Summary Report

ACEA activities during The Global Action Week- 2016

“Fund the Future: Education Rights Now”

1. Introduction

In 2015, world leaders committed to the most ambitious global development agenda in history. For education, this includes the pledge to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030' - regardless of personal, social or political context. Such ambitious goals need to be paid for. Since education is central to the achievement of all the development goals, failing to make adequate investments in education puts the success of the entire new agenda at risk. Investment in education now will help to fund a better future tomorrow. This was the theme of Global Action Week for Education (GAWE) 2016.

The following were the key messages of the GAWE:

- Political commitments made at the global level mean little without financial commitments at the national level: no government will meet the education goal or targets without adequate and reliable financing, of good quality.
- Education underpins the achievement of all development goals: failing to make adequate investments in education puts the fulfilment of the entire SDG 2030 agenda at risk.
- Financial commitments which have already been made MUST be fulfilled – including domestic and donor commitments to GPE, bilateral commitments by donors, and global commitments contained in the Sustainable Development Goals, Education 2030 Framework for Action, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.
• Citizens have a responsibility to hold governments to account for reneging on any existing financial commitments which could deny them their right to education.
• The commitment to 12 years of free education from early childhood to secondary must be backed by prioritisation in national education budgets and in ODA to education.
• Youth and adults have been systemically failed by decades of underfunding for literacy programmes – this trend must be reversed to ensure that future generations can fulfil their potential, engage in active citizenship, and increase their contributions to communities and societies.
• Political leaders must make the necessary commitments to ensure quality and equity in education, prioritising investments that have the most impact.
• Domestic financing to fulfil the right to education is accessible – with fairer tax systems, big companies paying their fair share, and when revenues generated by natural resources are converted into lasting benefits for citizens.
• Tax is the most sustainable source of financing for developing countries, and a concerted effort must be made by states to make global tax rules fairer.
• Public money, including through ODA, must go to strengthen public education systems
• Adequate funds must be allotted to address all forms of educational inequities including, but going beyond, gender to include other bases of exclusion.
• Budget data should be available in transparent, disaggregated and timely manner in a form that can be used for tracking by citizens and civil society.

2. ACEA National Coalitions

Arab Campaign for Education for All is an independent, non-profit coalition, consisting of networks, coalitions, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, teachers’ unions, associations and other sectors which are interested in education in the Arab countries. ACEA seeks to unite and mobilize the efforts of civil societies to ensure the accomplishment of the goals of Education for All. The founding of the Arab Campaign for Education for All comes within the framework of the Global Campaign for Education “GCE” that based on Jomtien conference 1990 and Dakar conference in April.
2000. The goal of ACEA is to contribute to the promotion of education as a fundamental human right, and to mobilize efforts to put pressure on governments and the international community to fulfill their promises in general pertaining to ensure free and compulsory basic education of good quality for all especially women and vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

Arab campaign for Education for All "ACEA" is committed to achieve its mission in the framework of objectivity, transparency, accountability, and equality following democratic standards in all plans and procedures in line with the Global Campaign for Education for All “GCE” and its commitments in the World Conference for the year 2001 in order to build an international movement based on the principles of good governance.

National coalitions that implemented GAWE activities this year are based in Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, Palestine, Egypt, Morocco, Albania, and Georgia.

3. GAWE Advocacy Activities with Decision Makers

National coalitions used the event of GAWE to advocate for investing in Education for the future. Several coalitions designed and implemented advocacy activities that target decision makers in their respective countries. These activities included meetings, round tables and hearing events where coalition members and other education stakeholders such as Media and academia advocated for increased financing for education.

Sudanese coalition conducted a national workshop on financing education for sustainable development. The workshop targeted decision makers from the National Education Council, parliamentarians, politicians. During the workshop A paper on Education legislations and policies, that ensures good quality education for all and another paper on investment in Education for sustainable development were presented. The recommendations of the working papers were raised to the
chairman of the National Council, the Deputy of National Council Chairman and President of Education Committee of the National council.

