



مُنْظَمَةُ الْعَالَمِ الْإِسْلَامِيِّ لِلتَّرْبِيَةِ وَالْعِلْمِ وَالثَّقَافَةِ  
ISLAMIC WORLD EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION  
ORGANISATION DU MONDE ISLAMIQUE POUR L'ÉDUCATION, LES SCIENCES ET LA CULTURE

**"THE SOCIETIES WE WANT" JOURNAL**  
**مجلة «المجتمعات التي نريد»**  
**LE JOURNAL "LES SOCIÉTÉS QUE NOUS VOULONS"**

EXPLORING THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN BUILDING  
THE SOCIETIES WE WANT

استكشاف دور التربية في بناء المجتمعات التي نريد  
LE RÔLE DE L'ÉDUCATION DANS LA CONSTRUCTION  
DES SOCIÉTÉS QUE NOUS VOULONS

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### **The "Societies We Want Journal"**

is a magazine published by the Directorate of Human and Social Sciences of Islamic World Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO). In line with the Directorate's eponymous flagship initiative . "The Societies We Want", the Journal is aimed at promoting a policy dialogue and experience sharing, as well as spreading knowledge and best practices on key issues for ICESCO member states and for the international community as whole.

### **مجلة «المجتمعات التي نريد»**

هي مجلة يصدرها قطاع العلوم الإنسانية والاجتماعية بمنظمة العالم الإسلامي للتربية والعلوم والثقافة (إيسيسكو). وتماشياً مع مبادرة القطاع الرئيسة التي تحمل اسم «المجتمعات التي نريد»، تهدف المجلة إلى تعزيز حوار السياسات وتبادل الخبرات، فضلاً عن نشر المعرفة والممارسات الفضلى حول أهم قضايا الدول الأعضاء في الإيسيسكو والمجتمع الدولي ككل.

### **Le Journal " Les Sociétés Que Nous Voulons "**

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Les articles reflètent les points de vue de leurs auteurs et pas nécessairement ceux de l'ICESCO*

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\* *The Titles of the articles have been added/adapted by the Editor*





**EDUCATION**



## L'ÉDUCATION AU CŒUR DU CAPITAL HUMAIN



**Mme Ramata Almamy Mbaye**  
Directrice des Sciences Humaines  
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**Dr Koumbo Bolly Barry**  
Directrice du Secteur de l'Éducation,  
ICESCO

La construction du capital humain qui est au cœur de la nouvelle vision de l'ICESCO requiert que l'on mette un accent particulier sur l'éducation. Celle-ci, dans le cadre d'un contexte international marqué par des crises et des défis sans précédent, demeure la meilleure voie pour construire des Sociétés de savoir pacifiques, prospères, justes, résilientes, inclusives avec une garantie de bonne santé pour ces citoyens et citoyennes.

L'éducation, nous en avons une compréhension holistique qui ne se réduit pas seulement à l'acquisition des connaissances et au développement des compétences cognitives mais va au-delà de l'aspect pédagogique et institutionnelle pour inclure la dimension sociologique, en termes de valeurs, savoir-être et attitudes à inculquer pour faciliter et promouvoir l'épanouissement humain, la cohésion sociale, le vivre ensemble pacifiquement et la coopération internationale.

L'Éducation, à tous les niveaux et dans toutes ses formes, doit jouer un rôle d'ouverture à la connaissance, à la compréhension au respect des autres et à l'adhésion aux principes et droits humains universels.

Ce numéro qui explore le rôle que l'éducation doit jouer dans la construction des Sociétés Que Nous Voulons est le fruit de la collaboration entre les Secteurs de l'éducation et des Sciences humaines et sociales de l'ICESCO, à travers un webinaire de haut niveau qui a vu la participation d'éminentes personnalités.

Nous avons voulu y explorer le rôle de l'éducation dans la construction de la cohésion sociale, la résorption des inégalités mais aussi la recherche du savoir. Dans ce cadre, on ne pouvait trouver une meilleure voix que celle de l'ancien Président brésilien Luis Inácio Lula da Silva qui a lancé un message fort pour une éducation moteur d'une prise de conscience chez le citoyen pour plus d'égalité et de cohésion. D'autres voix, comme celle du Prix Nobel de la Paix Kailash Satyarthi, ou celle de Mme Alice Albright de Global Partnership for Education viennent aussi enrichir la réflexion sur des questions comme le financement de l'éducation ou son rôle dans la protection de l'enfance.

Ce numéro contribue aussi au dialogue des politiques publiques sur l'éducation, son financement, son adaptation au contexte de la mondialisation tout en tenant compte des spécificités des pays et contextes, à travers des interventions de ministres de l'éducation en exercice, dont celui de la Gambie et du Pakistan ; ou d'anciens ministres dont celui de la Tunisie, de la Guinée et du Brésil.

