues such as role of education linked to the broader debates of, human rights, sustainability, human security, democracy building and equity.'

*Camilla Croso, 2012
President
Global Campaign for Education⁶⁵*

What will happen to the MDGs after the 2015 deadline? Will there be new additions? Or will the MDG deadline simply be extended? Or a new age MDGs 2.0? Or will they perhaps be replaced by the SDGs? Or will there be no framework at all? The same questions remain about the post-2015 EFA framework. Will they be recrafted? Abandoned? Or fundamentally altered?

Goals in themselves can be useful. They develop clear and shared commitment and identify the scale of action needed to achieve a desired result. But, they can also potentially become the peg for inflexible policies with 'one-size fits all' global targets which may have little relevance for some countries. There is also a tendency for duplication of single-issue prisms as most goals fundamentally target the same population — presumably the same 1 billion people (bottom billion if you will) who face extreme poverty and are at risk for hunger, lack of water and sanitation and also suffer from low education, poor access to healthcare and environmental hazards. The MDG style multi-pronged goal-oriented approach to target each of their basic needs separately without convergence results in unnecessary duplication of effort and initiatives. At all levels from the global to the national, this results in line ministries and committees with competing rather than shared portfolios.

But the need on-the-ground is for unified and shared solutions to eliminate poverty. School meals, for example, serve to dissolve classroom hunger, enable children to build their immunity to ill-health and through local procurement help smallholder agriculturalists to farm their way out of poverty. This type of a holistic approach to combat poverty requires convergence in vision and implementation.

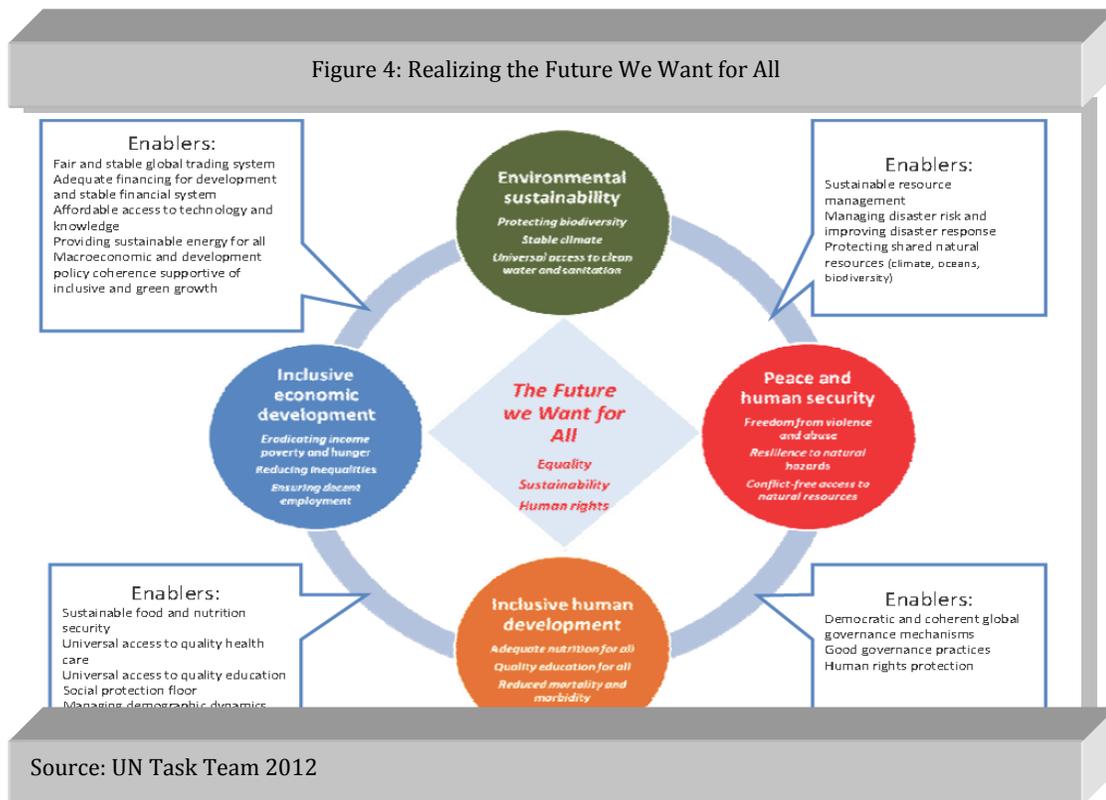
4.1. MDGs +

Nevertheless, the trend to put forth competing single-issue goals continues. While these are still early days, there is a clear trend of efforts by different civil society groups to push their individual development agendas to have their own goal in the post-2015 framework. For example, environmental groups have succeeded in getting Columbia to push "sustainability goals". The Quaker UN Office in Geneva is part of an Interim Committee which intends to set up a Global Alliance on Armed Violence Prevention and Reduction.⁶⁶ Similar efforts are also underway among civil society organisations which work on the elderly⁶⁷, human rights, democracy and fair global governance.

Education groups will also be expected to make similarly voluble pitches to raise their individual profile. But unless these disparate attempts fit together into a wholesome framework, governments are certain to ignore it. This will undoubtedly lead to zero impact on actual lives.⁶⁸ But in the debate post-2015 melee, a few efforts stand-apart in their attempt to unify these disparate threads into a unifying framework. They include:

- **The Future We Want**

The first report of the UN Task Team⁶⁹ constituted by the UNSG has created a broad framework to provide a system-wide vision and elements of a road map for the preparations leading to the post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda. The vision of The Future We Want for All (see Figure 4) seeks to achieve inclusive, people-centred, sustainable global development agenda. The central components of this structure include 4 pillars –human development, environmental sustainability, inclusive economic development and peace and security. The structure is in its early stages of development and could be further developed by the official UN processes and dialogues post-Rio.



