Commonwealth Ministerial Working Group on the Post-2015 Development Framework for Education

Technical Meeting on Advocacy Strategy Development

Marlborough House, 18-19 September 2013

Recommendations on Commonwealth Education Post-2015 Advocacy Strategy and Road-Map

1. Representatives of Commonwealth Ministries of Education, at the Technical Meeting of the Ministerial Working Group at Marlborough House, London, 18-19 September 2013, agreed advocacy strategies and options for ensuring that the key Recommendations of the Commonwealth Ministerial Working Group on the Post-2015 Development Framework for Education (hereafter the Recommendations) captured emerging issues and continued to be reflected in the emerging global framework for development.

2. The meeting was chaired by the Acting Senior Chief Executive of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources of Mauritius, Mr RP Ramlugun, and attended by delegations from Bangladesh, Barbados, Brunei Darussalam, Jamaica, Kenya, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone and Uganda. Representatives from the Brookings Institution, Centre for International Education (University of Sussex, UK), Commonwealth Consortium for Education, Commonwealth Foundation, Commonwealth Secretariat Youth Affairs Division, Council for Education in the Commonwealth, Education International, Open Society Foundations, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education participated on the first day. These were joined by representatives of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) on the second day.

3. The meeting recognised and appreciated the efforts made by countries and national and international organisations to ensure that education remained a priority in the post-2015 development agenda. The outcomes of the Global Thematic Consultation on Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda were welcomed. The inclusion of education in the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and his draft Report to the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly was noted. The global recognition of the crucial role of educational access, equity and quality to attaining global development goals was commended.

4. The meeting observed that at a crucial moment in the development of the post-2015 framework, the need for further clarity and direction on four key issues had emerged in the global debate. These were (i) ensuring an integrated post-2015 framework for education; (ii) engaging developed countries' ministries of education in the new global agenda; (iii) how to address skills for employability; and (iv) how to ensure measurable, broad-based outcomes for learning.

5. The meeting noted that the period up to 2015 was crucial in the formulation of the development framework and represented a major opportunity for advocacy actions at

national, regional and global level, and that efforts should be accelerated during this period, as would be outlined in the advocacy strategy.

Key advocacy message

6. The meeting reaffirmed the need **to ensure free, quality, basic education for a minimum of nine years continuously, minimising differences in learning outcomes, defined by national standards, between more and less advantaged groups, and to provide post-basic education and opportunities for all youth and adults to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes to participate fully in society and secure decent work.**

7. This message is elaborated in the Commonwealth Ministerial Working Group's Recommendations for the post-2015 Development Framework for Education, which remains the basis for detailed advocacy and which is attached as an appendix.

8. The meeting looked into various options for an advocacy strategy and recommended that the following set of actions be taken:

   National

   i. Every member country of the Ministerial Working Group and other Commonwealth ministries of education needed to see themselves as a champion of the Recommendations; ministers should take every opportunity to advocate the Recommendations in meetings, presentations and speeches.

   ii. Senior officials should advise Ministers to advocate the Recommendations. The senior management of each ministry should ensure that information was shared on the Recommendations so that all were aware of it and equipped to promote it; this information needed to be prepared in accordance with a brief/guidelines; there needed to be a focal point at each country level who should either be the Minister of Education or a designated high level education official within the Ministry, the role of which would be helpful to co-ordinate information and provide a point of communication with the Commonwealth Secretariat.

   iii. Ministries of education should involve other relevant ministries and government bodies, such as health, youth, environment, economic development, justice, presidents and prime ministers' offices, high commissions etc., so that they could advocate the Recommendations in other forums, and within cabinets and national assemblies.

   iv. Ministries of education should be emboldened by an ambitious and broad agenda, not by narrower donor priorities.

   v. Ministries of education should engage specifically with ministries of foreign affairs and ministries of finance and planning to agree strategies for advocating the Recommendations and securing resources to fund their implementation.

   vi. Ministries should integrate the Recommendations in their respective strategic plans.

   vii. A broad base of civil society, including teacher, children, youth and parents' organisations, should be engaged in the advocacy process, including through partnerships between ministries and stakeholders. The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting Commonwealth People's Forum and a meeting of Senior Officials at the Committee of the Whole would provide opportunities, and ministries of education could work with civil society to prepare for these.

