



Global Campaign for Education-US

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The Chapeau should include a reaffirmation of the critical promise to ‘leave no one behind’ in all SDG implementation. **It is vital to add commitment to the promises made by the UN Transforming Education Summit (TES). Upholding commitments to global education is essential to shaping a more equal, inclusive world and empowering youth and future generations to be leaders in their communities.**

We call on member states to:

Recognize “that the full realization of the right to education for all is an essential condition for achieving sustainable development, and in this regard encourage States to effectively implement SDG4 on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all” (A/HRC/RES/47/5, 2021)

Chapter I

Reaffirm their commitments from the *Incheon Declaration: Education 2030* and recognize the **“significant importance of investment in public education, and doing so to the maximum of available resources”** and commit to **“increasing and improving domestic and external financing for education, including in humanitarian emergencies and conflict situations”** and renew the calls to “to take all measures necessary, including by making education a priority in their national budgets by granting sufficient budgetary allocations to education, to ensure accessible, inclusive, equitable and non-discriminatory quality education to all at all levels, paying particular attention to women and girls, children in the most vulnerable and marginalized situations, older persons, persons with disabilities, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and all persons in vulnerable and marginalized situations, including those affected by humanitarian emergencies and conflict situations.” (A/HRC/RES/47/6, 2021)

Encourage “States to allocate appropriate financial and technical resources in support of country-led national education plans, and an increase in voluntary contributions to the Global Partnership for Education” (A/HRC/RES/47/5, 2021) and Education Cannot Wait.

Prioritize and increase funding for education: “US\$5 trillion or 6% of global GDP is invested in education worldwide...however, most of this educational investment is concentrated in high-income countries, which account for 63% of global investment in education but only 10% of the school-age population. (UNESCO/World Bank Education Finance Watch 2022 and 2022 TES Report, p.19)

As flagged by the Secretary General (SG) in his *Policy Brief on Transforming Education*, the right to education is at the very heart of the 2030 Agenda and a crucial instrument in the delivery of its defining principle of leaving no one behind. **Inclusive education enables individuals to be active agents of change in the pursuit of Agenda 2030 and more inclusive societies.**

Investments in education are below agreed international benchmarks. Only 4 in 10 countries meet their Incheon commitment to allocate at least 15% of total public expenditure to education [\[1\]](#). The [2023 SDG Progress](#) report showed that “in education, the impacts of years of underinvestment and learning losses are such that, by 2030, some 84 million children will be out of school and 300 million children or young people attending school will leave unable to read and write.” The report concluded that to achieve national SDG4 benchmarks, 79 countries still face an average annual financing gap of \$97 billion [\[2\]](#).

Urgent action is needed to ensure education funding meets the levels required to deliver SDG4 and reaches all learners, especially the poorest and most marginalized, children with disabilities, girls, and youth in emergency settings.

Chapter II

Affirm “the fundamental contribution of the enjoyment of the right to education to the achievement of peace and security, acknowledging that investment in universal, free, accessible, equitable and inclusive quality education and training is an important investment that States should make to ensure the immediate and long-term development of children, and reiterating that access to inclusive, equitable and quality formal and non-formal education is a crucial factor in enabling children to acquire relevant skills and to build their capacities” and recognize “the importance quality education plays in promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence to support peacebuilding efforts and sustaining peace” (A/HRC/RES/54/5, 2023).

Prioritize education, given that “today education is experiencing compounded crises...millions of children, young people and adults are denied their right to education, which limits their potential to achieve other rights and freedoms. The world is still home to at least 763 million young people and adults who lack basic literacy skills and 244

million out-of-school children and young people” and “many children, including those who are enrolled in school, are not acquiring basic literacy skills. In low- and middle-income countries, the share of 10-year-old children who could not read and understand a simple text was as high as 57% in 2019, which has increased to 70% in 2022” (TES Report).

As flagged by the SG, quality education is an essential ingredient in promoting, building and sustaining peace and this should be recognized in the Pact for the Future. Education has a key role in helping to prevent violence and promoting peaceful societies by teaching learners respect for human rights and skills to resolve conflicts. Education is severely affected by conflict and disasters. In 2022, 222 million school-aged children were affected by crises globally; 14.5 million children are crisis-affected and are not attending school [\[3\]](#).

Chapter III

Recognize “the role that access to information and communications technology (ICT), including the Internet, plays in facilitating the realization of the right to education and in promoting inclusive quality education, in particular in situations of emergencies” while “expressing concern at the inequalities in access to information and communications technology, which have increased the digital divide and expanded technological gaps, including but not limited to those based on gender, age, disability and migration or refugee status, and with their negative impact on the realization of the right to education” that “the incorporation of digital technologies in education, notwithstanding its potential to expand and complement access to education, is not a long term replacement for on-site schooling, and the need for a thorough debate on the role of digital technologies in education, keeping in mind not only equality of opportunities, including for conflict-affected areas, but also its potential unintended negative effects, including on children’s and young persons’ health, education and interpersonal development, the changes it may create in the organization of education systems and the potential to serve as an equalizer for marginalized children and young persons” and “call upon all States to take appropriate measures to accelerate efforts to bridge the digital divide and technological gaps, including those based on gender, age, disability and migration or refugee status, and not only to combat discrimination and bias in the development and use of new technologies, particularly in terms of access to products and services that are essential for the enjoyment of the right to education, but also to ensure accessible and quality education at all levels, in order to increase the digital competencies and innovation skills of all, including women, girls, and persons with disabilities, while ensuring the protection of personal data in the use of technology in education” (A/HRC/RES/47/6, 2021).