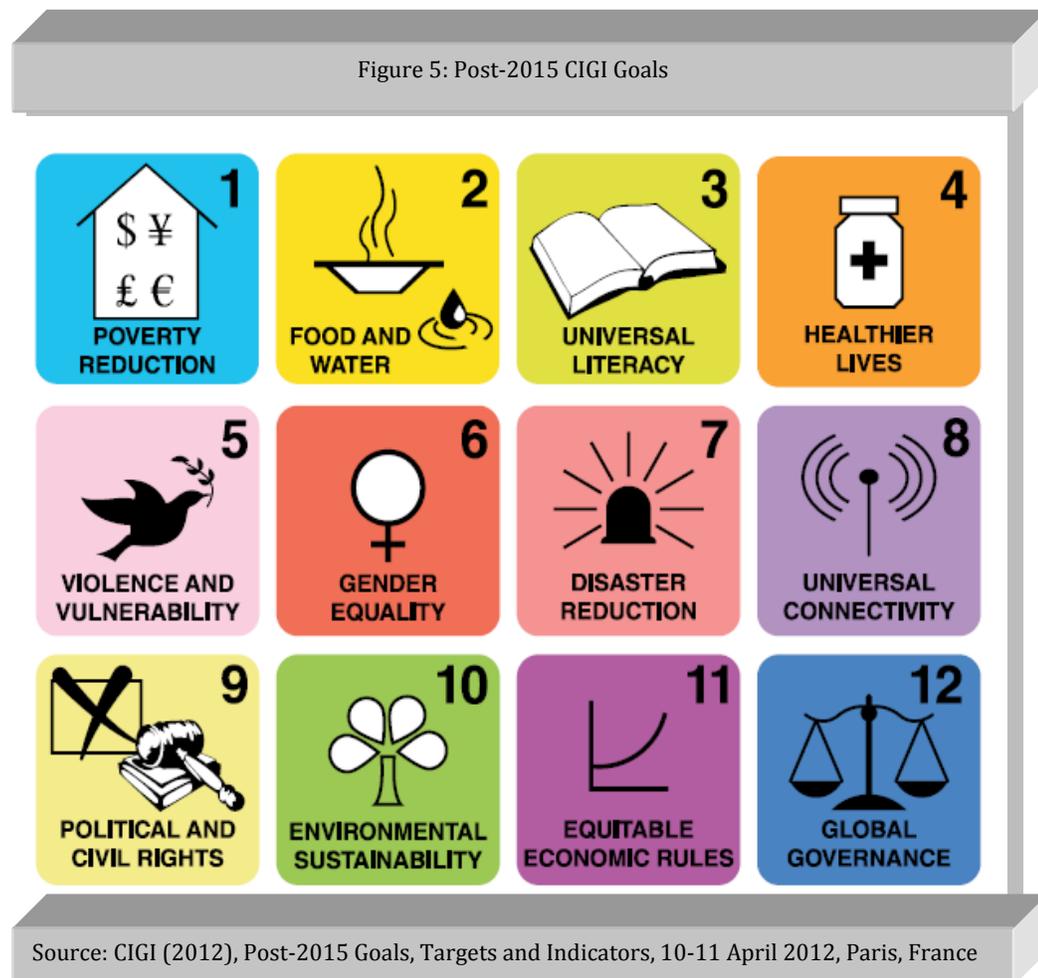
- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)⁷⁰**

The Colombian government has been at the forefront of the proposal for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which has been given the go-ahead at Rio+20. Since the UNSG has suggested that the SDG and post-MDG processes do not run on parallel tracks, it may emerge that sustainable development would be at the heart of the new post-2015 framework. But it is crucial that the framework also addresses core human development concerns around poverty, education and health.⁷¹ Currently,

the proposals for SDG thematic areas do not include education, but they do include employment and social protection. The UN General Assembly (UNGA) at its 67th session in September 2012 is expected to establish a 30-member Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).⁷²

- **One World Goals (OWG)**

The One World model, championed by a multi-stakeholder academic Consortium⁷³, seeks to move away from a paternalistic and aid-dependent view of development. The OWGs seek to reach beyond traditional development to integrate sustainable one-world goals that apply to poor and rich countries alike. The architecture includes 12 OWGs clustered into three categories.⁷⁴ Of these, the proposed candidate for the education goal is rather vaguely defined as, ‘*appropriate education and skills for productive participation in society.*’ The OWG consortium is keen to engage with the CCNGO/EFA to think-through and define the construction of specific measurable world targets and indicators on education.⁷⁵



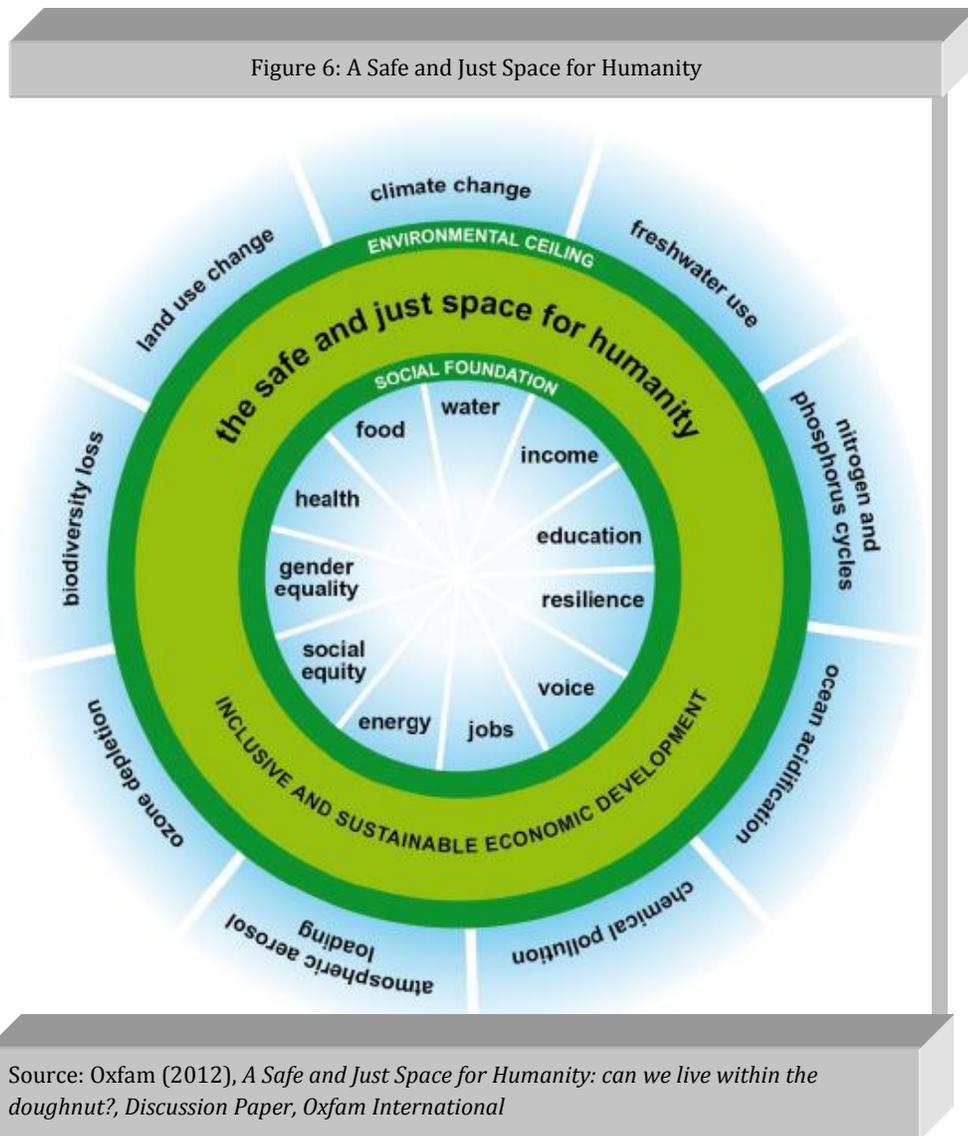
For each of these candidate OWGs, measurable world targets will be identified which express their overall impact. In addition, for each target, a set of indicators

