

Early Childhood Pathways to Sustainability

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Introduction:

The following presentation hopes to contribute with some suggestions to make reality sustainability, starting from our work with early childhood populations. It consists of four parts.

In the first section, we will go over some of the global commitments to early childhood, as well as their scientific, economic, and political arguments. We will highlight some of the results from the completed research and experiential data from various countries that ratify that we are all in agreement of three issues:

- Learning experiences start from conception.
- The first 1,000 days of life are decisive in the life of a child.
- We need to give back to parents the right as the first educators of their children.

We will also note that economic arguments for investing in early childhood do give us a return on investment. We have seen social returns and personal returns, with generations ready to compete in the future. We will finish by discussing how since the Convention on the Rights of the Child, political will has been growing and expanding to include not only governments but also civil society and private corporations. We will share initiatives and advances made in the Region of the Americas.

The second section will examine the process that was followed by the United Nations, in particular UNESCO, in order to convene, at the global level, various governments, civil society, and academia to evaluate past records, to analyze challenges and expectations of Education for All, which commits us to execute in the countries since 2015 to 2030 as stated in the “Incheon Declaration: Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all.”

On the third section, we summarize the process towards the Sustainable Development Goals for 2015-2030, especially highlighting that early childhood is addressed in Goal 4 and more specifically, objective 4.2; as well as the issues that relate to comprehensive care and human rights within the six elements mentioned by the Secretary-General to the United Nations in December 2014.

The fourth section analyzes a reference framework before proposing the early childhood pathways to sustainability, among these: conceptually clarifying of which early childhood we speak, the role that we think parents play within the family during early childhood, the kind of teachers we need for sustainable development, and how important is political will to reach the expectations that have been described by political commitments for development.

Finally, after the arguments, we propose pathways to sustainability for early childhood, once we understand the analysis process towards our end goal and the reference framework for the early childhood that we wish to see.

1. Some of the worldwide consensus regarding early childhood:

Its definition, scientific arguments, health, and education:

Early childhood is the vital stage of the life cycle that ranges from birth through 8 years of age. It is important because during this time a fundamental groundwork for human development is structured that is physical, social, psychological and emotional; which will steadily consolidate and become more perfect in the following stages of development. Research on neurobiology, pedagogy, sociology, and economics, among other sciences; and the lessons from many countries- demonstrate that the stimuli that a child receives during his or her gestational period are crucial for his or her performance during adulthood, as it is a phase of great brain plasticity. (Mustard, 2002, 2010). The value of play and exploratory learning are widely recognized as tools of excellence in preschool education.

The protection of the mother with adequate care of her health and diet, guarantee her child, from the gestational phase through **the first 1,000 days from birth, solid foundations that build all the dimensions of development:** physical, motor, intellectual, and socio-emotional, of personality, character, and positive attachment, that will contribute to their emotional security, and the development of basic trust; (Mustard, 2002, Goleman 1998) and all the foundations on which further development rests (Nash, 1997).

Research has shown that a synergistic effect exists between health care, nutrition, and education, which if offered at an appropriate and timely manner, starting at the gestational phase; that the pattern of growth, genetically determined, can be modified by external factors, for example, with nutrition.

When the parent interacts and plays with the child, he or she can change the child's brain functions for the rest of the child's life and if this positive influence remains permanent along with appropriate information, the child's capacity to learn will be strengthened. (Goleman 1998; Mustard 2005). It is crucial for parents, who have a high impact on the early development of the child as the first and primary educators, to enjoy social benefits such as maternity, paternity, parental, and breastfeeding leaves so they can establish relationships with their children from the moment of gestation in order to reach quality results.

Economic arguments:

James Heckman, Nobel Prize winner in Economics (2000), in assessing the data about human development in the United States, found that "the most efficient way to remedy the disadvantage caused by adverse family environments is to invest in children at their youngest age" (Interview, 06/2005). Heckman stresses his point with scientific arguments on the return on investment during these years.

