I. **INTRODUCTION**

The Arab Campaign for Education for All (ACEA) is an independent, non-profit coalition, consisting of networks, national educational coalitions, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, teachers’ unions, associations and other sectors active in the field of education in 14 countries in the Middle East & East Europe.

The founding of the Arab Campaign for Education for All (ACEA) comes within the framework of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). The reference of ACEA establishment was Jomtien conference in 1990 and Dakar conference in April 2000. Currently, ACEA seeks to unite and mobilize the efforts of civil societies to work towards the accomplishment of the Education 2030 agenda and is referenced by the Incheon Declaration.

ACEA is formed of 11 national coalitions in the Arab Region, and is partnering with three coalitions in East Europe. National coalitions comprise active and representative civil organizations in their membership, including those that work to promote achievement of the Education 2030 Agenda, national education goals and other critical education issues through public awareness, mobilization, policy participation, advocacy, research and monitoring activities.

As part of its advocacy work, ACEA joins the pledge to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” *(Sustainable Development Goal 4)*. SDG4 will entitle increased financing for education, and failing to make adequate investments in education not only puts the success of the entire new Education 2030 Agenda at risk, but also that of the sustainable development goals as a whole. Furthermore, the Middle East region is going through a devastating humanitarian crisis that is hugely drawing back the regions achievements in education and making the 2030 education agenda more and more farfetched.

To enhance the role of civil society and increase the regional momentum towards increased accountability and strengthening the central role of civil society, ACEA is seeking to bring together all stakeholders in the member ME&EE countries for a relevant learning event.

For this purpose, ACEA is planning to hold this learning event under the title **Financing Education 2030: Revisiting the Role of Civil Society on the 2nd. and 3rd. of May 2018 in Beirut, Lebanon**. The event will bring together not only national education coalitions but also official representatives of ministries of education, teachers’ unions, and the media. It will also bring in international organizations, institutions and funding agencies that are actively engaged in the field of education. The attendance and contribution of all these prominent parties active in the education field, and
their contribution grounded on their expertise and resources, is vital in the advancement towards the achievement of the Education 2030 Agenda.

II. CONTEXT
At the World Education Forum 2015 (WEF, May 2015)\(^1\), 120 ministers and Government delegations from 160 countries and the education community adopted the Incheon Declaration and committed to a single, renewed education agenda that is holistic, ambitious and aspirational, leaving no-one behind, including groups facing additional marginalisation such as children with disabilities. This new Education 2030 agenda is fully captured in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4), “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”.

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs which include SDG4 on education at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in New York in September 2015, the SDG4-Education 2030 Framework for Action was adopted at a high-level meeting alongside the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO in November 2015. It serves as the overall guiding framework for the implementation of SDG4-Education 2030 and outlines how to translate into practice the commitment made in Incheon at global, regional and national level. Therefore, urgent attention is now required to secure sufficient financing to enable the implementation of the ambitious new goals and targets.

Although the ultimate goal of the Education 2030 agenda is to leave no one behind, the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report 2016 emphasizes the urgent need for new approaches. On current trends only 70% of children in low income countries will complete primary school in 2030, a goal that should have been achieved in 2015. We need the political will, the policies, the innovation, and the resources to buck this trend.

In May 2017, the Dubai Roadmap for Education 2030 in the Arab Region (2017-2018), which was the outcome of the Arab Regional Meeting on SDG 4 - Education 2030 (ARMED II) reaffirmed the centrality of education in sustainable development, and recognized that the SDG4 agenda is key to obtain a humanistic vision of education and development based on human rights and dignity, social justice, protection, cultural diversity, and shared responsibility and accountability.

Following years of advocacy for sustainable development goal for education, global efforts have reached a critical point in ensuring its delivery in full. It is estimated that reaching universal pre-primary, primary and secondary education of good quality, in low and lower-middle-income countries will require a total of US$340 billion per year. This will require low-income countries to spend 6.56% of GDP on education, which will still leave a funding shortfall of US$39 billion\(^2\). The need to increase education spending is critical in most developing countries. Worldwide, 61 million children of primary school age are out of school\(^3\).

