Global Action Week 2015: The right to education 2000-2030

1. Background

The year 2015 is a crucial moment for the education sector and specifically for the GCE movement, marking the deadline for achievement of both the Education For All (EFA) Goals and the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). GCE was originally founded in 1999 to influence the EFA framework, and has continued as a movement dedicated to furthering achievement of these goals through civil society action to hold decision-makers to account. Moreover, in 2015, the next set of goals – covering the period 2015 to 2030 – will be finalised: these will play a major role in determining the future shape and focus of education policy and financing. The GCE movement has been heavily involved in both demanding accountability for promises made in 2000, and trying to influence the new commitments to be made in 2015.

2. Global Action Week 2015 campaign aims & objectives

In this context, the overall aim of Global Action Week (GAW) 2015 is to use the opportunities offered by 2015 to ensure that governments:

- individually commit to and take policy and financing action to meet the unfulfilled promises of 2000 (the EFA goals and education MDGs);
- collectively commit to a post-2015 framework and architecture that will bring the world closer to realising the right to education by 2030; and
- recognise the role of civil society in delivering EFA since 2000 and commit to ensuring citizen participation in developing and monitoring post-2015 framework.

Our shared policy aims for new goals have been drawn from extensive consultation within the membership. It has become clear in recent months that, given the timing of and participation in the different processes, the post-2015 EFA framework will continue independently of the post-2015 SDG goals, and – while GCE is calling for both to include the same elements – that their content and structure may differ somewhat. Given this, our specific objectives for GAW are:

- Individual governments (at least 25) make specific commitments on financing and policy (in line with national demands) that seek to fill some of the gaps left in the unfinished EFA and MDG agenda.
- UNESCO Member States gathered at the World Education Conference in the Republic of Korea in May 2015 agreed to adopt a revitalised and strengthened Education for All framework for the 2015-2030 period.
- Member states gathered at the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2015 agree a set of post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals that include a standalone goal on education.
- Both the post-2015 EFA framework and the post-2015 SDG goal on education are broad and rights-based, targeting, at a minimum:
  - Free, universal education to the end of secondary level
  - Free, universal access to early childhood care and education
  - Universal adult literacy
  - Closing of the massive disparities and inequities in education access and quality
The provision of quality education, to be achieved through every learner having a professional, well-trained, qualified and motivated teacher; safe and secure learning environments; relevant and responsive curricula including human rights education and education for global citizenship and sustainable development.

- Both frameworks include in their architecture clear commitments to and structures for citizen participation in monitoring and evaluation of progress towards 2030 goals, consistent with GCE demands.
- Both frameworks are accompanied by financing commitments, including commitments to spend 20 percent of national budgets on education and at least half of this on basic education, and 10 percent of ODA on basic education.
- Targets and indicators for each set of goals are aligned with a broad and rights-based conception of education, and the achievement of the full set of education goals.
- Member states begin the process of putting in place national mechanisms for implementing the two frameworks - including mechanisms of tracking progress, financing, and putting in place other essential prerequisites needed for implementation of the frameworks laid down.

3. Targets

Clearly, achieving these objectives is not simply about what happens in Korea or New York, but about the discussions and agreements during the build-up. Processes are now shifting further towards political negotiation between states, meaning that it is crucial to influence both national debate and the key players in the intergovernmental negotiations. Given the strong likelihood of two (related but distinct) frameworks emerging, it is essential to have a two-pronged approach that includes influencing both the processes in New York (the development of the new SDG framework) and the UNESCO-led processes leading up to Korea World Conference. While GCE’s key messages – and desired outcomes – on both frameworks are the same, the key players and timelines (at both national and international level) are likely to be somewhat different. The key targets for GAW 2015 activity are thus:

a) Key stakeholders within member states. While details will be determined nationally, the following are likely to be key targets:
   - Education Ministry (for both frameworks, but especially for EFA)
   - External Affairs Ministry (for the SDG negotiations)
   - Development Assistance (for both)
   - Government Permanent representative in the UN (who may or may not be fully briefed from capital)
   - Government Permanent representative for UNESCO (for the EFA process, again cannot assume she/he has been fully briefed)

b) Key players in international discussions:
   - UNESCO (for the EFA process)
   - UNICEF
   - the UNSG’s office and post-2015 team
   - the conveners of the various post-2015 processes (Kenya, Ireland and Norway)
   - the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) that is working on education indicators.