Albanian coalition in cooperation with 14 national schools, organized meetings between school students and decision makers such as chairmen of Education and Means of Public Information parliamentary committee, and deputy minister of education.

In addition a public hearing was implemented in coordination with Education and Means of Public Information parliamentary committee on the pre-university education system in Albania. The meeting engaged 6 coalition members actively participated in the hearing in addition to 20 parliamentarians, 3 high level officials and government representative from Ministries of Education and Finance are part of the hearing session, and UN and international organizations.

They also organized a round table discussion was organised among them, on the importance that money pays in their education. A group of children presented their ideas as well as requests to the mayor of Fushe-Kruja in the framework of 1-st of June, Children’s Day.

Albanian Coalition for Child Education organized a meeting with children and the deputy minister of education and sports Mrs. Nora Malaj on May 18th. Students from “Pjetër Budi”, “Edith Durham”, “Fan Noli” dhe” Jordan Misja”, “Petro NiniLuarasi”, “Sami Frashëri” dhe “XhezmiDelli” schools voted for the first time on the education priorities and evidenced the problems they face every day. Education authorities actively interacted with children; that children’s requests were delivered to the authorities. 10 students represented 7 schools of Tirana and joined the consultation in presence of Deputy Minister of Education.

The deputy minister of education and sports Mrs. Malaj, expressed her commitment to do every effort to solve the problems raised and encouraged students that together with their parents to be more cooperative and interact with the school and teachers. She invited students together to organize a meeting with the mayor of Tirana, where to set their requirements related to duties and responsibilities of the municipality.

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The Egyptian coalition organized a meeting with the financial budget management of Aswan Education Directorate; in which a presentation was given on GAWE 2016 theme. During the meeting, coalition members discussed the status of the financial allocations to education sector. More importantly, Financial Budget Management committee of Education Directorate presented the major problems and obstacles that prevent getting the appropriate limit of expenditure on education. The coalition also organized a meeting with the societal participation department manager of Aswan Education Directorate; and during this meeting (Role of Business & Private Sector) topics was discussed.

A roundtable was held as a closing event of GAWE. With the participation of a number of executive leaders of the learning and Education directorate, a number of partner associations Teachers Union and the College of Education at Aswan University. The meeting discussed Education sector financing issues in Egypt such as increasing the financial allocations disbursed to the basic education, amendment of legislation and laws that would apply decentralization and give wider powers for the decision-
makers in the governorate, abolition of transferring the schools’ special funds to the unified account system which would facilitate spending on education. Other issues included mechanisms to stimulate investors and businessmen on the community participation in the educational system, financial allocations for the extra-curricular activities for students in schools in basic education and need to strengthening capacity of administrators and those in charge of the budget capacities in the educational system. This meeting resulted in a document for recommendations to be submitted to the Education Committee in the House of Representatives.

Georgian coalition in cooperation with Netherlands Institute of Multiparty Democracy organized a round table with participation of 8 leading political parties and media to discuss the main education issues and provide parties with the opportunity to share their vision on education system development for upcoming parliamentary election in October 2016. For that end, the coalition developed a questionnaire and conducted the survey of leading political parties in prior of the round table meeting. Received results were elaborated into summarized report and presented at the round table meeting. The meeting was first in the planned series of round tables. As a result, all leading eight parties, including the ruler party’s representative, stated and agreed that the funds allocated for the education system should be significantly increased. Survey results reports and political parties’ representatives statements were reported in the media.

Moreover, Somali coalition members participated in Education cluster meeting - a high-level NGO meeting on April 27th, in which the coalition requested to build a more inclusive humanitarian system that recognizes the need for sustained financing to deliver education in emergency settings.

The Yemeni Coalition held an advocacy meeting with the United Nations Office (OCHA), in which the coalition handed over a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations – Mr. Ban Ki-moon. The letter included a request for supporting education in Yemen and also urged international organizations to make more efforts in supporting education.
The coalition met with the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education of the Enterprise Sector, and viewed the latest report on the size of damage to education facilities in Yemen. In addition to needs of education sector given the current financial crisis in Yemen.