Le numéro fait aussi la place aux expertises venant du terrain, pour explorer le rôle de l'éducation pour la paix dans un contexte de crise, ou les initiatives nécessaires afin de garantir à tous le droit à l'éducation.

Ce faisant, ce numéro du " **Journal des Sociétés Que Nous Voulons** " contribue à faire avancer la réflexion sur le rôle central de l'Éducation dans toutes ses formes, expressions et contextes, dans la construction du capital humain.



*“ Education allows human beings to gain consciousness of themselves and thus be aware they are citizens who are capable to struggle for their rights. ”*





**His Excellency LUIS INÁCIO LULA DA SILVA**  
Former President of the Federal Republic of Brazil  
President of the Lula Institute



## GUEST OF HONOR

### His Excellency LUIS INÁCIO LULA DA SILVA

Former President of the Federal Republic of Brazil

President of the Lula Institute

First of all, I would like to thank you for the invitation to participate in this meeting and to greet all the panel members.

Ms. Alice Albright, Chief Executive Officer of the Global Partnership for Education;

Mr. Kailash Satyarthi, promoter of the Global March - Against Child Labour and winner of the Nobel Prize;

Mr. Salim Al-Malik, director general of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO).

And I would also like to greet Dr. Koumbou Boly Barry, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education.

I would like to greet all the organizations promoting this meeting which the Lula Institute has the privilege to participate in.

I would like to start expressing solidarity with all families of the victims of the pandemics our world is going through.

I would also like to speak about these terrible times, after dealing with our core issue, which is Education and its role in building a new, better society, much fairer than the one we live in.

This September, we celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the great educator Paulo Freire's birth. Paulo Freire was my friend, he was born in the same region I was born in Brazil, in the state of Pernambuco, and he was one of the comrades who founded the Workers' Party.

He will always be remembered for the contribution he gave for the liberation,

through education, of the oppressed in Brazil and around the world.

From the many lessons Paulo Freire has left us, two of them are often highlighted two of them. The first one is the notion that the one who educates is also the one being educated. It is a concept that could only be formulated by someone who had the greatness to respect the wisdom of the humble people and to recognize the existence of the other, above social barriers and prejudice.

The second lesson is that education liberates us in the broadest meaning of the word freedom can have. In the society and region we were born in, marked by concentrated land ownership, the inheritance of slavery, the brutality of the rich against the poor, and by hunger and inequality, the simple act to learn how to read and write would be a very rare achievement for the working class.

Education allows human beings to gain consciousness of themselves and thus be aware they are citizens who are capable to struggle for their rights. Paulo Freire said in one of his books: "Education cannot transform society by itself, but without it, society cannot be changed".

It is not for any other reason that access to education has been denied to so many children and young people throughout the world. It is to perpetuate the mechanisms of inequality and keep the power of one nation over another, of one layer of privileged people over the immense majority.

I can only speak of what we have experienced in Brazil and what we have done so Education could become a right to all.



I am myself a survivor of the destiny reserved to the majority of our people. Someone like me, expelled by poverty from my hometown, having worked during childhood to help my mother support the family, I was not supposed to have succeeded. Perhaps I would have made it to adulthood. I was not supposed to learn a metal worker trade, have gone on strikes with my union comrades, let alone have built, along with thousands of workers, the largest left-wing party in Brazil.

The fact is: Eighteen years ago the Brazilian people trusted me, the Workers' Party, and, along with our coalition allies with a mission that could be summarized in one single word: change.

I will not speak further about the efforts we have done to fulfill that mission, but I can summarize it in two sentences. For the first time, in 500 years of history in Brazil, the working class majority, the black people, and the poor were the center of public policies.

And for the first time, the poor have made it to the government budget not as statistical data, and even less as a problem, but as part of the solution for the country's development issues.

No result of this collective action is more eloquent than the fact that 36 million Brazilians were lifted from extreme poverty, Brazil left the UN Hunger Map and 21 million formal jobs were created in little more than 12 years, including President Dilma Rousseff's term in office.

My dear friends.

Within the set of public policies we have adopted to change the Brazilian scenario, education played a central and organizing role. The Bolsa Familia program, for example, promoted income transfer to 14 million households, conditioning the payment of these stipends on the children's attendance to school, amongst other requirements. I

believe that this direct relationship between income transfer and access to education was one of the key factors of Bolsa Familia's success and one of the reasons it was adopted by many other countries.

I remember I forbid the cabinet ministers in my administration to use the word "expenditure" and "expenses" to refer to the budget in Education, which was tripled during our term in office. Those resources were, in fact, investments.

We invested in creating a national floor for the wages paid for the teachers in public junior and high schools that in Brazil are under the responsibility of local administrations.