The case study from the preschool program called High Scope Perry Preschool, geared towards the development of cognitive capacities, demonstrated through a longitudinal study that followed children from 3/4 years of age through 40 years of age, that the investment per dollar in high quality programs that respond adequately to the demands of children, result in a return on investment of more than US \$17 for each US \$1. The study found that adults at age 40 who had the preschool program had higher earnings, were more likely to hold a job, had committed fewer crimes, and were more likely to have graduated from high school than adults who did not have preschool.¹

The political commitments highlight solid arguments from economists, neuroscientists, and different specialists at the global level who reiterate that political will is very important in order to invest in early childhood development. They say that it offers substantial profitability to the budgets of governments; social and economic benefits, gender equality, greater productivity, and better human capital.

The political stage:

Politicians have recognized that equitable access to the quality childhood care and education can reinforce the learning foundations for a lifetime and also support the great educational and social needs of families. Early childhood issues are present on political agendas and these reiterate the need to build learning blocks beginning at the mother's pregnancy.

One of the universal agreements, on which early childhood policy is based, is the Convention on the Rights of the Child, approved in 1989 and ratified by 193 countries of the world. Its application is substantially modifying the conception of the child, considering him or her as a person, a social subject of rights. The Convention has 17 General Comments (written between the years 2001 and 2013) that analyze technical, policy and pedagogical details in order to guarantee for children to enjoy their rights freely.

As in other regions of the world: Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa, within the hemisphere, the Organization of American States (OAS), an intergovernmental organization with the participation of 35 countries, hosts the *Summits of the Americas*. Heads of state and government attend. The first Summit took place in Chile in 1998; the last one took place in Panama in 2015. Meetings for the ministers of education, health, social development, among others, also convened.

Declarations and resolutions are approved with explicit legislation about the importance of the development, care, and education during early childhood. In 2007, in Colombia, the Hemispheric Commitment to Early Childhood Education during the V Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education. This was inspired by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the General Comments N ° 7, 9.11, 12. The Hemispheric Commitment was ratified in 2009 in Ecuador and Suriname in 2012, as well as the General Assemblies held in both years.

¹. Weikart D; Scheweinart L (2005) <http://www.highscope.org>

In February 2015, Ministers of Education from OAS gathered for the VIII Inter-American Meeting and approved the Resolution “***Building an Inter-American Education Agenda: Education with Equity for Prosperity***” in which one of the priority issues is ***Comprehensive early childhood care*** (along with quality, inclusive, and equitable education; and strengthening of the teaching profession). An Inter-American Education Agenda will be written by Working Groups and presented at the next Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education in Bahamas in 2017.

The Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood is a regional movement of legislators from the countries in the Americas that promote advocacy, awareness and the compliance of the rights of the child in favor of a comprehensive development in early childhood; commits to establish certain partnerships with other international organizations and institutions from the governmental, legislative, and corporate level as well as civil society in order to add to efforts that enrich public policies and laws in order to make a reality the international and national commitments towards early childhood and adequate budgets that support the care, protection, education, and comprehensive development of the children of the Americas, with a priority on the most excluded populations. The Network ended its 6th Inter-American Meeting approving the Work Plan 2016-2017 with recommendations to the executive branches of the member countries on 2 July 2015.

Corporations and foundations in the region of the Americas are using Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to support the definition of legislation, policies, and programs for early childhood, considering a human rights focus. Many initiatives are directed towards supporting governments in their fight against undernourishment, anemia, and obesity of the child or the mother; offering services inside the company building; running specific studies that support the definition of policies or curriculum content; supporting monitoring systems of quantitative and qualitative data, co-responsible parenting, contributions towards infrastructure; supporting children with disabilities, children with delicate health conditions; capacity-building for teachers; the organizing and maintaining of funds in order to increase coverage or universal access to care for children who are three, four, or younger in age; among others.

2. The process to the World Education Forum 2015 – 2030

Since the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1989), various international agreements considered the commitment to early childhood, among these: the Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (1990), the World Forum on Education for All in Dakar (2000), and, the Millennium Development Goals, a universal framework for development 2000 – 2015. As agreements of Dakar and the Millennium Goals were not met, the United Nations and other agencies have mobilized the countries of the world to define a policy Agenda of Education for All post-2015.