will be developed which will provide a menu of options for countries to choose the metrics that best meets their circumstances. Analysis will then be disaggregated by sex, geography, identity and income to unmask the inequalities that hide behind generalised statistics. The OWGs are similar to the framework (see Figure 5) with 12 distinct goals prepared by The Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI).⁷⁶

- **Oxfam’s Doughnut**

Oxfam has produced a discussion paper, *A Safe and Just Space for Humanity: can we live within the doughnut?* to encourage public debate in the run-up to the UN conference on sustainable development (Rio+20).⁷⁷ It presents a visual framework – shaped like a doughnut – which brings the concept of planetary boundaries together with the complementary concept of social boundaries, creating a safe and just space between the two, in which humanity can thrive. This framework demands greater equity – within and between countries – in the use of natural resources and greater

Figure 6: A Safe and Just Space for Humanity



Source: Oxfam (2012), *A Safe and Just Space for Humanity: can we live within the doughnut?*, Discussion Paper, Oxfam International

efficiency in transforming those resources to meet human needs. As the debates on the SDGs and post-2015 MDGs grows, this framework proposes a global-scale compass that can help to chart the course and integrate both processes.

- **Beyond 2015 Campaign:**

It is an international campaign coalition of 240 civil society organizations created with the objective of working to build a global, multi-stakeholder movement for a legitimate post-2015 framework. It seeks to create a civil society consensus, both in terms of the processes and the post-2015 framework itself. The coalition is advocating for i) a global overarching cross-thematic framework for development; and ii) a participatory and inclusive process to develop the framework, responsive to voices of those directly affected by poverty and injustice.

The coalition believes that the UN is the only legitimate and representative global governance structure and must lead the process while national governments must have primary ownership and accountability for the framework and its delivery. It is an organised campaign which is now established as a leader of civil society voices for a post 2015 world and has a clear influence over the UNSG processes. The Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) coalition is also a member of this campaign. But with no engagement of education-specific stakeholders or content discussions, the campaign currently does not prioritise education.

4.2. EFA +

The post-2015 EFA agenda is less developed than the MDG framework. Only in recent months, have education groups been waking up to the need to posit a post-2015 EFA framework, not only to influence the MDG agenda, but also galvanise support amongst educationist for a new vision for the holistic arc of education goals. Unlike the post-2015 MDG debates, these remain early days for the post-2015 education agenda, which has not yet developed a serious focus to build an alternative framework or indicators.

- **Global Compact on Learning**

Some educationists argue that meaningful targets for the EFA goal 6 on education quality can realistically be set only at the national level as each country has its own evolving standard of education performance and its relevance to specific development contexts. But already several attempts have begun at the international level to develop learning goals and targets which could be amongst the most influential in the post-2015 EFA and MFG agendas. Under the umbrella of the Global Compact on Learning, the Center for Universal Education at Brookings and UNESCO Institute for Statistics have already launched a Learning Metrics Task Force⁷⁸ and Technical Working Group.⁷⁹ The Task Force is co-chaired by Pratham, UNICEF and Pearsons with support from Hewlett. The GPE Board civil society representatives have been invited to sit on the Task Force.

- **Global Partnership for Education (GPE)**

While the Global Partnership has not yet released its specific post-2015 EFA and MDG goal proposals, its internal strategic planning working group for 2012 to 2015 has proposed 4 priority strategic goals. They are: i) access for all: a good basic

education for all girls and boys, ii) learning for all: all children mastering reading, by the end of grade 2, iii) reaching every child: resources are focused on the most marginalized children and those in fragile states and iv) building for the future: ensuring that national systems have the capacity and integrity to deliver quality education for all their children. The GPE is currently in the process of finalisation of the indicators to measure progress on each of these strategic priorities. For the first time, within these goals, there is an explicit recognition of the central role of teachers. The first of these goals includes specific recognition of the need for a "skilled teacher". Alan Tuckett, President of the ICAE is also of the opinion that the GPE must play an important role to "argue for the money" as often governments agree to goals and targets with no financial plan to make it a reality.

- **Global Campaign for Education (GCE)**

The GCE has yet to release its post-2015 EFA and MDG proposed framework but Camilla Croso, President of the GCE has confirmed that it is on the cards. For starters, the GCE plans to hold an extensive virtual consultation with its membership. The GCE also plans to push for a rights-based approach to recraft the EFA architecture with an emphasis to make it legally binding. There is a growing recognition that the goal-oriented frameworks do not sufficiently emphasize the rights-based approach. 135 countries have accepted the legal right to free education, but 55 countries, three-fourths in sub-Saharan Africa, have yet to endorse it in their national legal frameworks. While the GCE envisages an 'EFA+' agenda, it is quite anxious about the current trend of exclusive focus on learning outcomes. Maria Lourdes-Almazan Khan, Secretary General of ASPBAE and Board Member of GCE is concerned, "*there seems to be a push to spawn a whole industry of statisticians and educationists to test learning outcomes.*" Camilla Croso, President of the GCE wishes that the new post-2015 EFA agenda instead includes issues such as role of education linked to the broader debates of, "*human rights, sustainability, human security, democracy building and equity.*"

- **US-based Basic Education Coalition**

The Basic Education coalition consists of United States-based organizations working to ensure strong leadership in the EFA campaign. For now, it seems that the post-2015 agenda is not yet a key priority. USAID, for example, is currently fully occupied with implementation of its education strategy, and has not yet fully turned its attention to post-2015. However the basic education coalition is playing an important role in both engaging with USAID and policymakers on the formulation of possible goals and their implementation.

