

# Beyond 2015: **The Education We Want**



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United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



## Background

The worldwide movement for Education for All, initiated in Jomtien in 1990 and reaffirmed in Dakar in 2000, is the most important commitment to education in recent decades. Efforts since the turn of the millennium have yielded significant progress. Yet the Education for All (EFA) agenda and the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are unlikely to be achieved by 2015. There is therefore consensus on the need for a new and forward-looking education agenda that completes unfinished business while going beyond the depth and scope of current goals to address new challenges, reach the most marginalized and give more emphasis to equity, quality and learning.

Global consultations with governments, civil society, the private sector and youth have identified education as a central priority for the post-2015 development agenda. Education is recognized as an essential condition for human fulfilment, peace, sustainable development, economic growth, decent work, gender equality and responsible global citizenship. It also contributes to reducing inequalities and eradicating poverty, by bequeathing the conditions and generating the opportunities for just, inclusive and sustainable societies. Education must therefore be placed at the heart of the global development agenda.

The EFA Steering Committee, a representative body of key international education stakeholders convened by UNESCO, has developed a comprehensive new vision for education beyond 2015. At the 2014 Global EFA meeting, organized by UNESCO in Oman on 12 – 14 May 2014, education leaders adopted the Muscat Agreement, endorsing a shared vision for the future education agenda.

# Proposed post-2015 education goal and targets

## THE PROPOSED OVERARCHING EDUCATION GOAL IS:

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### **“Ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030”**

This goal is translated into seven proposed global education targets, identified through extensive consultations. Five are outcome and two are input targets, the latter being considered indispensable for the realization of the former.

#### TARGET 1:

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**By 2030, at least x% of girls and boys are ready for primary school through participation in quality early childhood care and education, including at least one year of free and compulsory pre-primary education, with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalized.**

Because of the immediate and long-term positive impact of early childhood care and education (ECCE) not only on the well-being and development of children and their readiness for school, but also on the social and economic development of societies, ECCE provision must be increased and at least one year pre-primary education should be provided for all.

#### TARGET 3:

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**By 2030, all youth and at least x% of adults reach a proficiency level in literacy and numeracy sufficient to fully participate in society, with particular attention to girls and women and the most marginalized.**

Literacy is an indispensable foundation for engaging in learning opportunities throughout life and is understood as a continuum, with different levels and uses according to context. All young people and adults must reach a literacy proficiency level that allows them to effectively function at home, school, work and in society. Given the persistence and scale of the literacy challenge both in developing and developed countries, the future education agenda must provide for increased efforts in this area.

#### TARGET 2:

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**By 2030, all girls and boys complete free and compulsory quality basic education of at least 9 years and achieve relevant learning outcomes, with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalized.**

The future education agenda must ensure that a full cycle of basic education is provided. It must therefore ensure that all children, regardless of circumstance, enter and complete a minimum of 9 years of free and compulsory quality basic education, including at least primary and lower secondary schooling, but can progress beyond according to country context. Critically, it must also aim at achieving relevant learning outcomes, measured against recognized learning standards.

#### TARGET 4:

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**By 2030, at least x% of youth and y% of adults have the knowledge and skills for decent work and life through technical and vocational, upper secondary and tertiary education and training, with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalized.**

In light of socio-economic developments, transformed and intensified approaches to knowledge and skills for decent work and life are required. This includes providing relevant skill sets to young people through various education and training pathways, improving education-to-work transitions, and enhancing adult up-skilling and reskilling in a life-long learning approach.



**TARGET 5:**

**By 2030, all learners acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to establish sustainable and peaceful societies, including through global citizenship education and education for sustainable development.**

The challenges of today’s globalized, fast-changing and interconnected world require that people of all ages have the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to enable them to contribute as responsible global citizens to peace and sustainable development. Education is the key route to prepare individuals to take actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just, tolerant, inclusive and secure world for present and future generations.

**TARGET 7:**

**By 2030, all countries allocate at least 4-6% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or at least 15-20% of their public expenditure to education, prioritizing groups most in need; and strengthen financial cooperation for education, prioritizing countries most in need.**

The new education agenda cannot be achieved without adequate financing. There must therefore be a clear, renewed commitment by governments to provide equitable financing corresponding to national education priorities, as well as strengthened financial cooperation for education from all education stakeholders including multilateral and bilateral sources.

**TARGET 6:**

**By 2030, all governments ensure that all learners are taught by qualified, professionally-trained, motivated and well-supported teachers.**

The quality of education hinges on the quality of teachers. Teachers are at the forefront of education and training, from ECCE to tertiary education, in formal and non-formal settings. The future education agenda must therefore ensure that governments and education partners invest in closing the teachers’ gap and enhancing the performance of teachers.





## Vision and principles of the post-2015 education agenda

The post-2015 education agenda should be aspirational, transformative and holistic, and an integral part of the broader post-2015 development agenda. It should be of universal relevance and mobilize all stakeholders in all countries.

Education must be a stand-alone goal in the broader post-2015 development agenda and should be framed by a comprehensive overarching goal, with measurable global targets and related indicators. In addition, education must be integrated into other development goals.

The future education agenda should be rights-based and reflect a perspective based on equity and inclusion, with particular attention to gender equality and to overcoming all forms of discrimination in and through education, ensuring that no-one is left behind. It must support free and compulsory basic education. It should expand the vision of access for all to reflect relevant learning outcomes through the provision of quality education at all levels, from early childhood to higher education, in safe and healthy environments. It should take a holistic and lifelong learning approach, and provide multiple pathways of learning using innovative methods and information and communication technologies. It should reinforce approaches such as global citizenship education and education for sustainable development, which foster attitudes and behaviours that promote peace, conflict resolution and mutual understanding, tolerance, critical thinking, and respect for cultural diversity and for the environment.



## Measuring and monitoring progress

To have real impact, the post-2015 education agenda must be clearly defined and measurable. This requires precisely defining the concepts conveyed in each target as well as a set of agreed-upon indicators based on accurate and reliable data and international standards in order to ensure valid comparisons across countries and over time. Some of the proposed targets can already be measured with existing indicators, while others must still be developed. In response, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics is coordinating a technical advisory group that includes experts from UNICEF, the World Bank, the OECD, the EFA Global Monitoring Report and UNESCO. Its task is to identify and review existing indicators that could be used for the new education agenda and help to develop new measures to monitor global education progress.

The future education agenda should provide a common approach to monitoring international goals, while offering the flexibility to respond to countries' aspirations. Therefore, in addition to global benchmarks and indicators, the agenda will also include provisions for target setting and indicator development at the country level that reflect specific priorities and contexts.



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To effectively monitor progress at the global and country-levels, it will be essential to reinforce the mechanisms and capacities of countries to collect and report data accurately and on a timely basis. This will foster greater accountability in education governance. At the same time, global mechanisms such as the current EFA Global Monitoring Report should be maintained to ensure that global education progress remains a priority at the highest political levels.

### For more information

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