The General Conference of UNESCO in November 2013 proposed that educational programs post-2015 should be based on a **lifelong learning approach** that covers all areas and addresses issues of **access, results, equity, and quality education for all-** children,

youth, and adults- **from the care and education that starts in early childhood** through higher education and education of adults, within the formal, non-formal, and informal educational contexts.

In response to UNESCO's proposal, five regional meetings took place at the global level: Thailand and Peru in 2014; Cairo, Dakar, and Paris in 2015. In attendance were: high level officials, ministers of education, representatives from international organizations and institutions from civil society, the research sector, and the private sector. The five meetings focused their discussions and agreements on: progress, shared experiences, problems, priorities, perspectives, and recommendations –regional in scope, in order to contribute perspectives and recommendations for global education and development programs post-2015. At the same time, the meetings gathered input for the Framework for Action of Incheon, Korea.

Within this context, as a follow-up to the proposal for consultations, the **World Education Forum** took place in 2015, where ministers of education approved, in May of 2015, the Incheon Declaration titled “**Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all**”, captures a vision that is “fully captured by proposed [Sustainable Development Goal] 4”. It states that: It is inspired by a humanistic vision of education and development based on human rights and dignity; social justice; inclusion; protection; cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity; and shared responsibility and accountability. It “reaffirm[s] that education is a public good, a fundamental human right and a basis for guaranteeing the realization of other rights. It is essential for peace, tolerance, human fulfillment and sustainable development. [It] recognize[s] education as key to achieving full employment and poverty eradication.” It agrees to “focus...efforts on access, equity and inclusion, quality and learning outcomes, within a lifelong learning approach.” It commits to make necessary changes to education policies, focusing its efforts on the most disadvantaged, policies of gender policies, planning and environments for learning. It ensures that teachers and educators are empowered, well trained, professionally qualified, supported by a system of resources that are efficient and effectively monitored. It promotes quality lifelong learning opportunities for all, within all settings, in all levels of education, offered in safe environments, free of violence.

Those who endorsed this agenda, declared that:

- They “reaffirm that the fundamental responsibility for successfully implementing this agenda lies with governments. [They] are determined to establish legal and policy frameworks that promote accountability and transparency as well as participatory governance and coordinated partnerships at all levels and across sectors, and to uphold the right to participation of all stakeholders.”
- They are “determined to increase public spending on education in accordance with country context”.
- They will call on donors to increase funding to education.

- They will “resolve to develop comprehensive national monitoring and evaluation systems in order to generate sound evidence for policy formulation and the management of education systems as well as to ensure accountability.” (See **Annex 2 Incheon Declaration: Education 2030**).

3. The process towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015 – 2030

As we mentioned before, the program remarks that the Millennium Development Goals (MDG 2000-2015) were not accomplished. When evaluated, the United Nations and other associated organizations developed a consulting process with the member states in order to come up with a new set of collaborative objectives, goals, or indicators that will serve as global political agendas for the next 15 years.

Report A/69/700 dated 4 December 2014 from the Secretary-General to the UN General Assembly proposes a “universal, integrated and human rights- based agenda for sustainable development” where all people occupy a central place on the planet. It establishes the following six elements:

- Dignity: to end poverty and fight inequalities.
- People: to ensure healthy lives, knowledge and the inclusion of women and children.
- Prosperity: to grow a strong, inclusive, and transformative economy.
- Planet: to protect our ecosystems for all societies and our children.
- Justice: to promote safe and peaceful societies and strong institutions.
- Partnership: to catalyze global solidarity for sustainable development.

These six elements are taken into account as input for the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015-2030**, which encompass crucial issues for sustainable development. The final text will be adopted by the United Nations in September 2015. It contains 17 Goals. Goals number 4 states to “**Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**” and objective number 4.2 states, “**By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.**” (See **Annex 1: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015 – 2030**).