   viii. Countries should promote the Recommendations with representatives of development agencies operating in their countries.

ix. Ministries of education should organise specific activities with government bodies and civil society to raise awareness of the Recommendations and promote co-ordinated action, reporting the outcomes to the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Regional

x. There should be a specific focus on regional and sub-regional level intergovernmental and civil society organisations and the regional Education For All (EFA) consultations. The organisations would include (but not be limited to) the:
   – Africa Network Campaign on Education For All;
   – African Union;
   – Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education;
   – Association for the Development of Education in Africa;
   – Association of Southeast Asian Nations;
   – Campaña Latinoamericana por el Derecho a la Educación;
   – Caribbean Community;
   – East African Community;
   – Economic Community Of West African States;
   – European Union;
   – Organization of American States;
   – Pacific Islands Forum;
   – South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation;
   – Southern African Development Community.

xi. Commonwealth member countries in strategic positions in international processes should use these to promote the Recommendations, e.g. Antigua and Barbuda would be President of the UN General Assembly 2013-14 and Uganda in 2014-15; Kenya would be co-chair of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, and Nigeria was Chair of the African Union Ministers of Education.

xii. Countries should identify allies at regional and sub-regional levels so that countries' representatives to these forums could carry forward the message.

Commonwealth

xiii. A formal communication should be made from the Commonwealth Ministerial Working Group to UNICEF, UNESCO and the UN explaining exactly what requests were being made in regard to the Recommendations.

xiv. The Recommendations should be presented to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, and the Secretariat should prepare a strategy to ensure this.

xv. Teleconferencing could be used among Commonwealth Ministerial Working Group members to share resources, learning, progress and opportunities, and to co-ordinate action.

xvi. The Commonwealth should try to secure representation on the drafting committee(s) of the global framework; efforts should be made to engage with the committee(s) at the highest level.

xvii. Fall-back positions should be prepared to respond to emerging challenges to the proposals in the Recommendations so that EFA-level detail was not lost; for example, by consolidating the three principal goals into one.

xviii. A brief and/or guidelines for advocating the Recommendations should be prepared.

xix. A robust co-ordination mechanism needed to be put in place, to harmonise the advocacy activities, provide a reporting system, follow up on the issues paper and ensure that a common message on the post-2015 agenda was promulgated by Commonwealth organisations.

xx. The Recommendations should be promoted at the Commonwealth Youth Forum.

xxi. The Commonwealth Ministerial Working Group should continue to lead on advocating for the Recommendations, and report to 19CCEM on progress.

Global

xxii. A particular focus should be on sharing information by countries' representatives on the UNESCO Executive Board and at the General Conference.

xxiii. Countries should advocate the Recommendations in their national reports to UNESCO's EFA reviews, and in their UN's MDG's country report.

xxiv. Countries should advocate for the Recommendations at the UN General Assembly and to the UN Secretary-General's Education First Initiative, including through Education First Champion Countries Australia, Bangladesh and South Africa.

xxv. The Recommendations should be promoted to the Global Partnership for Education, through board members Ghana and Sierra Leone.

xxvi. The GCE should be engaged as an ally in the promotion of the Recommendations.

xxvii. A special strategy needed to be prepared to target the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, UN General Assembly and other UN processes, in collaboration with Education International.

xxviii. Side meetings at international forums should be organised to promote the Recommendations.

xxix. Advocacy should include a specific focus on India and South Africa as members of the BRICS Group (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), and the Group of Eight (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, United Kingdom, and United States of America).

All levels

xxx. The unique selling point of the Recommendations above other proposals – that they had been endorsed by a multinational group at the ministerial level and that they provided a ready-made framework for goals and financing – should be highlighted.

xxxi. Use should be made of technological means, including Commonwealth Connects and the media, including social media, and other ways of reaching people, to undertake general marketing and dissemination of the Recommendations, co-ordinate action, share outcomes and monitor progress, and the Commonwealth Ministerial Working Group should be kept informed of such progress.