We invested in teachers' training courses and also ensured healthy school meals for the children, which have come to be acquired directly from family farms. We invested in a safe school transport service, in a country that has many regions where the distance from schools to homes have to be covered using buses, bicycles, and even small boats.

We invested in building libraries, purchasing computers to the schools, and tablets to the students. Former minister of Education comrade Fernando Haddad is going to talk further about this in another panel. Unfortunately, Brazil does not have a minister of Education that would be able to participate in such discussion, once the current administration declared itself an enemy of science, culture, and education.

I could not help but mention the two main landmarks we have left. The first one was the opening of 430 vocational training schools. This is four times more than everything that was ever done in one hundred years previous to our administration. These new vocational training schools gave the opportunity of a dignified profession to thousands of young people, children of the working class.

At the same time, we increased the number of enrollments in public and private universities, from 4 to 8 million students. We built 19 new universities and 173 campuses, the State came to fund educational credit and we passed a bill of affirmative action to assure students coming from public schools, black and indigenous people could join Federal Universities.

I am proud to say that the sons and daughters of the working class people and the young black people are currently the majority of students in Federal Universities in Brazil.

My dear friends.

Any discussion about the future of humanity and the society we want to build has to take into account the impacts of the pandemics we are facing today, which has aggravated the extreme social and economic inequality around the world.

I was recently invited by the Buenos Aires University to talk about the post-pandemic world. I admit I did not - and still don't - know how our lives will be. I believe no one knows, but I want to bring about some reflections.

Statistics show that the majority of the pandemics victims in Brazil are black, working class people, dwellers of big cities' slums, and the outskirts. It does not differ much from the rest of the world. These are people who live in precarious crowded homes, who need to get their support on the streets every day and have to use public transport service. They are more vulnerable because they hadn't already had access to healthy food and basic health care.

So, the first conclusion that we can come to is that this pandemic is not democratic.

And that is because the society we live in is not democratic, at least not for

the majority. Everybody is subjected to being contaminated by the virus, but it is amongst the poorest that it produces deadly devastation.

This humanitarian emergency has led the responsible governments to adopt measures in the sense of keeping the economy and the people alive during the crisis with special credit lines, income transfer programs, and even the payment of wages to preserve jobs.

Even those rulers and the so-called experts that until recently defended fiscal austerity measures acknowledged that now is the moment for government spending because life is priceless, and the economy should serve the people, not the figures. And ultimately, it is the State that could provide the resources and organize society through this difficult period.

I believe it is the greatest lesson this pandemic is teaching us. The dogma of the Minimal State is just that, a dogma, something that can neither be explained nor justified in real life. The God Market is just a myth, and once again reveals its lack of capability of solving the global problems we are facing today.

I had the privilege to talk with Pope Francis, who dearly applies himself to studying this issue. We know that it is not a task just for economists and for the people of goodwill. We have to involve academia, intellectuals, artists, political parties, trade unions, social movements, grassroots movements, the churches. Everybody has to be included. However, we will not go anywhere if the governments of the world, the ones that have State power, do not engage themselves, in a very objective way, deeply changing the relationship between people and money.

For centuries they have told us that hunger and extreme poverty were as natural as rain and the sunrise. For centuries they have told us that the poor, the black people majority,



and the sons and daughters of the working class were condemned to repeat the sad stories of their parents, grandparents, and great grandparents. But at least during a decade, in Brazil, we managed to prove that a country could be ruled for all - with special focus on the always excluded majority.

The immense inequality among human beings is simply unbearable, but as long as it lasts there will also exist the dream of change that moves us towards the future.

This is, from my point of view, another lesson we can learn from the pandemics. As deep as the crises may be, the darker the reality presents itself, shedding the light is up to us. And I believe dreaming and keeping on fighting was ever so necessary to build a better world than the one we live in.

Thank you very much.

