

# THE EDUCATION COMMISSION

The International Commission on  
Financing Global Education Opportunity

## **Summary Note for Commissioners**

The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity is a major new global initiative engaging world leaders, policy makers and researchers to develop a renewed and compelling investment case and financing pathway for achieving equal educational opportunity for children and young people.

The Commission will bring together the best research and policy analysis on the actions necessary to increase investment in concrete, relevant learning outcomes that have a positive impact on economic and social development. While the entire education system will be considered starting in the early years, the Commission will pay particular attention to the provision of basic education and its role in improving life chances and generating equal opportunities for young people to access further education, enter the workforce and engage in society. The Commission aims to secure increased, more effective investments and contribute to the mobilization of new partnerships to achieve these aims, particularly in middle-income and low-income countries.

## **Why Now?**

Without significantly greater efforts to deliver quality education, the world faces the risk of not meeting the ambitions of the Sustainable Development Goals and failing to close the gap between developed and developing nations for generations to come. Without urgent action, the prospects for more than 124 million children and youth denied access to schools and more than 250 million not learning the necessary skills are severely diminished. Their education underpins improved outcomes in health, economic growth, job creation and employment, innovation, climate and security. The world's governments know this, as do business and finance leaders, but sufficient action has not been taken by governments and world leaders to increase the scale and effectiveness of investments in education.

While domestic spending on education has increased in many countries, in part driven by economic growth and improved tax mobilization, education's share in government budgets has been declining in a number of countries despite growing needs. With international assistance to education declining by nearly ten percent in recent years, a financing gap for basic education upwards of \$27 billion is projected by 2020. Moreover, financing of education is inefficiently allocated across and within countries, not reaching most marginalized children and young people, achieving limited results on both the access and learning fronts.

## **Objective**

The Commission will establish a compelling case for investment in education and an agenda for action. The Commission aims to inspire and persuade heads of states and Government, ministers of finance, economy, education and labor, state governors and local authorities, as well as business leaders and financial investors to reappraise their assessment of short and longer-term economic trade-offs and increase overall investment in effective ways of achieving universal opportunity through education.

### **In doing so, the Commission will develop proposals which address five themes:**

1. **The Case for Investment in Education.** What are the benefits? What is the impact of education on the economy and social goals, including on key SDGs? What will be the consequences of inaction?
2. **The Scale of the Challenge.** What are the key education challenges that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency? What factors have held back progress?
3. **Reforms Needed to Deliver Effective Education.** What will it take to accelerate progress? What systemic reforms, scaling up of good practices and innovations will be needed to improve the effectiveness and equity of education financing and delivery?
4. **Financing Needs to Achieve Education Goals.** What are realistic financing needs, taking into account implementation capacity? What additional costs are likely to be associated with efforts to reach marginalized children and children in conflict? How could alternative delivery models potentially help reduce costs?
5. **Sources of Finance and Financing Architecture.** What types of resources – domestic and external- could be mobilized in different country contexts and how could they be used to best effect?

## **Global Leadership**

The Commission is co-convened by Prime Minister Erna Solberg of Norway, President Michelle Bachelet of Chile, President Joko Widodo of Indonesia, President Peter Mutharika of Malawi and the Director-General of UNESCO Irina Bokova. The UN Special Envoy for Global Education, Gordon Brown, will serve as the Chair of the Commission. The Commission will comprise of approximately 20 high-level individuals representing diverse geographical and disciplinary backgrounds.

The Commission's work will bring together the highest quality research from all corners of the globe by establishing a set of research hubs and building a network of expert advisors and researchers focusing on various pieces of investigation. The Commission will also form several small panels of experts to provide insights into specific issues. The expert panels will assess the existing knowledge base and initiate new research where there is found to be gaps.

The Commission will seek the advice and engagement from civil society, teachers, young people, technology innovators, international agencies and other constituencies throughout the year through a series of outreach and engagement activities.

A project team will administer the Commission's work throughout the course of the year.

**Timeline and Outcome**

The Commission was announced at the Oslo Summit on Education for Development in July 2015. Following the appointment of the Commissioners and its first meeting in September 2015, the work of the Commission will take place over an initial 12-months period with the Commission's report to be presented to the co-conveners and the UN Secretary-General at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2016. The report and recommendations will be communicated to heads of State or Government, ministers, business leaders and potential investors throughout the world in a systematic outreach strategy upon the report's launch.