4. Framework to achieve the objective 4.2

Much coincidence exists between distinct medical and social sciences that demonstrate that **early childhood is a crucial age for a solid beginning** and to expand the possibilities of human development. Consequently, the fulfillment of children’s rights greatly depends on the well-being and resources that are available to those responsible for the care, education, and protection of children. Recognizing these interdependencies is an adequate starting point for planning assistance and services for parents, different sectors, legal representatives, and other educational agents.

Early childhood is a strategy of high priority for policy, service, and program interventions against poverty and towards social development change. Interventions for the comprehensive care of early childhood, as a tool to reverse poverty, must start with intensity from the time the mother is in the gestation phase. It needs to persist throughout time, adapt to children, families, and communities; and be systematically evaluated.

Early childhood requires a **comprehensive focus** where all actions come together to drive further development. It demands an inter-sectoral approach with a conceptual framework that considers all the dimensions of early childhood. It also requires leadership from one of the sectors - from its field of domain, containing the infrastructure and the adequate personnel and budget.

The family has a fundamental role in the education of young children, especially during the first 1000 days of the child's life, as it is considered the most critical period of the human being's life cycle. Involving parents will strengthen their child-rearing practices and their knowledge about early childhood development, to be able to offer their children timely and engaging experiences, along with comprehensive care during these years. Early childhood is a period of broader (and more intense) parental responsibilities. This is why policies, strategies, and programs that involve the active participation of parents, build safe emotional attachments, improve the learning environment at home, and enrich the socio-affective, communicative, and cognitive development of their children.

Teachers are key actors to accompany early childhood development according to the age group in which the children find themselves. Other educational agents (starting with parents) can also do this. In order to fulfill a successful role, these need to be properly trained, be provided with capacity-building opportunities, and specialize in their field in order to count on specific competencies that will enable them to work more proactively with other parents, the community, collaboratively with other sectors, and civil society linked to sustainable development.

Political will is important because it can promote the existing standards of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its General Comments, the Goals of Incheon, and the Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030. It can enrich the legal framework for early childhood development policies, with clear scientific evidences. It can support comprehensive public policy making, specifically for the indigenous populations, the Amazonian peoples, Afro-descendant peoples, people with different abilities in order to give them the same guarantee of rights, respecting diversity with equity and quality; pushing for budget allocation from national and local executives so policies are implemented according to the law; and to safeguard that the obtained resources are used for the implementation of early childhood care in the countries, and that is is sustainable, prioritizing the needs of the most vulnerable areas and populations.

5. The Early Childhood Pathways to Sustainability

Within this context of reflexivity and expectations to guide the possibilities for intervention can take shape through the following ways:

Have clear policies, with content that shows scientific justification and a sufficient budget for their implementation, with accountability mechanisms and indicators, as well as transparency to verify compliance of applicable regulations from the national to the local level

Implement **high quality systems of early childhood that are equitable and inclusive** (children with different abilities, indigenous children, Afro-descendent children), that safeguard the rights of children, that promote the access and quality of lifelong learning opportunities (from birth), respecting the characteristics and principles of comprehensive care, that boost personal and social child care and protection, as well as cultural literacy, and that it includes parents as potential educational agents.

Create integrated programs and services that prioritize care, education, and protection of children from their conception through their **first two years of life**.

Adjust or provide enrichment to curricula, making them relevant so they create meaningful learning experiences for children, with content such as: healthy eating habits, taking care of nature and animals, taking care of the environment, good hygiene habits, conservation of water and electricity, proper disposal of waste, controlled use of technology devices, methodologies that allow for play to be used as a method for learning; including the participation of parents; and applicable within different teaching environments that might offer formal, non-formal, and informal care.

Push for the creation or **development of careers, systems, and training programs for professionals** who work with early childhood; with a focus on human development, a human rights perspective, along with a priority for the first 1,000 days from birth; and the training of parents as pedagogical mediators who can drive the content for sustainable development.

Convene and solicit participation from institutions and organizations that work with early childhood to build partnerships that bring together legislators, corporations, foundations, universities, civil society organizations, and benefactors in order to set up partnerships on behalf of early childhood and their plans/activities for sustainable development.