Utilize technology and innovation to make education more accessible to all students, especially learners with disabilities and/or living in conflict zones.

ICT can support inclusion in education of learners with disabilities, however, it cannot replace face-to-face methods or training teachers in inclusive pedagogy, both face-to-face and online. Learners with disabilities, especially girls – already more likely to be excluded from advances in digitalization – were largely left behind during school closures, exacerbating inequalities. Only 18% of parents of children with disabilities found radio/television learning resources accessible, and 29% found computer use accessible/useful for their children [4].

Chapter IV

Include children and youth fully in policymaking.

Reaffirm “that the right to education, enshrined in international human rights law, can help to enable the realization of many other human rights” and “that the human rights principles of non-discrimination and equality are central to the full realization of the right to education, and emphasizing that everyone is entitled to the right to education without discrimination of any kind.”

Urge “States to ensure equal access to inclusive, equitable and quality education, which may require transformations in education systems, mainstreaming a gender perspective into education programs, infrastructure development and teacher training, and in this regard calls upon States to invest in quality education, including through adequate financing, to ensure that all girls, including those who are marginalized or in vulnerable situations, enjoy their right to education on the basis of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination; promote gender sensitivity and disability inclusion within education systems in planning, budgeting, implementing, monitoring and reporting; gather data disaggregated by sex and disability and share knowledge and experience on educational programs and policies that support the empowerment of all girls and women and learners with disabilities.”

Recognize “that the right to education is a multiplier right that supports the empowerment of all women and girls to claim their human rights, including the right to participate in the conduct of public affairs as well as in economic, social and cultural life, and to fully, equally and meaningfully participate in the decision-making processes that shape society, and the transformative potential of education for every girl. **Reiterate the importance of early childhood development as a valuable foundation of lifelong learning and the entire education system, and the need to invest in early childhood education and care.**”

Urge “all States to strengthen their legal frameworks, adopt adequate policies and programs and allocate sufficient resources to the full realization of the right to education and expand educational opportunities for all, without discrimination, including by:

Implementing targeted programs to address inequalities, including barriers to accessibility and discrimination against women and girls and persons with disabilities in education

Recognizing the significant importance of investment in public education, and doing so to the maximum of available resources

Strengthening engagement with all relevant stakeholders, including communities, diverse children and youth, parents and legal guardians, local actors and civil society, to contribute to education as a public good.”

(A/HRC/RES/47/5-6, 2021).

Maintain education as a key point for the Pact for the Future, per “the UNSG’s Vision Statement and TES follow-up actions collectively will inform a UN Policy Brief on Transforming Education, to be finalized by mid-2023. This Policy Brief will be provided as a key input to the ‘Summit of the Future: Multilateral Solutions for a Better Tomorrow’ which will be convened on 22-23 September 2024 in New York. Consideration and prioritization within the context of the Pact for the Future – the primary outcome document of the Summit – would provide greater impetus for longer-term national and global efforts to transform education and effectively situate education as a centerpiece in preparing societies for uncertain futures” (TES Report).

UNICEF’s [SDG report](#) reveals that two-thirds of SDGs concerning children's rights and well-being are falling behind in progress to achieve targets. If recent progress continues, only 1 in 6 countries will meet SDG4 (universal access to quality, inclusive education for all) by 2030.

SDG4 is a core pillar of Agenda 2030 and key to unlocking all other goals. Inclusive education is essential to provide opportunities and allow future generations to develop to their full potential. Education has a role as an equalizer for future generations and the potential to break the cycle of intergenerational transmission of inequality.

However, 250 million children are out of school today, with children with disabilities more likely to be excluded from education. Compared to children without disabilities, children with disabilities were 49% more likely to have never attended school and 42% less likely to have foundational reading and numeracy skills (UNICEF, 2021).

Transforming education to reach all learners, including those with disabilities, is needed to ensure resilient and inclusive education systems and societies. Solutions that support the inclusion of learners with disabilities, who are often those most at risk of neglect, stigma and abuse, are the same approaches that support the well-being and success of all learners.

References:

[1] UNICEF, [Transforming Education with Equitable Financing](#) (2023).

[2] Ibid.

[3] ECW, Crisis affected children in need of educational support (2023).

[4] World Bank-Inclusive Education Initiative, Pivoting to Inclusion: Leveraging Lessons from the COVID-19 Crisis for Learners with Disabilities (2020).