- **Regional Education Coalitions**

In Africa, ANCEFA has had two consultations to frame the post-2015 EFA agenda in September 2011 in Addis Ababa and in April 2012 in Abuja⁸⁰ prior to the Fifth Conference of African Education Ministers (COMEDAF V).⁸¹ The two consultative meetings have given an initial indication of post 2015 six EFA broad priorities areas from the African Education civil society perspective. These areas include 1) quality education and sustainable development, 2) access for marginalized groups, 3) out of school youths and life and vocational skills development, 4) education governance and financial transparency and accountability, and 6) investment in ICT. ANCEFA has

also planned for a regional Pan African Civil Society Policy Forum from 07 to 10 November 2012 at which these policy areas will be refined further.

In Asia, ASPBAE will conduct a face-to-face meeting of members in September-October 2012 for an internal strategic review to reflect, strategize, plan and propose the education agenda until and beyond 2015. This will be further fine-tuned during workshops coinciding with the 50th anniversary celebrations of ASPBAE in 2014. ASPBAE also participated in the UNESCO Bangkok High level Experts Meeting on the Post 2015 EFA agenda, *'Towards EFA 2015 and Beyond – Shaping a New Vision of Education'*, 9-11 May 2012 in Bangkok.

In Latin America, CLADE has prepared a position paper on, *'The Education We Need in the World We Want'* and has held extensive consultations with its membership.

- **Thematic Education Coalition**

The International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), too, has had a virtual consultation and is planning to hold another virtual webinar after Rio+20 Conference to develop its position with the involvement of its regional and national members for the post-2015 international education agenda. Alan Tuckett, President of the ICAE confirms that, they have already developed an introductory paper and would prefer to create a list of *'journey to travel'* targets which countries can customise rather than a *'one-size fits all'* model.

5. Strategies for civil society contribution to the education agenda

'The challenge will be to keep focus on the EFA goals as an unfinished business and scale up efforts to reach the goals.'

Olav Seim, 2012⁸²
Director
UNESCO's Education for All Global
Partnerships Team

'Although adult learning is a good thing, it is also a fundamental prerequisite for achieving a range of other social policy objectives. Few, if any, of the MDGs can be fully achieved without investing in adult learning.'

Alan Tuckett, 2012⁸³
President
International Council for Adult Education

Global targets can be important drivers of change. Although the world has not achieved many of the MDG and EFA goals, it is undeniable that they have unified political commitment as never before. Currently, in terms of the post-2015 EFA and MDG frameworks, it seems there are four likely scenarios:

- A. *Extend the deadline:* In the first scenario, the MDG/EFA goals remain unchanged as many countries have not yet achieved these goals and their deadlines are simply extended to 2020 or 2025. This seems unlikely.
- B. *Plus arguments:* In this scenario of the MDG +/- EFA + frameworks, there could be a streamlined set of global indicators (education, health, nutrition and add three or four new locally-defined goals) with actual targets being set by national governments.
- C. *One world-type approach:* This scenario envisions the creation of a globally binding agreement, with poverty targets for the south and sustainable consumption targets for the north. While the international goals would contain universally defined targets and indicators, every developing country could set its own benchmark level. Similarly, developed countries could focus its energies on aid in terms of their efforts towards both the post-2015 MDG and EFA frameworks.
- D. *No goals:* This scenario envisages that the global discussion will only concentrate on the essentials of the moment like food security and climate change. In terms of EFA this will imply abandoning the universal framework entirely for national level priorities, which seems highly unlikely.

5.1. MDG +

The current reality is that with the financial crisis hitting many rich countries, donor appetite to re-commit and increase current levels of aid to a new post-2015 MDG-type global compact to eradicate poverty and universalise access to quality basic education is very low. In this context, a few strategic priorities for education advocates are:

1. Make A Strong Case

Since, education is perceived as a 'better performer' among the MDG goals, it is losing its space in the emerging priorities of the on-going post-2015 discourse. In the light of this, education advocates and campaigners should strongly ensure that

they make a robust evidence-based case to assert the fundamental need to fulfil the right to free, quality education – as crucial for survival, transformation and change. In this one key strategic priority is to collaborate with the Education for All Global Monitoring Report. Pauline Rose, chair of the GMR has already stated that in the next two years as the post-2015 goals are debated, *“evidence presented in future GMRs will need to support policymakers in making the case for education.”* In addition, Olav Seim, Director on UNESCO’s ED/EFA in the Education for All Global Partnerships Team also recommends, *“strengthening the evidence base with more constructive collaboration with research and academia.”*

2. Develop Measurable Goals

International dialogues can often meander into endlessly vague discussions. However, given that the fundamental nature of the MDGs and EFAs are as time-bound goals or deadlines, it is essential that education activists focus their energies and prepare a concrete list of measurable post-2015 education actionables or goalposts to cement their arguments in the development agendas. Barry Carin, Senior Fellow at the Canadian Centre for International Governance and closely associated with the Beyond2015 campaign clearly endorses this need and recommends that, *“it is important that the education groups develop a cogent practical set of measurable goals, targets and indicators that are feasible to monitor and achieve.”*

The US-based Basic Education Coalition pinpoints some timely questions which would enable a more nuanced development of these education goals:

- *How do we incorporate the remaining challenges on access and equity within the post-2015 goal?*
- *How do we craft a goal that is both measurable and realistically achievable by a certain date, and what should that date be?*
- *What goal or goals would have the greatest chance of mobilizing and motivating the widest range of stakeholders?*
- *Is there a place for a goal whose indicators are in some way indexed to particular country circumstances and challenges?*

More specifically on the contours of a learning or education quality goal, they posit three important questions:

- *If we were to move towards a learning goal, what purpose should such learning serve, and what are the requisite elements most likely to foster that purpose?*
- *Where is the balance between a learning or education goal which can be measured, but is narrowly drawn and one that is broader, but not fully measurable?*
- *Similarly, would it be more feasible to take an approach that values both inputs and outputs, rather than one that solely looks at outputs, based on the belief that even if certain inputs cannot be directly tied to learning gains, they are nonetheless crucial to the larger educational experience?*

3. Align with other Sectors

To ensure greater traction, it is also a strategic prerogative for education advocates to align their demands with those of other sectors to ensure the cross-sectoral convergence of global anti-poverty priorities. In the current global economic

climate, Barry Carin is also of the opinion that, it would be prudent for education to be linked to the larger debates of employment, happiness and economic growth. Jordon Naidoo of UNICEF echoes this view and is equally perturbed that, *“education has not been as strong in systematically engaging non-traditional partners and opportunities and may have been missed to engage with cross-sectoral partnerships and the private sector. The relative lack of innovative approaches to raising and delivering financing, as compared with the health sector for instance, is also a constraint to basic education funding.”*⁸⁴ There seems to be a unanimous view for education to engage with other sectors, especially those which are on a rising trajectory, e.g.; food security and employment, and define common measurable goals e.g. on skills, employment, nutrition in classrooms etc.; to bolster its position and relevance in the international development agenda.

4. Build Consensus across Civil Society

As the lead EFA agency UNESCO must lead the global, regional and national consultations on education, but some civil society observers believe that UNESCO is lagging behind at the moment, due to the delay of the 6th CCNGO/EFA. Other civil society education coalitions have also not firmed up their policy stances. But it is crucial for civil society to organize itself with a coherent voice to demand greater participation, transparency and accountability in the post-2015 processes and agenda. Different constituencies within civil society need to come together to present a common voice. Non-government organizations, the media and teacher unions, for example, need to work with parent groups and other local structures to ensure that community and children’s interests remain at the forefront of the education agenda.⁸⁵ Effective partnerships, especially multi-stakeholder, are the key to facilitate transformative gains.

5. Stand-Out in the Clutter

The international education community has not organised a Jomtien+20, twenty years after the World Conference on Education for All in the manner of Rio+20. But it has kept the six EFA goals of Jomtien, reinforced by Dakar in 2000, very visibly on the world development agenda through the publication of the annual EFA GMRs in the last 10 years.⁸⁶ Similarly UNESCO must ensure that the 2015 World EFA Conference planned as a high profile summit similar to Dakar in 2000 must also play an important role to profile the importance of education. The use of influential ambassadors or celebrities with long-standing commitment to education could also be employed to contribute to increase the profile of education. For example; it is important to leverage the prominence of the recent appointment of Gordon Brown, former British Prime Minister, as the UNSG’s Special Envoy on Global Education.

6. Target Influential Policy Makers

To ensure that at least one goal in the post-2015 MDG framework focuses on education, it is essential to directly target influential policy makers.

- First, the new High Level Panel of Eminent Persons is the main advocacy target
- Second, senior officials of the UNDP and DESA are also important to influence. Currently the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) coordinates the inter-agency group on MDG indicators that prepares and publishes the MDG Report.

- Third, the UN Statistical Commission will be an important body with reference to the development of indicators for agreed targets. An inter-agency experts group is also expected to be appointed to craft individual indicators.⁸⁷
- Fourth, the 50 country and 9 thematic consultations organised by the UN will feed into the high-level plan on post-2015 and it will be crucial for civil society in education to ensure active participation at national, regional and global levels, and more importantly to bring the voices of the poorest and most excluded into the conversation.⁸⁸
- Fifth, some observers also recommend that it is important to get the G20 more involved in the process as it will be easier to get agreement in a smaller group than the UN which tends to the lowest common denominator. Particularly, there could be improved leverage by getting the G20 Working Group on Development, currently co-chaired by South Africa, more actively involved.⁸⁹
- Sixth, in terms of education, in particular, UN Secretary General’s ‘Education First’ special initiative is crucial to give education a high profile.

5.2. EFA +

So far, the official processes or agendas to define the post-2015 EFA framework have not been as clearly defined as the post-2015 MDG discussions spearheaded by the UNSG. Nevertheless, many of the emerging strategic priorities for civil society education advocates would be the same as those outlined in detail for the post-2015 MDG+ agenda. In addition, a few EFA-specific imperatives are as follows:

1. Ensure that UNESCO leads

Since the original Education for All agenda was a product of UNESCO’s stewardship in Jomtien, 1990 and Dakar, 2000, it is crucial for UNESCO to continue to lead the post-2015 EFA process. In this context, Gorgui Sow of ANCEFA is clear that, “UNESCO should support a clear process of CSO participation, for example, as was initiated for the Ministers of Education of African Member States (MINEDAF VIII)” by organising regional consultations of experts and research institutions. This is already on the anvil and the CCNGO/EFA can play an important role to consolidate regional consultations. However, it is also important to note that the UNSG’s ‘Education First’ special initiative on education is also likely to be an important forum to bring together key stakeholders to agree on a consensus on the overall framework of the post-2015 EFA priorities.

2. Consolidate Southern Priorities

Civil society organisations, especially those in the south, should use their existing networks and pressure groups at the national level to harmonize their positions. There is also a case for creating several regionally aligned dialogues and consultations. This will be particularly crucial to build an over-arching and holistic post-2015 EFA framework. The US-based Basic Education Coalition also raises the fundamental question on the need for alignment, “concurrent with the setting of goals, how do we empower countries and their constituents so that their needs and objectives are fully reflected in national education plans...and how can we impart a roadmap for success, derived from best practices or standards and principles of aid effectiveness?”⁹⁰

3. Collaborate with Donors

Collaboration with donors on the post-2015 EFA agenda must essentially be a two-way process. While on the one hand, donors must coordinate their efforts more closely according to their respective comparative advantages, civil society too must ensure that their priorities closely align with and adequately respond to country needs and objectives. The US-based Basic Education Coalition notices that, *“The United States, for example, has undertaken an education strategy that focuses on early grade reading and access to education for children living in conflict countries. Yet... (this)...has deemphasized other critical parts of the spectrum, including numeracy skills, early childhood education, and secondary education. The point is that as the world looks to assess the post-2015 paradigm, it will be critical to ensure that core elements of the education process which are sought by countries and their people not be sacrificed.”*⁹¹ This time around, too, while donor inputs must be consolidated in the creation of the post-2015 MDG and the EFA frameworks it is essential for civil society to keep up the pressure and ensure that the processes are more southern-led, participative and consultative.