Develop and implement **laws for the use of mass media** to inform the public on early childhood issues, the Incheon Declaration 2030, and the Goals for Sustainable Development 2015-2030, during prime time for parents and the general public to receive information on: breastfeeding, immunizations, maternal and child health care, healthy eating, the care of the environment, climate change, among others.

5.8 Promote judicial and program initiatives, communication campaigns that advocate positive discipline that guarantee that children grow up free from violence, and that sanctions the unauthorized use of the images of children.

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Annex 1:

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015 – 2030

Transforming our World by 2030: A New Agenda for Global Action

- 1) End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- 2) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
- 3) Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages
- 4) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- 5) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- 6) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- 7) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- 8) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all
- 9) Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation
- 10) Reduce inequality within and among countries
- 11) Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- 12) Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- 13) Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (taking note of agreements made by the UNFCCC forum)
- 14) Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

15) Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.

16) Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

17) Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

Within the goals are a proposed 169 targets, to put a bit of meat on the bones. Proposed targets under goal one, for example, include reducing by at least half the number of people living in poverty by 2030, and eradicating extreme poverty (people living on less than \$1.25 a day). Under goal five, there's a proposed target on eliminating violence against women. Under goal 16 sits a target to promote the rule of law and equal access to justice.

Annex 2

Incheon Declaration: Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all

Preamble

1. We, Ministers, heads and members of delegations, heads of agencies and officials of multilateral and bilateral organizations, and representatives of civil society, the teaching profession, youth and the private sector, have gathered in May 2015 at the invitation of the Director-General of UNESCO in Incheon, Republic of Korea, for the World Education Forum 2015 (WEF 2015). We thank the Government and the people of the Republic of Korea for having hosted this important event as well as UNICEF, the World Bank, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women and UNHCR, as the co-conveners of this meeting, for their contributions. We express our sincere appreciation to UNESCO for having initiated and led the convening of this milestone event for Education 2030.

2. On this historic occasion, we reaffirm the vision of the worldwide movement for Education for All initiated in Jomtien in 1990 and reiterated in Dakar in 2000 — the most important commitment to education in recent decades and which has helped drive significant progress in education. We also reaffirm the vision and political will reflected in numerous international and regional human rights treaties that stipulate the right to education and its interrelation with other human rights. We acknowledge the efforts made; however, we recognize with great concern that we are far from having reached education for all.

3. We recall the Muscat Agreement developed through broad consultations and adopted at the Global Education for All (EFA) Meeting 2014, and which successfully informed the proposed education targets of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We further recall the outcomes of the regional ministerial conferences on education post-2015 and take note of the findings of the 2015 EFA Global Monitoring Report and the Regional EFA Synthesis Reports. We recognize the important contribution of the Global Education First Initiative as well

as the role of governments and regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in galvanizing political commitment for education.

4. Having taken stock of progress made towards the EFA goals since 2000 and the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as the lessons learned, and having examined the remaining challenges and deliberated on the proposed 2030 education agenda and the Framework for Action as well as on future priorities and strategies for its achievement, we adopt this Declaration.

Towards 2030: a new vision for education

5. Our vision is to transform lives through education, recognizing the important role of education as a main driver of development and in achieving the other proposed SDGs. We commit with a sense of urgency to a single, renewed education agenda that is holistic, ambitious and aspirational, leaving no one behind. This new vision is fully captured by the proposed SDG 4 “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” and its corresponding targets. It is transformative and universal, attends to the ‘unfinished business’ of the EFA agenda and the education-related MDGs, and addresses global and national education challenges. It is inspired by a humanistic vision of education and development based on human rights and dignity; social justice; inclusion; protection; cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity; and shared responsibility and accountability. We reaffirm that education is a public good, a fundamental human right and a basis for guaranteeing the realization of other rights. It is essential for peace, tolerance, human fulfilment and sustainable development. We recognize education as key to achieving full employment and poverty eradication. We will focus our efforts on access, equity and inclusion, quality and learning outcomes, within a lifelong learning approach.