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\(^{1}\) The World Education Forum was organized by UNESCO together with the co-convening agencies: UNICEF, the World Bank, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women and UNHCR and hosted by the Republic of Korea in Incheon (19-22 May 2015).

\(^{2}\) Global Education Monitoring Report 2016

The Education 2030 Framework for Action recommends that governments allocate “at least 4-6% of Gross Domestic Product and/or at least 15-20% of total public expenditure to education⁴. However, on average, low income countries spend 3.9% of their GDP on education and allocate 16.7% of the national budget to education⁵. Furthermore, a contentious issue that requires immediate attention is the expectation that 97% of funding required to deliver on the SDGs is going to need to be met by domestic financing. In order to meet this target, governments will have to stop giving away unnecessary tax incentives, to take action on tax evasion, and to increase their tax bases, in order to increase domestic resource mobilization. Reality is that most countries in the Middle East and East Europe allocate less than 6% of GDP and less than 20% of government budget to education⁶ with only few exceptions from oil-producing countries. In countries that are in state of emergency, international donors cover as low as 3.5% of total response budgets (Yemen)⁷ and only 6% of actual emergency funding has been secured (Sudan)⁸.

Many of countries in the Middle East are affected by protracted crises to the detriment of the lives, rights and livelihoods of millions of displaced persons and communities as well as those in host countries affected by crises.

Significant numbers of children remain excluded from the education systems. It is estimated that more than 12.3m children are out of school: 4.3m primary school aged children (9%), 2.9m lower secondary aged children (12%) and 5.1m of pre-primary school age (58%). These figures do not include children who have been forced out of school by the crises in Syria, Iraq and Yemen ⁹. Two countries in the region (Djibouti and Sudan) are known to have among the lowest out of school numbers and rates¹⁰. Children still do not go to school because of poverty, conflict, gender discrimination, educational quality, poor school environments (including violence in schools) and an epidemic of drop out.

Acute and protracted emergencies are predominant in the region mainly in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic, countries hosting Syrian refugees and Yemen, as well as emergencies in Libya, the State of Palestine and Sudan. There are 56.6 million¹¹ people in need across the region. Violence has rendered 8,500 schools unusable¹² and this is believed to be an underestimation to the real figure. In many cases school buildings have been transformed into internally displaced persons (IDP)

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⁶ Data is available in http://data.uis.unesco.org/, Some more updated data is available in Annex 1 of Financing Matters Toolkit. www.campaignforeducation.org/docs/.../GCE%20Financing_Matters_EN_WEB.pdf
¹¹ This figure represents the aggregate total number of people in need as indicated in the Humanitarian Action for Children 2017 appeals for Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, the State of Palestine, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and Yemen.
shelters such as the case in Iraq\[^{13}\] and Yemen or inhabited by military groups or militias such as the case of Yemen.

It is expected that in cases of conflicts and wars, disability due to direct injury is estimated to increase dramatically. Children with disability have therefore doubled needs in the education sector. Of the estimated 1.4m Syrians who have found safety in Jordan, about a third, have a disability or serious health condition.

Recent surveys on Syrian refugees show that at least 22 per cent of surveyed Syrian refugees have a kind of impairment, 6 per cent of them have a severe impairment, while half of them experience difficulties in daily living activities. About 44.2 per cent of impairments recorded in this survey were physical.\[^{14}\] This is a very high number knowing that hosting communities and countries struggle to provide basic food and shelter services. For example, the Jordanian government admits it is unable to support everyone and to address the needs of the disabled, they need more money\[^{15}\].

Almost half a million children are suffering from acute malnutrition in Yemen and 2,450 have been disabled. This number is increasing every day as children outside of school are at risk of being recruited into armed forces and prone to further injury and disability\[^{16}\].