4. Include Multiple Stakeholders

Civil society, too, needs to expand its base and ensure that all its stakeholders are consulted and their respective strengths employed to make a strong case for education. Teachers, in particular, have the potential to be a more powerful voice in the international debates on learning. Elizabeth King, Education Director of the World Bank notices that, *“while Education International is the most prominent other independent bodies are often invisible. Given both their numbers and their potential political power, teachers and learners should lead the charge on the importance of achieving the EFA goals (and learning in particular).”* In addition, the US-based Basic Education Coalition consider, *“how do we leverage the assets of newer players, particularly the corporate sector?”* The media, parents’ organisations, associations in support of children with vulnerable needs (street children, differently-abled, child labourers, indigenous communities etc.) and other education stake-holders are also often missing in these broader international education debates and their inputs need to be earnestly sought and consolidated to build a more inclusive post-2015 EFA framework.

5. Create an Overarching Framework and Concise List of Goals

To coalesce these disparate priorities, it is essential for education groups to immediately create technical committees to posit an overarching post-2015 EFA framework and a concise list of alternative/additional goals, targets and indicators. These exercises could also potentially play a key role to influence the larger MDG framework. The CCNGO/EFA can play a key role in this endeavour. The aim in building this new post-2015 EFA framework should be simplicity and consistency, as unduly lengthening the list of goals or targets is likely to diminish the framework’s political traction for agreement and implementation.

6. Conclusion

While these are early days for the construction of the post-2015 development and education frameworks, there are several timely opportunities for civil society to consolidate its positions and influence broader education debates. This discussion paper outlines a few potential core strategies.

Undeniably the most crucial goal for civil society advocates, including the CCNGO/EFA is to ensure that education is included in the post-2015 MDG framework. The MDGs incorporated two education goals. But with the advances in school enrolments in the last decade, education is now perceived as the most successful of the millennium outcomes. Therefore, it is unlikely that education will retain its previous prominence. Nevertheless, it is essential that if a unified post-2015 MDG framework is endorsed then at least one single goal on education must be included to ensure that it remains centre-stage in the international development agenda.

Amongst multiple education priorities, there will undoubtedly be a number of contenders for this single-slot for the education goal. Therefore civil society advocates need to consolidate their advocacy positions and be prepared with a list of measurable global indicators which encapsulate the priorities of the international education agenda.

Since, 'learning outcomes' seems to have gained considerable traction in recent years and the Global Compact on Learning has specifically set up a multi-stakeholder taskforce with the clear goal of building internationally comparable metrics and indicators to measure learning, it could turn out to be amongst the most influential pitches in the education debates. Therefore, civil society advocates need to ensure that similar goalposts and metrics are also developed for other educational priorities e.g. elementary childhood care and education, trained teachers, adult literacy etc., which are arguably equally important, including for indirectly improving learning outcomes.

In addition, it would be welcome if unlike the rigid MDG framework, the post-2015 goals, targets and benchmarks are intelligently designed to contain in-built flexibility to ensure that their watermarks can be locally defined by national governments based on their contextual priorities.

Fortunately, the post-2015 avatar of the EFA framework will provide more room for the inclusion of a larger list of education priorities. The CCNGO/EFA has a golden opportunity to play an important role in the development of this holistic framework in tandem with the UNSG's special initiative – 'Education First' which will be launched in September 2012. Both these forums will also offer crucial opportunities for civil society advocates to mainstream their priorities in the post-2015 education debates.

The World Conference on Education planned by UNESCO in 2015 will be a key moment to consolidate these multiple efforts. The conference can also potentially capitalize on the spirit of the 25th anniversary of the original EFA Declaration in Jomtien to propel education high on the international agenda in time for the launch of the post-2015 EFA and MDG frameworks in keeping with the original dream to ensure that *"education is a fundamental right for all people, women and men, of all ages, throughout our world."*⁹²

Figure 7: List of Telephone and Email Interviews

Name	Designation	Response
Mr Olav Seim	Director, EFA Global Partnerships team UNESCO	Email Response 14 June 2012
Ms Elizabeth King	Director Education, Human Development Network The World Bank	Telephone Interview 5 July 2012 and Email Responses 6 July 2012
Mr Jordan Naidoo	UNICEF Senior Education Advisor UNICEF	Email Response 23 July 2012
Mr Belkachla, Saïd and Mr Higazi	Senior Programme Specialist EFA Regional Coordinator UNESCO Beirut Office Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States, UNESCO	Skype Interview 13 June 2012
Ms Maria Lourdes Almazan Khan	Secretary-General Asia South Pacific Association for Basic & Adult Education (ASPBAE)	Telephone Interview 11 June 2012
Mr Gorgui Sow	Secretary-General African Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA)	Email Response 19 June 2012
Ms Camilla Croso	General Coordinator Campaña Latinoamericana por el Derecho a la Educación (CLADE) and President, Global Campaign for Education	Skype Interview 15 June 2012
Mr Alan Tuckett	International Council for Adult Education (ICAE)	Skype Interview 14 June 2012
Mr Barry Carin	Senior Fellow Canadian centre for international governance innovation	Email Response 7 June 2012
Mr Refaat Sabbah	Director General Teacher Creativity Center Palestine	Skype Interview Cancelled 15 Jun 2012
Mr Mukesh Kapila	Professor of Global Health & Humanitarian Affairs University of Manchester	Email Response 8 June 2012

7. Abbreviations

ANCEFA	Africa Network Campaign on Education For All
ASER	Pratham's Assessment Survey Evaluation Research
AU	African Union
CCNGO/EFA	Collective Consultation of Non-Governmental Organizations on Education for All
CIGI	Centre for International Governance Innovation
CLADE	Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education (Campaña Latino Americana por el Derecho a la Educación)
COMEDAF	Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CONFINTEA	International Conference on Adult Education
DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DFID	United Kingdom's Department for International Development
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EFA	Education for All
EI	Education International
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
GCAP	Global Call to Action Against Poverty
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GEM	UNESCO's Global EFA Meeting
GMR	Education for All Global Monitoring Report
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HLF	High-Level Forum
ICAE	International Council for Adult Education
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MINEDAF	Ministers of Education of African Member States
NORRAG	Network for Policy Research, Review and Advice on Education and Training
OWG	One World Goals
QEDC	Quality Education in Developing Countries
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation
UNMC	United Nations Millennium Campaign
UNSG	UN Secretary General
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