The Yemeni Coalition organized a public event attended by the Coalition members, Mayor of Sana’a Capital, the Ministry of Education, number of members of local councils, directors of education offices, of heads and members of civil society organizations, representatives from trade union, human rights activists and media people. In this event the coalition awarded outstanding students and teachers. More than 400 people from the attendees signed a petition calling for an increase in education budget.
A Seminar under the slogan Spending Education was held in which a working paper were presented by the Ministry of Education under the title *(Spending on Education and the Challenges faced by the Ministry of Education)*. The paper main focus was on the importance of spending on education, especially in the current circumstances of Yemen. Furthermore, it explained the difficulties and problems faced by the Ministry of Education due to lack of operational balancing of the ministry.

The second paper was submitted by trade union entitled *(Societal Partnership and the Role of Educational Unions in Support of Education)*. Another working paper was submitted by civil society under the title *(The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Spending on Education)*. The Educational union presented addressed a paper under the title *(Vision Teaching Unions in Support of Public Education)*.

In Palestine, round tables and several meetings in the cities of Jenin, Ramallah, Gaza, Nablus and Qalqilya were held and discussed the increase of budgets of education in Palestine in order to ensure quality and compulsory education, free of charge. The meetings also demanded deepening community dialogue to gain access to participatory budgets related to human rights issues and the marginalized groups and ensure education for all groups. The coalition in partnership with Al-Aqsa University in Gaza, conducted also a workshop on increasing budgets and the challenges facing the teaching-learning process.

Moreover, the coalition held solidarity campaign signatures on 25th-27th April related to the *Global Campaign for Education* goals on "Spending on Education: a guarantee for the future" with the participation of a large number of media and civil society representatives and educational organizations that support people with disabilities. The coalition handed over the objectives and demands of the campaign to the government, to increase budgets and to support and adopt policies concerning education as a top national priority, and increased budgets for education.
The Somali Coalition launched the week with official school by coalition members to 10 primary schools in the cities of Bossasso, Galkayo and Mogadishu. The coalition requested in these visits, that the government, education stakeholders, teachers and parents make adequate investments in education.

4. GAWE Community based & Awareness Raising Activities

National Coalitions implemented several activities that aimed at bringing the theme of "Fund the Future: Education Rights Now" to the grass root level. This was done through community based activities in schools, open activities and targeting huge numbers of community members.
For example, the Palestinian educational Coalition alone was able to target more than 800,000 people, including women, school students, students with disabilities, parents, representatives from different Educational CSOs, decision maker and political representatives. The coalition implemented awareness campaigns under the title “The Big Right: Education First” in the cities of Qalqilya, Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, and Gaza in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, under the title of “Vote for Education” and with the support of local community organizations.

National events were held during the period to raise awareness and educate students and present community implications of providing quality education for all and motivate people to take accountability procedures and put pressure in order to increase the proportion of spending on education and enhancing its quality, and providing qualitative learning for all students.

Palestinian coalition designed activities that targeted community members through different channels. For example, School radio activities were implemented in which students managed to broadcast messages to the community about their dreams of free education and the freedom of their homeland and their colleagues from child prisoners in Israeli jails and returning back to practice their right to education, and their schools be safe and inclusive for people with disabilities. In addition to presenting topics and sayings urges learning and teaching. Principals, teachers, students and Parents council participated in the activities. The activities were about the importance of supporting and spending on education, and also reviewed the material needs of the schools and the needs of the infrastructure and maintenance, and students’ wishes in regards to their schools.

