

GLOBAL EDUCATION MONITORING REPORT 2016
Education for people and planet:
CREATING SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR ALL
 UNESCO, 2016

Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report:

The Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 entrusts UNESCO with the leadership, coordination and monitoring of the Education 2030 agenda. It also calls upon the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report to provide independent monitoring and reporting of the Sustainable Development Goal on education (SDG 4), and on education in the other SDGs, for the next fifteen years. The ultimate goal of this agenda is to leave no one behind.

The 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015 underscore the Incheon Declaration. The member states adopted a new global development agenda, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. At its heart are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 4 on education. The SDGs establish development priorities to 2030 and succeed both the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All (EFA) goals, whose deadlines expired in 2015.

The 2016 GEM Report, the first of the new 15-year series, explores the complex relationship between education and other facets of sustainable development, along with the monitoring implications for SDG 4. It provides valuable insight for governments and policy makers to monitor and accelerate progress towards SDG 4, building on the indicators and targets, with equity and inclusion as measures of overall success.

Education and sustainable development:

The 2016 GEM Report makes three messages starkly clear.

- *The urgent need for the political will, the policies, the innovation and the resources to buck the current trend where only 70% of children in low income countries will complete primary school in 2030, a goal that should have been achieved in 2015.*
- *The need for a must act with a sense of heightened urgency, and with long-term commitment. Failure to do so will not only adversely affect education but will hamper progress towards each and every development goal: poverty reduction, hunger eradication, improved health, gender equality and women's empowerment, sustainable production and consumption, resilient cities, and more equal and inclusive societies.*
- *The need to fundamentally change the perception about education and its role in human well-being and global development. Now, more than ever, education has a responsibility to foster the right type of skills, attitudes and behaviour that will lead to sustainable and inclusive growth.*

Planet: environmental sustainability

- *Three of the most common understandings of how human behaviour leads to environmental degradation involve demography, modern lifestyles and individual behaviour.*
- *Education has a key role to play in addressing environmental challenges. Education, especially of girls and women, is the most effective means of curtailing population growth, increasing women's autonomy over fertility-related decisions and the timing of pregnancies.*
- *Education can improve livelihoods by increasing earnings, and skilled people are essential to the transformation of economies and food systems.*
- *Education can influence individual and collective environmental behaviour through contemporary, traditional and lifelong approaches to learning.*
- *Knowledge about the environment is increasingly incorporated into formal school curricula. Analysis of 78 national curricula shows that 55% use the term 'ecology' and 47% 'environmental education'.*
- *Traditional approach: learning through community*
- *Beyond formal education, government agencies, religious organizations, non-profit and community groups, labour organizations and the private sector can all help change individual and collective behaviour.*
- *Education enhances people's resilience to climate-related risks. Projections show that if education progress stalled, future disaster-related fatalities would increase by 20% per decade.*

Prosperity: sustainable and inclusive economies

- Education and lifelong learning are needed to make production and consumption sustainable, supply skills for the creation of green industry and orient higher education and research towards green innovation. Literacy and agricultural extension programmes can help farmers increase productivity by up to 12%.
- Increased levels of primary and secondary education contribute to long-term economic growth. Evidence suggests that most education systems are not keeping up with market demand.
- By 2020, the world could have 40 million too few workers with tertiary education relative to demand, and up to 95 million too many at lower education levels.
- Education drives growth, increases the incomes of the poorest and, if equitably distributed, reduces inequality. Reducing education disparity can increase access to decent work among disadvantaged groups. Analysis conducted for the 2016 GEM Report suggests that if workers from advantaged and more disadvantaged social backgrounds had the same education, disparity in working poverty could reduce by 39%.
- Education is clearly linked with earnings – across 139 countries, the rate of return per additional year of schooling is 9.7%.

People: inclusive social development

- Education is a powerful enabler, and a key aspect, of social development.
- Inclusive social development requires universal provision of critical services such as education, health, water, sanitation, energy, housing and transport, which is far from the case at present.
- Women do at least twice as much unpaid work as men, and often work in the informal sector.
- Differences in income, location, ethnicity and gender account for patterns of educational marginalization within countries.
- Poverty is by far the greatest barrier to education.
- Among 20- to 24-year-olds in 101 low and middle income countries, the poorest have on average 5 years fewer schooling than the richest; the gap is 2.6 years between urban and rural dwellers, and 1.1 year between women and men.
- Education can improve social development outcomes across a range of areas, notably health and women's status.
- School-based interventions, such as meals and health campaigns, can have an immediate impact on health. Conversely, meals in schools may increase attendance.
- School-based interventions can provide information on health and lead to behavioural change. Many water, sanitation and hygiene interventions in schools improve health and economic and gender equity.
- Individuals and societies benefit when girls and women receive better quality Education.
- Education can reduce maternal mortality. Increasing female education from zero to 1 year would prevent 174 maternal deaths per 100,000 births.
- Health and nutrition form a foundation for education systems: They condition children's ability to attend school and learn, and their families' ability to support them.
- Access to water, sanitation, hygiene and energy has a positive influence on education.