8. Endnotes

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- ¹ The author is an independent education and food policy specialist currently based in India.
(swatinarayan@gmail.com)
- ² "In 2001 a group of mostly UN experts selected 18 targets from the Millennium Declaration, grouped them in eight goals, and identified 48 indicators to monitor global progress to rescue the Millennium Declaration from oblivion." Vandemoortele 2012
- ³ In September 2000, 189 member states of the United Nations came together at the [Millennium Summit](#) and adopted the [Millennium Declaration](#), including commitments to poverty eradication, development, and protecting the environment.
- ⁴ The conferences include the 1990 World Summit for Children, World Conference on Education for All, and the UN Secretary-General's Millennium Summit. The publications include the first UN Human Development Report and the 1990 World Development Report and the most influential meeting was the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC's) *Groupe de Reflexion*. For more on the History of the MDGs see Melamed, C (2012), "After 2015: Contexts, politics and processes for a post-2015 global agreement on development", Overseas Development Institute, January 2012, <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/7537.pdf>
- ⁵ The six EFA goals are: Expand early childhood care and education, Provide free and compulsory primary education for all, Promote learning and life skills for young people and adults, Increase adult literacy by 50 per cent, Achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015, Improve the quality of education
- ⁶ In April 2000 more than 1,100 participants from 164 countries gathered in Dakar, Senegal, for the World Education Forum. The participants, ranging from teachers to prime ministers, academics to policymakers, non-governmental bodies to the heads of major international organizations, adopted the Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments and agreed upon six wide-ranging education goals to be met by 2015.
- ⁷ The eight MDGs listed are: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, Achieve universal primary education, Promote gender equality and empower women, Reduce child mortality, Improve maternal health, Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, Ensure environmental sustainability, Develop a Global Partnership for Development
- ⁸ Countries that achieve universal primary education will automatically comply with the target on gender equality in basic education Vandermoortele (2012)
- ⁹ The Education for All Global Monitoring Reports are developed by an independent team and published by UNESCO and have emerged as an authoritative reference that aims to inform that aims to inform, influence and sustain genuine commitment towards Education for All.
- ¹⁰ Vandemoortele (2012), Background Paper prepared for the Experts Group Meeting to support the advancement of the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda New York, 27-29 February 2012, Advancing the global development agenda post-2015: some practical suggestions, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Vandemoortele%20Background%20Paper.pdf>
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- ¹² UNESCO (2011), The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education, Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011, Paris: UNESCO
- ¹³ Bartholomew Armah (2012), Power point presentation 'Africa-Region Perspectives on the Post 2015 Agenda', United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Economic Development and NEPAD Division
- ¹⁴ 72 per cent of respondent from southern countries to a survey by CAFOD were of the opinion that development had become a higher priority because of the MDGs. Amy Pollard, Andy Sumner, Monica Polato-Lopes & Agnès de Mauroy (2011), 100 Voices: Southern perspectives on what should come after the Millennium Development Goals, CAFOD
http://www.cafod.org.uk/content/download/126194/1369296/version/2/file/100+Voices_English_full+report.pdf
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- ¹⁶ This section draws heavily from Pearce, C (2012), Education post-2015 – MDGs and EFA, Internal GCE note part 1: update on process and players, mimeo.
- ¹⁷ Cameroon, 2011, David Cameron's education speech in full <http://www.politics.co.uk/comment-analysis/2011/09/09/david-cameron-s-education-speech-in-full>
- ¹⁸ UNSG (2012), Secretary-General Assembles High-level Panel on Post-2015 Development Agenda, SG/A/1364 DEV/294931, July 2012, Department of Public Information, News and Media Division, New York <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2012/sga1364.doc.htm>
- ¹⁹ UN (2012), UN System Task Team to support the preparation of the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, TOR for Working Groups, 23 February 2012
- ²⁰ UNSG (2012), UNSG Announces Plans for High-level Panel, ASG on Post-2015 Agenda <http://uncsd.iisd.org/news/unsg-announces-plans-for-high-level-panel-asg-on-post-2015-agenda/>
- ²¹ Formerly Amina Ibrahim, has previously coordinated Nigeria's Education for All programme at the Education Ministry, and also simultaneously worked on the gender and education task force for the Millennium Project under Jeffrey Sachs, special adviser to Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General.
- ²² 2012, Getting to Zero: Finishing the Job the MDGs Started, version 17 April 2012
<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2012/4/17%20millennium%20dev%20goals%20mcarthur/0417%20millennium%20dev%20goals%20mcarthur.pdf>
- ²³ Sherpas (2011), <http://www.sherpatimes.com/index.php/resources/62-resources/543-g20-development-working-group-list-of-members->
- ²⁴ Elizabeth King, Education Director, Human Development Network, The World Bank (Telephone interview 5 July 2012)
- ²⁵ Rea Johanna, 2012, G8 summit – private sector to the rescue of the world's poorest?
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2012/may/25/2012-g8-summit-private-sector>