Due to the gendered, unequal roles of girls and boys, crises impact girls and boys differently. Disaster mortality rates are higher for women than for men. A study of 141 countries found that more women than men are killed during disasters; particularly in poor communities and at an earlier age.\[^{17}\] Gender inequality started time long before recent conflicts. However, girls are now more vulnerable and more disadvantaged. Conflicts always reduce access of girls to education. This is because girls start carrying caring responsibilities and also may be forced into child labor.

Girls also are liable during crisis for more Gender-based violence (GBV) which is rooted in unequal gendered power relations and often increases in times of crisis. This is due to a number of factors, including: a breakdown of law and order leading to impunity for the perpetrators of violence; risks associated with displacement; and the use of rape as a weapon of war. Domestic violence, which can be exacerbated by the availability of weapons, may also increase during and after conflict\[^{18}\].

Measures of the impact of armed conflict and violence often focus on fatalities, not, for example, GBV/VAWG, and therefore the experience of girls and women tends to be less visible in determining responses.

http://www.handicap-international.us/emergencies_resources
However there is a power of quality education in preventing and mitigating the impact of conflict, providing protection in time of crisis, equipping the affected with the necessary knowledge and skills to become more resilient.

III. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES
The general objective of the learning event is to consolidate efforts of civil society in the region towards a regional strategy for securing sufficient levels of financing for the achievement of the SDG4.

Specific Objectives:
1. To revisit the current role of civil society in responding to increasing challenges of education financing with more focus on countries in emergency.
2. To identify the challenges and obstacles facing civil society working in the field of education in country and region specific settings and identify feasible strategies to upscale their role and effectiveness.
3. To consolidate a common response strategy to increase domestic financing and protection and financing education in emergency.

IV. EXPECTED OUTPUTS
- Identify a common vision and strategy of action for civil society towards upscale financing for education.
- Action plans for an effective intervention of civil society in protecting and financing education in emergency are in place.

V. THEMATIC AREAS
To achieve its objectives, the learning event will focus on three main thematic areas:

1. Domestic Financing for Education: Under this theme, participants will discuss issues of current domestic spending on education, gaps in financing, taxation as source of financing and tax reform, as well as good governance.
2. Education in Emergency: Participants will discuss education under attack and the current impact of conflicts and emergency on education in the region. They will also discuss the role of civil society in protection of education facilities and schools, of school staff and students. Another topic under this theme will be funding mechanisms for education in emergency and available opportunities for civil society in this aspect.
3. Social Accountability: Under this theme the role of civil society mainly national coalitions will be discussed towards better advocacy work and policy change aiming at increasing domestic and donor funding to education.
VI. METHODOLOGY
A variety of approaches and methods will be used to ensure broad involvement of all participants and achieve the stated objectives and expected results. This includes presentation of research papers in open general panels, thematic debates, and group work.

VII. DATE AND VENUE
1-3 May 2018
Le Commodore Hotel, Hamra, Beirut, Lebanon

VIII. WORKING LANGUAGES
Arabic and English with simultaneous translation
IX. RESOURCES

1. One in Five Children, Adolescents and Youth is Out of School. UNESCO Fact Sheet 48. February 2018

http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0026/002615/261593E.pdf

http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002595/259593e.pdf

4. ملخص التقرير العالمي لرصد التعليم 8/2017 المساءلة في مجال التعليم: الوفاء بتعهداتنا


6. Reducing Global Poverty through Universal Primary and Secondary Education. UNESCO Fact Sheet 44. June 2017

7. إعادة الاستثمار في مبدأ التعليم كمنفعة عامة. 17 تموز/يوليو 2016
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002453/245306A.pdf

8. مستقبل التعليم 2: أي نوع من التعليم في القرن الحادي والعشرين؟ تشرين ثاني/نوفمبر 2015

9. الأزمة الخفية: النزاعات المسلحة والتعليم (ملخص) التقرير العالمي لرصد التعليم

http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001911/191186e.pdf