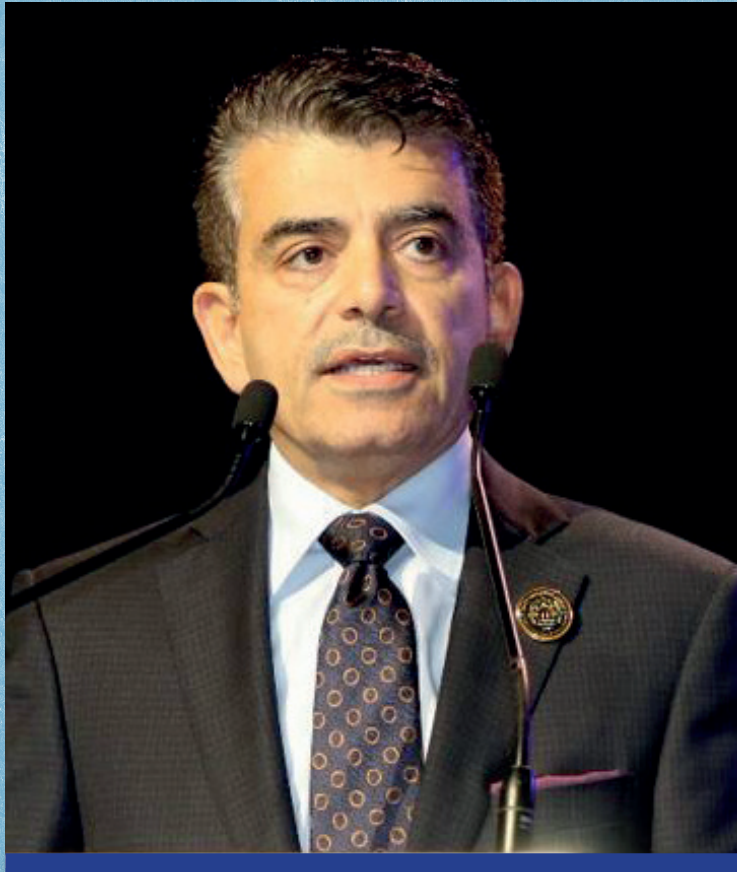
*\* Translation From Portuguese: Lys Rideiro*





*“ It is time to revisit and reconsider  
our education systems, to rebuild  
the education of the future  
that we need. ”*





**His Excellency Dr. Salim M. AlMalik**  
Director General  
Islamic World Educational,  
Scientific and Cultural Organization  
(ICESCO)



## OPENING REMARKS

### His Excellency Dr. Salim M. AlMalik

Director General

Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
(ICESCO)

In the name of God, the most gracious, the most merciful. Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds and prayers, and peace be upon our master Muhammad, his family and companions.

His Excellency President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, former President of Brazil,  
Our Guest of Honor

His Excellency Mr. Kailash Satyarthi,  
Winner of the Nobel Prize in Peace  
in 2014

Ms. Alice Albright, Chief Executive Officer  
for Global Partnership for Education

Excellencies Ministers of Guinea Bissau,  
Guinea, Gambia, Tunisia, Pakistan,  
Finland...

Distinguished Guests and Panelists

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Participants,

I am very pleased to welcome you all today in this crucial virtual meeting on Education and ICESCO social mission, the "Societies We Want" to discuss what I truly believe must be the priority of everything we build together: Education.

On April 2020, during the tough situation of the international lockdown due to the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis, ICESCO made a call to embark on a deep transformational phase of our societies and has launched the "Societies We Want" initiative, which aims to build healthy, peaceful, prosperous, inclusive, resilient and sustainable societies.

As Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". Education is the key for eliminating gender inequality, to reducing poverty, to creating a better planet, to preventing conflicts and illness, and to fostering peace.

Our today's gathering is a great opportunity to challenge ourselves about the Education we need for the present and the future.

Excellencies,

*Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Guests*

Education is a concern and is in the heart of every national, regional and international agenda and in every country's development strategies. However, despite the valuable efforts made by countries and by us to enhance access, retention, and performance while promoting gender equality . . . the "learning poverty" indicator demonstrates that in low and middle-income countries, the percentage of children, at the age of ten, who are unable to read or understand, has reached %53. It is unfortunate that Girls and Women continue to remain underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The internet access and availability remain a critical issue for some countries, particularly in the African continent. Countries need to be supported to build a strong Education Management Information System (EMIS) that will boost their education literacy.

Furthermore, according to the United Nations, "the COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education

systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in over 190 countries in every continent. Closures of schools and other learning spaces have affected 94 percent of the student population in the world, and up to 99 percent in low and middle-income countries.”

Dear participants

The pandemic has taught us that we are not prepared for such crisis and we need to step up and make concerted efforts to overcome it. Schools and universities that we know today may no longer exist tomorrow.

It is time to revisit and reconsider our education systems, to rebuild the education of the future that we need!

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the need for innovative education approaches and models, in particular, the use of Artificial Intelligence in Education. The 21st century education system will be completely different. Those who will win this pursuit are the ones that can foresee the future and make them a today's reality.

*Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Guests*

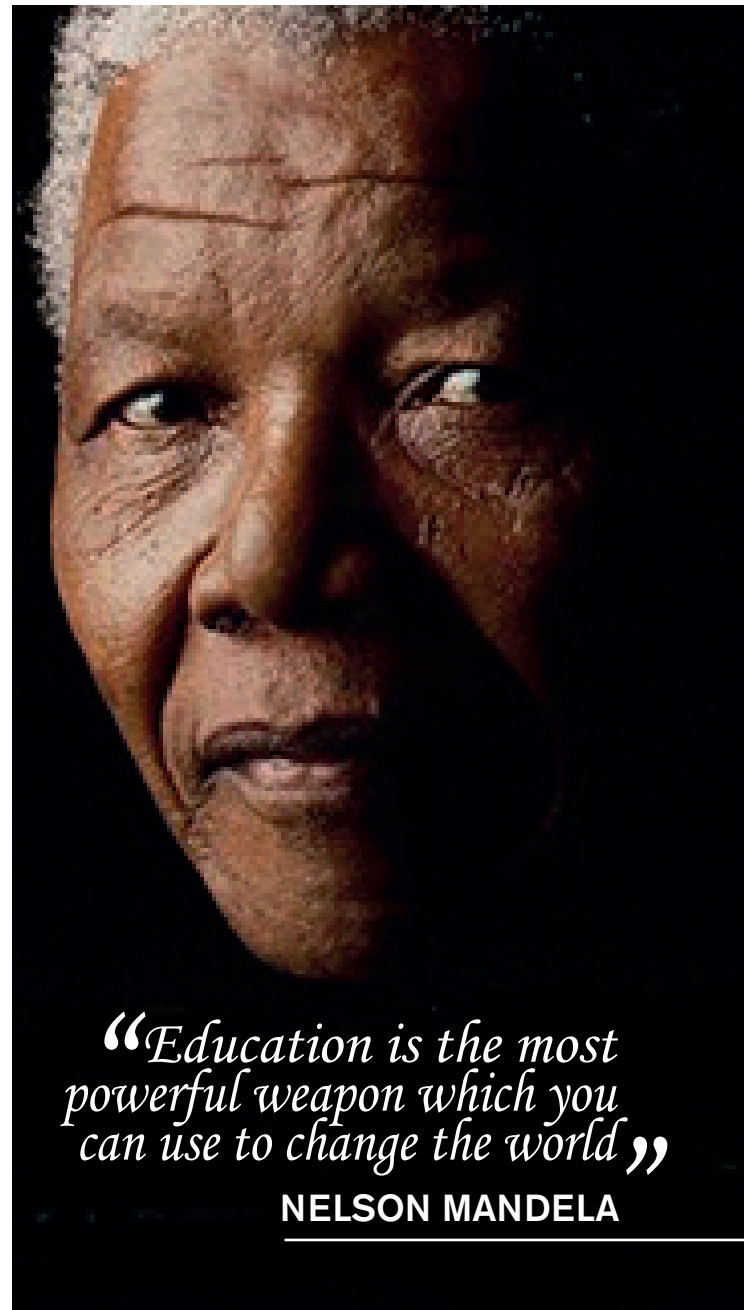
Today, I would like to reiterate the promises and commitments I made to the Member States 16 months ago (during the extraordinary session of ICESCO General Conference in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), to place ICESCO as a beacon of global outreach within its realms of competence to overcome the challenges and keep pace with regional and international changes, while promoting multilateral cooperation and partnerships, decentralizing efforts to further reflect the ground realities on education, science, and culture.

My commitment responds to the aspirations of the Islamic and the world at large for inclusive, sustainable development and a prosperous future through all forms of education for everyone, and at all levels!

Once again, I express my determination for ICESCO to contribute in achieving the Education For All goals (EFA), and invite all the stakeholders in EDUCATION to join us in creating a strong and unified Education Management Information System (EMIS) as an enabling factor in the achievement of our Education Goals.

Many International Organizations like ICESCO share similar and homogenous aspirations and goals. Instead of competing, we complement the efforts of our counterpart organizations and are delighted to work hand-in-hand to achieve together the advocacy of EDUCATION FOR ALL.

*Thank you.*



*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world,”*

**NELSON MANDELA**



*“ Today, we have to introspect and reexamine. Many of us were thinking that this shared pain and suffering will teach us a lesson, a sense of collective responsibility and our shared responsibility. But what is happening today is contrary to what we expected. ”*





**Mr. Kailash Satyarthi**

Co-recipient of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize  
Founder of Bachpan Bachao Andolan  
(Save the Childhood Movement)



## SPECIAL GUEST

### Mr. Kailash Satyarthi

Co-recipient of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize

Founder of Bachpan Bachao Andolan

(Save the Childhood Movement)

Thank you, Dr. Salim. My dear friend and hero, President Lula. My friend, Alice Albright.

Sisters and brothers.

It is heartening to see President Lula virtually today on this screen. Last time I met him personally in Curitiba prison, that was the makeshift prison and he was living in a small cell when I met him. We had several discussions, but he said that those who have great objectives in life, they cannot die easily. So he said that he has to live 120 years! So, dear friend Lula, you are going to live 120 years and some of us too maybe, because some of us also have big objectives in life. And of course, Dr. Selim, we are going to live that to see him hundred twenty years and celebrate it.

Today, we are talking on a very important subject. Education has always been considered as an equalizer, a liberator, a gateway to justice, a human right which is the key to all the other human rights and the prerequisite for social and economic justice. So, the importance of education is much bigger than ever in this crisis time and its aftermath.