The coalition also advocated with the Ministry of Awqaf to devote Friday sermons and religious seminars in more than 1000 mosques covering Palestine, to talk about education as everyone’s responsibility and to ensure that the Palestinian government apply the announcement of Incheon declaration (Education by 2030: Towards good equitable, comprehensive and lifelong learning Education for all).
National coalitions targeted children and community members in several creative activities. For example, Sudanese coalition organized an Open day for children and an exhibition on educational themes within the frame of governors community including different sketches in addition to competitions, rewards, puppet theatre, storytelling events. The number of participants exceeded 1500 children, parents and youth from Palestinian community. The children presented many paints and sketches and songs related to educational themes.

Albanian coalition organized an activity entitled *A Request Every Day* in which sharing photo shooting of activists, artist, children addressing their message to the importance of financing on education, addressing key messages to the public; addressing requests to the politicians, parliamentarians, Join the worldwide campaign GAWE 2016 by using hash tags and sharing messages; Sharing ideas with the public and inviting them to participate. The activity involved 14 schools, 10 CSOs representatives with the participation of two well-known artists joined the campaign.

The coalition also organized “Fund the Future” activity for children with disability. This activity has been organised by MEDPAK (*Protect the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*), coalition member organizations in “DemirGashi” and “HakiStermilli” schools. A fair took place where students exposed their drawings, hand-made crafts, awareness materials addressing children’s rights and requests delivered to teachers, Education directorate representatives, municipality representatives etc.

During these events, participants addressed requests to local representatives. More than 40 students were involved in the activity; plus more than 20 teachers participated in the activities; 10 regional education directorates and local representatives attended the fair. Women in the Heart of Development NGO, operating in Kucova, organised activities with children and joined 74the campaign “A request Every Day” .The activity aimed to address messages to teachers, regional education directorates and +calls for requests to local representatives. It also gave voice to children needs. More than 50 students were involved in
the activity; plus more than 30 teachers were present in the activities; more than 10 regional education directorates and local representatives attended the fair.

In Georgia, the coalition organized teachers’ discussions in which Teachers Union introduced to young teachers /educational personnel and future teachers the GCE/GAW goals and objectives internationally/ nationally, developed the GCE/GAW campaign materials and tools of awareness raising and organized teachers’ panel discussion on the topics of teachers professional development and roles of Government/trade unions subject associations and other stakeholders in that regard.

### 5. GAWE Activities with the Media

All national coalitions that implemented GAWE activities engaged national and local media effectively. Palestinian coalition in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Municipalities of the cities of Hebron, Qalqiliya, Nablus and Jenin in addition to the local institutions, organized Marathons under the title of “Education First” as part of the activities of the Global Action Week for Education. This public event was covered massively by local media.

In Sudan, a Media Forum was held on education funding at the Sudanese Women Union headquarter. With the participation of 109 people including 50 of media people.

In Georgia Local media represented by two TV channels and three electronic/printed media means covered the story, including 30 min. TV interview with the coalition’s representative on the public broadcaster.

Somali coalition promoted GAWE extensively through Social media platform of the coalition (EFASOM Facebook page) and digital news, YouTube channel, and one Of the coalition member’s website - Danan Radio Website which was up to date at all events and transmitted GAWE activities in Somalia. In terms of social media, the coalition managed to reach approximately more than 1,280 persons.
Furthermore, more than 600 persons were reached with the distribution of press release directly and through sharing it with Facebook. With the press release the coalition requested the government and education stakeholders to ensure access to free, good quality education for all.

6. Pledges presented to ACEA Country Governments

Through GAEW activities, national coalitions made several pledges to their governments to increase financing for education.

Pledges made by the Sudanese coalition the government to support the coalition included increase education finance, review the legislations and policies regarding education and increase the teachers’ salaries and provide opportunities to rehabilitation and training the teachers

The Albanian coalition managed to get pledges by the government and decision makers during the Global Action Week for this year as follows:

1. For 2017 3.3 % of GDP will be allocated to the Education Sector.
2. Education annual state budget will be consulted with CSOs.
3. The mid-term budget 2017-2019 will take into consideration SCOs recommendations.

Pledges from Yemen, focused on increasing budgets earmarked to education in humanitarian plans and donor funds.