Consultation: World Bank World Development Report on Education 2018

Guidance notes for GCE Members

- GCE’s global response to the World Bank consultation will reiterate the need for the following:
  - An holistic and humanistic definition of quality of education and learning that is in line with a rights-based understanding of education that goes beyond attainment of narrowly defined competencies in literacy and numeracy. Assessments and learning metrics must be comprehensive, support learning (and not only measure it) and be supportive (and not punitive); we also support the need for more formative assessments.
  - A commitment to financing of education, especially domestic resource mobilisation and continued relevance of ODA commitments. The concept note on the themes of the report suggest an omission of a strong financing thrust, and in a World Bank report this is somewhat puzzling.
  - A strong focus on strengthening public education systems. The key to achieving reform at scale is to focus on making public schools and public education systems work.
  - Address the full Education 2030 agenda, including adult literacy and lifelong learning.
  - Education must respect, promote and protect the needs of learners from all communities, not only as a prerequisite derived from the fact that education is a fundamental human right, but also as a critical strategy to promote improved learning. As such, stronger pedagogical perspective is needed in the report. Adequate and appropriate teaching and learning materials, robust and inclusive curricula, and safe, inclusive learning environments and infrastructure are critical and the report must not lose track of the continued need to ensure provisioning of quality schools. Instruction in an alien language, absence of materials in students’ mother tongue and lack of attention to the culture and history of students in the curriculum all act as barriers to education. The report should look at the evidence of the negative equity impact of ability grouping and see remedial education as a part of an overall package of strategies to even out differences in social background of students, not expect mass scale remedial education to compensate for poor teaching in classrooms.
  - A concerted push for the abolition of all school fees, similar to the World Bank’s historic push for the abolition of primary school fees.
  - The Bank to end its ‘double speak’ on teachers. The recommendations for treating teaching as a profession and supporting teachers is welcome, but we oppose the tendency to see teachers as part of the problem holding back change.
  - Stronger effort for equity. Educational settings must be prepared for diverse students (through steps like school meals, school health programmes, enabling policies and programmes to address social barriers like racism, child marriage and child labour). The report should address issues of educational inequality (and how educational inequality entrenches social inequality), address discrimination and ensure that all students irrespective of class, race, ethnic or linguistic background, disability, migrant status or gender are fully supported in schools.
  - Robust coalitions for advocacy on education, including the need for the WDR to learn from the experience of the Global Campaign for Education’s work in this regard.