Dear friends, this pandemic is not simply a health crisis or an economic crisis it is a crisis of morality, it is a crisis of justice, even it is a crisis of civilization. Why am I saying this? Because we are all witnessing the ongoing inequalities and injustices that are exposed and exacerbated during the crisis. And that's why education is in danger. The childhood and freedom of millions, dozens of millions of children are in danger.

Today, we have to introspect and reexamine. Many of us were thinking that this shared pain and suffering will teach us a lesson, a sense of collective responsibility and our shared responsibility. But what is happening today is contrary to what we expected. One billion children, school-going children are not attending class today. And out of them, 465 million have no access to online education.

Is it not another expose, or revelation that we are living in the age of advancement and development and technology on one hand, but on the other hand, we have so deep a digital divide? And who are the worst sufferers and victims of it? They are the marginalized children of the world and their families.

We also know that three hundred and seventy million children, school-going children, were solely depending or mainly depending on school feeding programs or conditional cash transfers or other incentives, and even their families were depending on it. What is going to happen to these children? We all know how Bolsa Escola, and later on Bolsa Familia, under the leadership of President Lula, has helped millions of children to get out of child labor and slavery and they were able to attend the classrooms.

How can we afford to turn back the clock? How can we afford to lose an entire generation? Because the present political scenario is very, very disgraceful and sometimes I would call it inhumane.

As we know that 8 trillion dollars has been allocated by the rich countries as the COVID-19 response fund. And this money is mainly being spent, or will be spent, for bailing out their own companies and financial institutions. Out of these eight trillion dollars, only 0.13 percent is allocated for the most marginalized children and their families in the low-income countries through multilateral mechanisms.

How can you justify it? And how is it going to affect education?

We have experience in the past that during the Ebola pandemic, in West Africa, and during the long school closures in some countries, including in Argentina the year before last due to the educators' strike, there was a serious effect on children and school-children and a massive drop out.

And now it is emerging, according to various studies and reports, that 11 million children may not come back to schools. We have made many promises to our children and the international community and the world leaders never kept them. They kept on failing our families, on our promises to our children and that cannot be accepted forever.

They were not able to bring every child in school and ensure completion of basic education when we made the promise in Jomtien. In the year 2000, I was a part of drafting the Dakar framework of action on education. But we failed to children again by 2015. And now we have made another commitment and this crisis may lead to a much more serious impact.

Dear friends,

88 Nobel laureates and world leaders joined hands together, and we have issued a joint statement calling for urgent action to protect the marginalized children and their families in the world.

And in the beginning of this month, we organized a fair share summit under the

auspices of Laureates and Leaders for children and that has come with a statement and a call to action. We demand that at least 20 percent of COVID 19 response funds should reach to the most marginalized 20 percent children and their families. That is justifiable. That is affordable.

It is not inappropriate to say that if you want to protect this generation and the education and freedom of children, then this 20 percent must be reached. And that demand has been supported and in fact, initiated by all major student unions and youth organizations, including from Brazil and Africa and Asia and Latin America. These young leaders cannot wait and watch. They are holding the world leaders accountable and the international community and their government accountable.

Dear friends, we also demand, in this call of action, that all debt given by the governments, companies and other financial institutions to low-income countries should be cancelled. The fact of the matter is that much more than that original debt has been recovered or has been extracted by these governments and companies in interest and other forms. So, this is the time to demand that this tax would be canceled, so that they can spend it on social protection as well as on education for children.

I was one of the founding board members of the Fast Track Initiative, which is now known as the Global Partnership for Education, and we have been struggling, we have been fighting for resource mobilization. This is the time when the government and the companies should support financially the replenishment efforts being made by the Global Partnership for Education.

Similarly, as I said before that as president, Lula's leadership and his government during those years have achieved a lot with social protection programs. This is the time to globalize the schemes like Bolsa Familia to ensure education for all children.

And thirdly, I would also hope and demand that the companies should take the leadership. The governments should ensure that there is a mandatory provision, there should be mandatory legislation, to ensure that no child labor is engaged in supply chain. A large number of children are falling into child labour, and as we know without social protection, a one percent increase in poverty results in a 0.7 percent increase in child labor. These children are not going to attend their schools once they are trapped into slavery and trafficking and prostitution. So therefore, there must not be any child labor in supply chains.

Fourthly, we are demanding for establishing a global social protection plan. We have seen in many parts of the world, not only in Brazil alone, that how social protection has helped in school attendance and augment and aids retention in schools as well as in quality education apart from also empowering financially and politically and socially the marginalized sections of society. So, a Global Social Protection Fund is one of our demands.

We have also demanded in our call of action that once the COVID 19 vaccine is available that must be made available for the poorest of the poor person in the world free of cost. So, the vaccine should be made a public good, a common, public good. That is the least we can do to ensure that we are in one voice.