Next steps

9. The meeting requested that:

   a) A sub-committee be tasked to finalise the advocacy strategy and road map and develop an advocacy brief that provided guidelines for effective action;

   b) The Commonwealth Secretariat establish a mechanism for co-ordinating advocacy action, monitoring progress, and providing feedback to the Ministerial Working Group;

   c) The sub-committee finalise the strategy and road map document and disseminate for approval by Ministerial Working Group members by 30 October 2013.

Annex: Summary of the Recommendations of the Ministerial Working Group on the Post-2015 Development Framework for Education

Principal goals	Illustrative Indicators	Target
1. Every child completes a full cycle of a minimum of 9 years of continuous, free basic education and demonstrates learning achievement consistent with national standards	· % of boys and girls who complete a minimum of 9 years of basic education, to the appropriate national and, where appropriate, international, standard of completion, by the age of 15	100% of boys and girls within xx years
2. Post-basic education expanded strategically to meet needs for knowledge and skills related to employment and livelihoods	· % of students of senior secondary/TVET/tertiary age (15-25) who complete an accredited qualification	X% of boys and girls within xx years, depending on country starting point
3. Reduce and seek to eliminate differences in educational outcomes among learners associated with household wealth, gender, special needs, location, age and social group	· % of children from the bottom 20% of household income achieving x% in national learning assessments (NLAs) compared to those from the top 20% · Comparative achievement of boys compared to girls in NLAs · Comparative achievement of those with special needs in NLAs · Comparative achievement of those in disadvantaged geographic locations in NLAs · Comparative achievement of those from marginalised social groups in NLAs	X% of boys and girls within xx years

Cross-cutting themes	
Education in Emergencies	Conflict and disaster risk reduction integrated into all national education sector plans
Migration	All migrants of school-age or who are education professionals recorded in monitoring of education goals by the host country to inform policy formulation
Gender	All reporting and evaluation of the development goals disaggregated by sex and analysed through a gender lens
Education for Sustainable Development	Education for sustainable development mainstreamed in all education policies, teacher and school leader preparation, and curricula

Subordinate goals	Goal	Illustrative Indicators
i. Early childhood education and development	· Reduce and seek to eliminate early childhood under-nutrition and avoidable childhood disease, and universalise access to community based ECE/D and pre-school below age 6 years	· Basic health and child development · Body Mass Index, immunisation rates, childhood diseases · Participation rates in organised ECE/D and pre-school by age
ii. Basic education	· Universalise an 'expanded vision of access' to a full cycle of a minimum of 9 years of continuous basic education · Successful achievement of national learning outcomes in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains for both primary and lower secondary cycles at age appropriate levels up to the age of 15 years	· Enrolment at Grades 1-12 · Completion rate by age at Grades 1, 3, 6, 9 and 12 · Trained and qualified teacher rate · Trained and qualified school leader rate · National Learning Assessment standards at Grade 3, 6, 9 and 12 · Yield (level of achievement * % of age group achieving level)
iii. Post-basic and post-secondary education	· Invest strategically in expanded and equitable access to post-basic and tertiary level education and training linked to wellbeing, livelihoods and employment and the transition to responsible adult citizenship	· Enrolments by grade at secondary level · % of age group enrolled by Grade · Transition rates · Completion rates All disaggregated by wealth quintile, location, gender, age and social group
iv. Non-formal education and lifelong learning	· Eliminate illiteracy and innumeracy amongst those under 50 years old · Provide education opportunities for young people and adults who have not successfully completed 9 years of basic education	· Literacy and numeracy rates at ages 15-20, 21-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-45 and 46-50 using samples and graded tests · Trained and qualified non-formal education facilitators

v. Participation	· Reduce and seek to eliminate disparities in participation in education at school level linked to wealth, location, special needs, age, gender and social group and ensure all children have equal educational opportunities and reduce gaps in measured outcomes	· Participation rates by Grades 1, 6, 9, and 12 by wealth quintile, location, gender, special needs, age and social group
		· Distribution of:
		  - pupil-teacher ratios and class size
		  - distance to school
		  - achievement levels

vi. Infrastructure	· Provide adequate infrastructure for learning according to national norms for buildings, basic services, safety, learning materials, and learning infrastructure within appropriate distances of households	· % of schools meeting standards for:
		  - sanitation - furniture and equipment
		  - learning materials - electricity
		  - recreation facilities - clean water
		  - security - access to relevant technologies
		  - building quality/learning space/safety