6. Motivated by our significant achievements in expanding access to education over the last 15 years, we will ensure the provision of 12 years of free, publicly funded, equitable quality primary and secondary education, of which at least nine years are compulsory, leading to relevant learning outcomes. We also encourage the provision of at least one year of free and compulsory quality pre-primary education and that all children have access to quality early childhood development, care and education. We also commit to providing meaningful education and training opportunities for the large population of out-of-school children and adolescents, who require immediate, targeted and sustained action ensuring that all children are in school and are learning.

7. Inclusion and equity in and through education is the cornerstone of a transformative education agenda, and we therefore commit to addressing all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparities and inequalities in access, participation and learning outcomes. No education target should be considered met unless met by all. We therefore commit to making the necessary changes in education policies and focusing our efforts on the most disadvantaged, especially those with disabilities, to ensure that no one is left behind.

8. We recognize the importance of gender equality in achieving the right to education for all. We are therefore committed to supporting gender-sensitive policies, planning and learning

environments; mainstreaming gender issues in teacher training and curricula; and eliminating gender-based discrimination and violence in schools.

9. We commit to quality education and to improving learning outcomes, which requires strengthening inputs, processes and evaluation of outcomes and mechanisms to measure progress. We will ensure that teachers and educators are empowered, adequately recruited, well-trained, professionally qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems. Quality education fosters creativity and knowledge, and ensures the acquisition of the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy as well as analytical, problem-solving and other high-level cognitive, interpersonal and social skills. It also develops the skills, values and attitudes that enable citizens to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, make informed decisions, and respond to local and global challenges through education for sustainable development (ESD) and global citizenship education (GCED). In this regard, we strongly support the implementation of the Global Action Programme on ESD launched at the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in Aichi-Nagoya in 2014. We also stress the importance of human rights education and training in order to achieve the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

10. We commit to promoting quality lifelong learning opportunities for all, in all settings and at all levels of education. This includes equitable and increased access to quality technical and vocational education and training and higher education and research, with due attention to quality assurance. In addition, the provision of flexible learning pathways, as well as the recognition, validation and accreditation of the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through non-formal and informal education, is important. We further commit to ensuring that all youth and adults, especially girls and women, achieve relevant and recognized functional literacy and numeracy proficiency levels and acquire life skills, and that they are provided with adult learning, education and training opportunities. We are also committed to strengthening science, technology and innovation. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) must be harnessed to strengthen education systems, knowledge dissemination, information access, quality and effective learning, and more effective service provision.

11. Furthermore, we note with serious concern that, today, a large proportion of the world's out-of-school population lives in conflict-affected areas, and that crises, violence and attacks on education institutions, natural disasters and pandemics continue to disrupt education and development globally. We commit to developing more inclusive, responsive and resilient education systems to meet the needs of children, youth and adults in these contexts, including internally displaced persons and refugees. We highlight the need for education to be delivered in safe, supportive and secure learning environments free from violence. We recommend a sufficient crisis response, from emergency response through to recovery and rebuilding; better coordinated national, regional and global responses; and capacity development for comprehensive risk reduction and mitigation to ensure that education is maintained during situations of conflict, emergency, post-conflict and early recovery.

Implementing our common agenda

12. We reaffirm that the fundamental responsibility for successfully implementing this agenda lies with governments. We are determined to establish legal and policy frameworks that promote accountability and transparency as well as participatory governance and coordinated partnerships at all levels and across sectors, and to uphold the right to participation of all stakeholders.

13. We call for strong global and regional collaboration, cooperation, coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the education agenda based on data collection, analysis and reporting at the country level, within the framework of regional entities, mechanisms and strategies.

14. We recognize that the success of the 2030 education agenda requires sound policies and planning as well as efficient implementation arrangements. It is also clear that the aspirations encompassed in the proposed SDG 4 cannot be realized without a significant and well-targeted increase in financing, particularly in those countries furthest from achieving quality education for all at all levels. We therefore are determined to increase public spending on education in accordance with country context, and urge adherence to the international and regional benchmarks of allocating efficiently at least 4 - 6% of Gross Domestic Product and/or at least 15 - 20% of total public expenditure to education.