Dear friends, we know that child labor, poverty and illiteracy make the full circle of exploitation and injustice and perpetrates intergenerational poverty and illiteracy. To break this vicious circle, on the one hand, we have to invest in education, quality control and public education, but also, we have to make all of our efforts in ending child labor.

Next year is a great opportunity when the world will be observing the United Nations year for the elimination of child labour. This is the right time. This is the right time, when

everybody has to come together, to make sure that children should not be given tools and guns in their tiny hands. These tools should be replaced with books and toys and pencils. They must not be working in mines and factories or prostitute houses. The best place for them is the classroom. So, they have to be in a classroom so they enjoy the rest of their childhood and future. Dear friends, we cannot afford to lose one generation once again. We cannot fail our children once again.

I call upon young people. I have full confidence in the power of young people, the ways of young people that they should take the leadership role this year. They should become the champions. They should take the cause of left out children. No child should be left behind. No child should be left out. We cannot leave them.

This is going to happen. Slavery and development cannot go hand in hand. It cannot go together. We have to choose. We have to end slavery to ensure sustainable development and peace in society.

Once again, I called upon us to work together, to be united. Let us globalize compassion. This is the right time to globalize compassion for children. And there could not be any other binding factor than the compassion for children. To make this world a sustainable and peaceful place.

I call upon you to march from exploitation and injustices to shared prosperity, I call upon you, my dear friends, to walk from ignorance and illiteracy to education. I call upon you to walk from wrongs and injustices to the world of justice. I call upon you to walk and march from exploitation to education, from violence to peace.

Let us march from darkness to light. Let us march my dear friends.

Thank you so much.







*“If anyone harbored a doubt about the importance of education, the Covid-19 pandemic erased it. Education is not only fundamental to a child’s future, it is also essential for her parents to go to work to support their families.”*





**Ms. Alice P. Albright**  
Chief Executive Officer of  
the Global Partnership for Education



## SPECIAL GUEST

### Ms. Alice P. Albright

Chief Executive Officer  
of the Global Partnership for Education

Your Excellency, President Lula da Silva, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor to speak with you today in such esteemed company, including the ministers of education from Pakistan, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Tunisia. I also acknowledge and salute Dr. Koumba Barry Boly and Mr. Kailash Satyarthi for their outstanding work on education.

I'm grateful to ICESCO Director-General Dr. Salim Al Malik and his team for hosting this important event. His Excellency and I first met in his home country of Saudi Arabia in 2018, when I addressed a gathering of the region's brilliant educators. Since then, we've seen a series of inspirational, creative engagements and partnership-building across the Arab region.

The Global Partnership for Education works to mobilize new partnerships and investments, including with Arab and Muslim country partners. In 2018, the UAE became the first Arab donor country to join GPE and support education generously. In 2019, we consolidated our relationship with the Islamic Development Bank with a signature framework of cooperation on innovative financing for education unlocking the GPE multiplier in joint member countries. And my colleagues are working with Dubai Cares, a leading global philanthropy, to ensure a successful ReWireD Summit 2021 at the Dubai Expo.

Today, I'm going to make four points. First, the societies we want cannot be built

without guaranteeing a quality education for every child.

If anyone harbored a doubt about the importance of education, the COVID-19 pandemic erased it. Education is not only fundamental to a child's future, it is also essential for her parents to go to work to support their families. It is vital to the prosperity of nations and a peaceful world.

GPE's vision is of a world where every child has access to an education system that is equitable, inclusive, and resilient—where a high-quality education is not limited by one's economic status, gender, disability or place in society. But that vision, and this is my second point, is far from reality. Children, families, communities, and countries suffer the repercussions of denying the right to a quality education.

The COVID-19 pandemic took some 1.6 billion students out of school—putting everyone at risk of falling behind, but especially students living in poverty, girls, refugees and migrants. Some will never return. Early marriage, teen pregnancy, child labor, and poverty will rise.

Even before the pandemic, more than a quarter of a billion children did not attend school. And many who did were not learning.

Girls especially are left behind. They are one and a half times more likely than boys to be excluded from primary education.



We ignore girls' education at our own peril. An educated girl is more likely to lift her family out of poverty. She is more likely to immunize her children and send them to school.

The economic costs of not educating girls are colossal - leading to between 15\$ trillion and 30\$ trillion in lost lifetime productivity and earnings. That is why GPE puts equality at the heart of everything we do.

Third, turning education around for our children will require sustained investments and innovation. That has been the GPE approach for nearly two decades. We are the only partnership and fund dedicated exclusively to improving education in lower-income countries.

Since our founding, we have invested 7\$ billion dollars to help transform education systems. Our innovative approach has helped partner countries enroll 160 million more children in school-more than half of them girls - and save 6\$ billion through more efficient education spending.