Focus countries? – TBC in discussion with GAW working group

4. Key messages
Key campaign messages are drawn from existing GCE positions which have emerged from extensive consultation:

- While considerable progress has been made on advancing the right to education for all since 2000 significant gaps remain which must be addressed by urgent government action.
- These gaps are particularly acute in relation to quality and to equity, as well as on the ‘neglected’ goal of adult literacy.
- Post-2015 frameworks must be rights-based and take into account the full educational experience.
- Governments cannot meet current or future goals on education quality without financing and policy framework necessary to guarantee a trained, professional teacher for every learner.
- Quality education post-2015 must not just focus on achieving a narrow set of indicators (such as test scores), but focus on how quality is achieved (teachers, schools, curricula) and what quality education is (encompassing rights education and education for global citizenship, peace and sustainable development).
- There persist massive disparity gaps in educational access and quality on the basis of gender, disability, poverty, location, ethnic or linguistic identity, or other drivers of marginalisation and discrimination; without tackling these, the right to education and the existing and future education goals cannot be achieved.
- Post-2015 frameworks must explicitly address equity.
- Governments and the international community have for far too long neglected targets on adult literacy and adult education, denying millions a route out of poverty and into full participation in society.
- Citizens have a crucial role to play in determining and monitoring new goals and indicators.
- Civil society organisations and networks have made an important impact on supporting progress since 2000, and future frameworks must recognise and build on this.

Other messages will relate to specific national contexts and challenges.

5. GAW activities

GAW activities will form part of a year of activity on EFA and post-2015, which may include (for example) a launch in January, as well as activities before and during the WEF in Korea and the UNGA in New York. This paper deals specifically with Global Action Week.

In recent years, national coalitions have developed activities individually, with some – for example – holding mass public rallies and events, others focusing on media, others holding high-level discussions with government, or some combining many different elements.

Given the global nature of the discussion in 2015, there has been some enthusiasm for a ‘global action’. One suggestion has been made by CAMPE (the GCE member in Bangladesh) for discussion by the GAW group, which involves highlighting the personal stories of children born on 26 April 2000, the day that the Dakar World Education Forum started (and possibly those born on 18 September 2000, the day the MDGs were agreed). This could be used either in lobbying or in popular mobilisation, and could be used to highlight any particular aspect of the campaign, including (for example): lack of access to school; lack of teachers; inequity and exclusion; impact of civil society engagement; or individual aspirations for the next generation. This is for the GAW working group to discuss, alongside other suggestions.

At a global level, GCE will seek to present some kind of submission to both UNESCO and the UNSG, expanding on our agreed movement position on post-2015, and drawing on national inputs. We will also plan a global e-action, with targets to be discussed nearer the time (possibly UN structures, or possibly a set of key national governments, depending on how negotiations unfold), and global communication.
6. Allies

Global Action Week of course seeks engagement and involvement from across the GCE movement. This year, other actual and potential allies are:

- **UNESCO**: a long-standing GAW supporter; this year’s theme is anyway at the heart of UNESCO’s work in 2015, meaning that they may be producing a number of products that will be useful without necessarily being explicitly presented as GAW products. This may include a report on civil society contributions to EFA, produced with CCNGO. They will also draw attention to GAW on their website, and may offer a video message, as in recent years. TBC – is there anything the working group would like to specifically request?

- **EFA GMR**: the theme of their report this year will be closely aligned to the GAW theme; the launch date has been changing, and is now likely to be one week ahead of GAW. We will find out what briefings may be available in advance.

- **A World At School**: will be pushing on the aspect of the “final push” to achieve EFA & MDG goals. What liaison would the working group recommend?

- **Action/2015**: we are starting to talk to this group, which is seeking to support any post-2015 related activity. There is some danger that the very open nature of the campaign could allow us to be co-branded with groups (or companies) with very different aims; on the other hand, it could be a good way to get attention for education issues in broader post-2015 campaigns. Does the working group have views on this?