15. Noting the importance of development cooperation in complementing investments by governments, we call upon developed countries, traditional and emerging donors, middle income countries and international financing mechanisms to increase funding to education and to support the implementation of the agenda according to countries' needs and priorities. We recognize that the fulfilment of all commitments related to official development assistance (ODA) is crucial, including the commitments by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for ODA to developing countries. In accordance with their commitments, we urge those developed countries that have not yet done so to make additional concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for ODA to developing countries. We also commit to increase our support to the least developed countries. We further recognize the importance of unlocking all potential resources to support the right to education. We recommend improving aid effectiveness through better coordination and harmonization, and prioritizing financing and aid to neglected sub-sectors and low income countries. We also recommend significantly increasing support for education in humanitarian and protracted crises. We welcome the Oslo Summit on Education for Development (July 2015) and call on the Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa to support the proposed SDG 4.

16. We call on the WEF 2015 co-convenors, and in particular UNESCO, as well as on all partners, to individually and collectively support countries in implementing the 2030 education agenda, by providing technical advice, national capacity development and financial support based on their respective mandates and comparative advantages, and building on complementarity. To this end, we entrust UNESCO, in consultation with Member States, the WEF 2015 co-convenors and other partners, to develop an appropriate global coordination mechanism. Recognizing the Global Partnership for Education as a multi-stakeholder financing platform for education to support the implementation of the agenda according to the needs and priorities of the countries, we recommend that it be part of this future global coordination mechanism.

17. We further entrust UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialized agency for education, to continue its mandated role to lead and coordinate the 2030 education agenda, in particular by: undertaking advocacy to sustain political commitment; facilitating policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and standard setting; monitoring progress towards the education targets; convening global, regional and national stakeholders to guide the implementation of the agenda; and functioning as a focal point for education within the overall SDG coordination architecture.

18. We resolve to develop comprehensive national monitoring and evaluation systems in order to generate sound evidence for policy formulation and the management of education systems as well as to ensure accountability. We further request the WEF 2015 co-conveners and partners to support capacity development in data collection, analysis and reporting at the country level. Countries should seek to improve the quality, levels of disaggregation and timeliness of reporting to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. We also request that the Education for All Global Monitoring Report be continued as an independent Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR), hosted and published by UNESCO, as the mechanism for monitoring and reporting on the proposed SDG 4 and on education in the other proposed SDGs, within the mechanism to be established to monitor and review the implementation of the proposed SDGs.

19. We have discussed and agreed upon the essential elements of the Education 2030 Framework for Action. Taking into account the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (New York, September 2015) and the outcomes of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, July 2015), a final version will be presented for adoption and launched at a special high-level meeting to be organized alongside the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO in November 2015. We are fully committed to its implementation after its adoption, to inspire and guide countries and partners to ensure that our agenda is achieved.

20. Building on the legacy of Jomtien and Dakar, this Incheon Declaration is an historic commitment by all of us to transform lives through a new vision for education, with bold and innovative actions, to reach our ambitious goal by 2030.

***Gaby Fujimoto**

Dr. Fujimoto holds a Doctorate in Sciences of Education from the National University of Education in Lima, Peru. She is co-founding partner and honorary member of OMEP Peru since 1996. Dr. Fujimoto has represented OMEP World before the Organization of American States (OAS, 35 countries) and is Alternate Representative to ECOSOC United Nations since 2014.

Since 2011, Dr. Fujimoto is Technical Secretariat for International Affairs to the Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood. She has worked (25 years) as Senior Specialist in Education to the OAS, consultant to the World Bank, officer to the United Nations, and Chief of Special Programs at the Ministry of Education in Peru.

Dr. Fujimoto is a leader in the development, research, and evaluation of policies, programs, and innovative services for early childhood education, indigenous education, teacher training, multidisciplinary and multinational projects at the Inter-American level. She is an advisor on technical networks and policies of governments, legislators, civil society representatives, and entrepreneurs.

Honored for her outstanding work, Dr. Fujimoto has written and edited various books and essays on early childhood. Her research and writing is used as selected bibliography among political and academic environments of the hemisphere.

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