Peace: political participation, peace and access to justice

- Education and literacy make politics more participatory.
- Students are more likely to engage in politics with well-designed civics.
- Education and an open learning environment that supports discussion of controversial topics and allows students to hear and express differing opinions.
- Better education and women's involvement in national and local decision-making bodies are closely linked.
- Greater representation of women in politics and public office can reduce gender disparity in education by providing positive role models for women and increasing their educational aspirations.
- Across India's 16 biggest states, increasing the number of women involved in district politics by 10% would lead to a nearly 6% rise in primary school completion, with a larger impact on girls' education.
- Across 106 countries over 55 years, ethnic groups with more education were more likely to engage in non-violent protests.
- Broad and equitable access to good quality education helps sustain democratic practices and institutions.
- Higher literacy levels accounted for half the regime transitions towards democracy between 1870 and 2000.
- The poverty, unemployment and hopelessness resulting from the lack of a good education can act as recruiting agents for armed militia.
- Data from 100 countries over 50 years found that those with wider education gaps were more likely to be in conflict.
- Schools that inculcate prejudice, intolerance and historical distortions can become breeding grounds for violence.
- A functioning justice system is critical for sustaining peaceful societies. Community-based education programmes can help increase understanding of legal rights, particularly for the marginalized.
- Building the capacity of judicial and law enforcement officers is critical. Insufficient training and capacity-building can hold back justice and result in delays, flawed or insufficient evidence-gathering, lack of enforcement, and abuse.

Place: cities and human settlements

- Education should be Integrated into urban planning so that the education needs and rights of all are met as urban populations change.
- Urban education systems that receive forcibly displaced children and youth need to adapt to support their long-term integration — particularly as the global refugee crisis is deepening.
- Education has economic, social and environmental effects on cities.
- Education has a positive social impact, particularly in reducing crime.
- Education can improve awareness of environmental challenges and responsibilities in cities.
- Education can also contribute to urban inequality.
- Discriminatory policies and practices, such as inequitable distribution of good teachers, private schools, often resulting from poor Government provision, can both alleviate and exacerbate inequality.
- Education can also perpetuate social exclusion if schools serving the disadvantaged are violent.
- Education and lifelong learning can influence urban planning and help transform cities.
- In most countries, urban planning schools and programmes are limited. India has about one planner for every 100,000 urban residents, compared to one for every 5,000 in Canada and the United States.
- Education-led participatory approaches, recognizing the needs of the disadvantaged, improve urban planning and decision-making.
- As cities grow increasingly important, improving local autonomy and emphasizing education strategies are key to making them sustainable and inclusive.

Partnerships: enabling conditions to achieve SDG 4 and the other SDGs

- The GEM Report team estimates that the total annual cost of ensuring that every child and adolescent in low and lower middle income countries has access to good quality education from the pre-primary to upper secondary level will rise from US\$149 billion to US\$340 billion by 2030.
- The International Commission on the Financing of Global Education Opportunities, announced at the Oslo Summit on Education for Development in July 2015, calls for a New Compact on education, including specific measures to mobilize domestic funds and address the funding gap.
- The Education 2030 Framework for Action set two benchmarks on domestic financing for education: 4% to 6% of gross domestic product (GDP) and 15% to 20% of public expenditure.
- In about half of all lower income countries, tax ratios are below 15% of GDP, compared with 18% in emerging economies and 26% in advanced economies.
- Education can improve taxpayer behaviour and increase compliance. Low literacy was associated with reduced tax revenue in 123 countries studied with data from 1996 to 2010.
- Addressing tax evasion and avoidance is also a global responsibility. Recent estimates suggest that lower income countries lose about US\$100 billion annually due to multinational tax avoidance via offshore investments.
- Coordinated domestic and international action on tax incentives, treaties and harmful corporate decisions is needed for lower income countries to recoup lost tax revenue.
- Two ways to prioritize spending for education are to remove fossil fuel subsidies and to earmark education funds.
- In education, cross-sector interventions include integrated initiatives in school feeding and school health, early childhood development, and skills and livelihood training.
- At the national level, successful efforts to improve multisector planning reflect the importance of political will, institutional support, adequate capacity and sufficient data.
- Well-developed national plans that are linked to good education financing plans and decentralized planning and financing systems, and that lead to good cross sector integration, are the exception rather than the rule in most poorer countries.
- Increased civil society activity was a major achievement of the EFA agenda.
- The role of coordination and financing bodies is critical. The global education coordination mechanism includes the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, Global Education Meetings, regional meetings and collective bodies of NGOs.
- The Global Partnership for Education, the education sector's principal multi-stakeholder partnership, could learn from such health sector partnerships as the Global Fund for Tuberculosis, Aids and Malaria and GAVI, which leverage substantial funds.
- The new Education cannot wait fund aims to raise money for targeted education for those affected by conflict, natural disasters and disease outbreaks.

Read the full report at the official website: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002457/245752e.pdf>

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