- **Beyond 2015**: we have had some contact before, and led the drafting team on their education position, but haven’t engaged recently.

7. Campaign products

**Equitable, Inclusive and Free: a collective vision for quality education beyond 2015**

This position statement was collectively produced and approved as GCE’s proposed goal and targets for the post-2015 education goals and frameworks, and will be used for advocacy and direct lobbying within the GCE network, while providing messages to be used throughout the campaign.

**Campaign tool kit**

Full campaign pack to support members to lobby governments to support our position on the post-2015 frameworks, including identity and other visual assets as well as an overview of aims, objectives, messages etc.

**GCE perspective on EFA 2000-2015**

A shadow report, Terms of Reference TBC, highlighting progress and gaps in achieving the EFA goals and MDGs, drawing on member perspectives.

**Global Action Week 2003-2015**

An exhibition highlighting major achievements of GCE members since the first formal Global Action Week in 2003, to be displayed during key events between February and September 2015.

**GCE: 2000-2015**

Mini-documentary drawing on existing footage from within the central and members’ archives, telling the story of civil society’s contribution to achieving EFA.
## 8. Timeline of key events

This timeline combines key activities and events for the EFA review process, the post-2015 processes and GCE activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date &amp; location</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>GCE engagement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 December, Paris</td>
<td>GMR meeting</td>
<td>GCE attending</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2014, Morocco</td>
<td>Teacher Task Force Meeting</td>
<td>GCE &amp; VSO attending</td>
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<td>December 2014</td>
<td>Secretary General’s Synthesis Report (date TBC)</td>
<td>GCE will respond</td>
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<td>From January (monthly), New York</td>
<td>Political negotiations on post-2015 begin</td>
<td>To seek intelligence</td>
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<td>January</td>
<td>Zero Draft of the SDG Framework (?)</td>
<td>GCE will respond</td>
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<td>January (tbc)</td>
<td>Middle East regional consultation on EFA</td>
<td>GCE members attending</td>
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<td>Feb 9-10th, Kigali</td>
<td>Africa regional consultation on EFA</td>
<td>GCE &amp; members attending</td>
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<td>February (tbc)</td>
<td>EFA SC meeting</td>
<td>GCE participating as Steering Committee member</td>
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<td>Feb 19-20 (tbc) Paris</td>
<td>Region 1 consultation on EFA</td>
<td>GCE &amp; members attending</td>
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<td>Feb 23-26, Johannesburg</td>
<td>GCE World Assembly</td>
<td>GCE &amp; members attending</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan to March 2015</td>
<td>Global EFA synthesis report UNESCO</td>
<td>GCE participating as Steering Committee member</td>
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<td>March 2015, Tunisia</td>
<td>World Social Forum</td>
<td>tbc</td>
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<td>April 2015, DC</td>
<td>WB Spring Meetings</td>
<td>GCE members attending</td>
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<td>April 2015</td>
<td>GMR report launch</td>
<td>Details tbc</td>
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<td><strong>26 April – 2 May</strong></td>
<td><strong>GLOBAL ACTION WEEK</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>19-25 May, Incheon, Korea</td>
<td>World Education Forum</td>
<td>GCE &amp; members attending</td>
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<td>June (tbc), NY</td>
<td>ECOSOC Ministerial Review</td>
<td>tbc</td>
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<td>22-26 June, Bahamas</td>
<td>Commonwealth Education Ministers Meeting</td>
<td>tbc</td>
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<td>7 July, Oslo</td>
<td>Forum on education financing</td>
<td>GCE &amp; members attending</td>
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<td>13-16 July, Addis Ababa</td>
<td>High Level Summit on Financing For Development</td>
<td>GCE (tbc) &amp; members attending</td>
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<td>15-28 September, New York</td>
<td>70th UNGA</td>
<td>GCE &amp; members attending</td>
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<td>September 2015 TBC</td>
<td>G 8 Summit- Germany</td>
<td>Tbc – members?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 2015</td>
<td>IMF WB Annual Meetings</td>
<td>GCE members attending</td>
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