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- ²⁷ EI (2012), UN Secretary-General: "Education should be the first priority", News - Country: Global, Theme: Education For All, 07 August 2012
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- ²⁹ Infonote on the New Architecture of UNESCO's Global Education for All (EFA) Coordination
- ³⁰ The method of selecting the civil society representatives to the GEM will be defined in the CCNGO/EFA working procedures which will be adopted at the CCNGO/EFA meeting in 2012.
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<http://allchildrenlearningreport.globalpartnership.org/English2011/?#/7>
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- ⁴¹ Bartholomew Armah, (2012) 'Africa-Region Perspectives on the Post 2015 Agenda', United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Economic Development and NEPAD Division
- ⁴² The Guardian (2012), *ibid.*
- ⁴³ SIDS (2012), UNDG Prepares Guidelines for Country Consultations on Post-2015 Development Agenda, International Institute for Sustainable Development, 6 August 2012
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- ⁴⁶ With almost 75 million young people under the age of 25 years of age out of the total of 200 million unemployed persons, global unemployment is clearly mainly affecting youth (ILO 2012).
- ⁴⁷ According to latest ILO (2012) figures, vulnerable employment is on the rise mainly in sub-Saharan Africa (22 million persons) and in South Asia (12 million persons).
- ⁴⁸ Vandermoortele (2009), *ibid*.
- ⁴⁹ In the wake of the economic crisis. In 2010 and 2011, the average unemployment rate in the EU-27 was 9.7 %, the highest annual rates recorded since the start of the series in 2000. The youth unemployment rate in the EU-27 was around twice as high as the rate for the total population throughout the last decade.
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics#Recent_developments_in_unemployment_at_a_European_and_Member_State_level
- ⁵⁰ In 2000, the unemployment rate in the United States for 4 per cent which rose to 9.3 % to 9.6 % between 2009 and 2010, it dropped again in 2011 to 8.9 %.
- ⁵¹ The *Arab* world is the region that carries the highest rate of *unemployment* in the world. They reported unemployment in the region is running at 10.3% compared to 6.2% on average globally. For people up to age of 25 years the unemployment rate is estimated to be 40%.
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/stephenpope/2011/02/03/arab-unemployment-frustration-is-the-real-danger/>
- ⁵² 2012, Getting to Zero: Finishing the Job the MDGs Started, *ibid*.
- ⁵³ UNESCO (2011), EFA Global Monitoring Report, Paris
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- ⁵⁵ Alan Tuckett, ICAE, Skype Interview, 14 June 2012
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- ⁵⁷ Since its launch in 2011, the SABER-Student Assessments tool has already been applied in 35 countries and states, with 9 more on the way. This tool is already being used to inform policy dialogue and design operations. This tool is the basis for technical assistance to Angola, Armenia, Ethiopia, Kyrgyz Republic, Mozambique, Tajikistan, Vietnam, and Zambia (in partnership with bilateral donors), as well as to Nigeria and Kuwait. Countries have launched new assessment centers to train staff, to carry out large-scale national and international assessments, and to develop materials.
- ⁵⁸ UNESCO (2010), EFA Global Monitoring Report, Paris
- ⁵⁹ Elizabeth King, Education Director, Human Development Network, The World Bank (Email correspondence 7 July 2012)
- ⁶⁰ <http://norrag.wordpress.com/2012/06/04/the-post-2015-agenda-what-room-for-education-and-skills/>
- ⁶¹ <http://www.adeanet.org/triennale/indexang.html>

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- ⁶² The Young Lives longitudinal survey on child poverty clearly shows a strong influence of nutrition on cognitive achievement. <http://www.younglives.org.uk/>
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- ⁶⁴ Elizabeth King, Education Director, Human Development Network, The World Bank (Telephone interview 5 July 2012)
- ⁶⁵ Camilla Croso, GCE, Skype Interview, 15 June 2012
- ⁶⁶ Barry Carin, Senior Fellow Canadian centre for international governance and innovation (Email correspondence 7 June 2012)
- ⁶⁷ HelpAge International (2012), Mainstreaming ageing into the post-2015 process, February 2012 <http://www.helpage.org/download/4f47af0fb1375>
- ⁶⁸ Melamed, C (2012), Christmas tree, jigsaw or bullseye? A rough guide to post-2015 frameworks, Global Dashboard Blog, 25 April 2012
- ⁶⁹ UNTT (2012), Realizing the Future we Want for All: Report to the Secretary General, UN System Task Team to support the preparation of the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, Draft 30 April 2012, mimeo
- ⁷⁰ UNECLAC (2012), RIO+20: Sustainable Development Goals: proposal by the Government of Columbia for consideration by the participating countries, Latin American and Caribbean Regional Meeting, Preparatory to the United Nation Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, Meeting of the member countries of the Rio de Janeiro Platform for Action on the Road to Johannesburg 2002: Latin America and the Caribbean in preparation for Rio de Janeiro 2012 [http://www.eclac.org/rio20/noticias/paginas/6/43906/2011-613-Rio+20-Note by the secretariat Colombia note.pdf](http://www.eclac.org/rio20/noticias/paginas/6/43906/2011-613-Rio+20-Note%20by%20the%20secretariat%20Colombia%20note.pdf)
- ⁷¹ Pollard (2012), UN All Africa Parliamentarians Conference, Addis Ababa, Serpents and Doves, CAFOD Policy team blog <http://cafodpolicy.wordpress.com/2012/06/01/un-all-africa-parliamentarians-conference-addis-ababa/#more-1619>
- ⁷² SIDS (2012), UNDG Prepares Guidelines for Country Consultations on Post-2015 Development Agenda, International Institute for Sustainable Development, 6 August 2012
- ⁷³ The One World Project is the initiative of a Consortium which includes the Centre for International Governance Innovation in Canada, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Switzerland, Korea Development Institute in South Korea, Manchester University in the United Kingdom, Institute for Poverty Reduction Center in China, Getulio Vargas Foundation in Brazil, University of Pretoria in South Africa, and Tata Institute of Social Sciences in India. The ideas presented here come from Consortium discussions that have been held in Bellagio, Geneva, and Paris, and will be developed further in consultations planned for 2012 in Asia, Africa, and Americas.
- ⁷⁴ The three categories are : i) essential endowments necessary for individuals to achieve their fuller potential, ii) protecting and promoting collective human capital and iii) effective provision of global public goods
- ⁷⁵ Dr Mukesh Kapila, Professor for Global Health & Humanitarian Affairs, Manchester University, Co-director of Project on Post-2015 Development Goals, email 8 June 2012
- ⁷⁶ CIGI (2012), Post-2015 Goals, targets and Indicators, April 10-11 2012, Paris, France Conference <http://www.beyond2015.org/sites/default/files/CIGI%20Post2015.pdf>

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- ⁸³ Alan Tuckett, ICAE, Skype Interview, 14 June 2012
- ⁸⁴ UNICEF and UNESCO are both members of the Leading Group of Innovative Financing for Development. However, in the absence of strong leadership of the partnerships there is no clarity on how the discussions so far on Taxation of Financial Transactions will progress and its implications for education.
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- ⁸⁹ Barry Carin, 2012, *ibid*.
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