So far, we've provided more than 439\$ million to 55 countries to support their COVID19-responses. Governments are using these funds to launch innovative distance education programs, to support teachers and to equip schools to re-open safely. In places as diverse as Pakistan and Rwanda, governments are investing to make education systems more resilient now and in the future.

But this emergency funding is just a drop in the ocean of need. Without urgent action, the economic impacts of COVID-19 could roll back decades of progress on education.

We can't afford to lose ground.

We must safeguard education spending and make it a core part of our COVID-19 response and recovery plans - including relieving, postponing and restructuring debt.

We must mobilize international finance to fill gaps, focusing on the countries most in need and the children most at risk.

Fourth, and this is my final point, it will take all of us working together to get the job done. Business as usual will not get us anywhere near our vision of universal, quality education.

We have to both protect budgets and scale up financing and innovation. This fall GPE will launch our fourth replenishment campaign to ensure we have the resources to continue this vital work. I invite you to be a part of our campaign because education is the most important investment a country can make in its future.

Excellencies, strengthening education systems transforms lives. I am impressed at how forward-looking the Middle East is when it comes to education. One of the next frontiers is to bridge the digital divide because remote learning solutions will be part of our future.

I urge every one of us to become a change-maker. That is how we will reimagine and transform education systems to help create the societies we want.

Thank you.







**POLICIES AND MECHANISMS FOR  
ENSURING EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE  
QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL**



*“It is not because a country is poor or still a developing country that this country should inhibit itself from the ambition of a quality education.”*





**Mr. FERNANDO HADDAD**  
Former Minister of Education  
of the Federal Republic of Brazil





## REFORMING EDUCATION: THE THREE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE BRAZILIAN EXPERIENCE

### Mr. FERNANDO HADDAD

Former Minister of Education of the Federal Republic of Brazil

It is a great pleasure to be here today. I will complement the speech made by our president Lula that was in office for eight years and put education among his top priorities. I have the opportunity to work with President Lula for seven years as Minister of Education, so I am an alive witness of how much he cares about education and the revolution he did in Brazil in the light of the past century.

I would like to share the Brazilian experience and the principles of education reform in Brazil because I believe some of these principles could be followed in the post-pandemic era. We had three basic principles that guided our educational program.

The first is to value the teachers, valuing the teacher's work. President Lula passed a constitutional amendment to specify a minimum wage for the teachers. Brazil has a minimum wage for the country plus a minimum wage for a specific working category that is the teachers. Historically speaking, the teachers' work was being devalued and we put that as core focus and this specific minimum wage for the teachers transformed the way people saw the profession of teacher, especially for the poor people it had an appeal.

The second principle was the funding of education. For the very first time in Brazilian history the funding of Brazilian education as a share of GDP was fixed above the OECD countries, something that never happened before in the 20th century. That

is, for the very first time in Brazil we have public investments in education as a share of the GDP over the richest countries in the world.

The third point is we started to assess every two years all the public schools in Brazil without any exception. We started to publicize the results per school, so the families could appropriate themselves of this information and we fixed targets for each school to reach a certain learning goal in basic disciplines - domain of Portuguese language and Math. This mobilized all the teaching system in favor of high-quality education. We know that education is not only based on the domain of the native language of a country and knowledge in Math, but we also understand that without their control, it is very difficult to guarantee the full follow up of literacy and learning of math. Now it is a routine of the families and the governments at local, state and federal level.

The change of management of education was based on these three principles: first the appreciation of the teacher, second public funding and third, permanent assessment. But there is a fourth element that I would like to add, and it is not a usual recommendation, especially from the international body. I would like to ask your attention on this: we did not establish a focus policy for education. We adopted as a goal that investments would be done from elementary education until graduate studies and so, going through university studies, vocational training, adult school, education

for disabled people. We decided that each one of the Brazilians had the right to take one step forward. They had the right to have a promotion regarding their education situation, especially the poor people that had the right to go to the university.

These four elements are key for the message that no one stays behind, no matter the color of the skin, the gender, the social class or the abilities. People could progress as much as they desire to improve themselves vis a vis the education. This is a crucial message for the poor and developing countries. Sometimes the dreams of the children are not guaranteed because the country, in a certain way, is submitted to its role in the international hierarchy and this is the path we don't want to follow. No

child has a pre-determined destiny, their future will be constructed depending on him or her, because the government will support whatever ambition or vocation they have. We cannot deny anyone to reach the highest levels of education, that means, the formation of citizens that are capable of making criticism in a world that is under constant transformation.

I close my comments saying that it is not because a country is poor or still a developing country that this country should inhibit itself from the ambition of a quality education.

Thank you very much.

*\* (Translated From Portuguese)*





*“Technology is the way forward and we are looking at education technology for development of new content, reaching out to children who are difficult to reach out.”*





**Mr. Shafqat Mahmood**  
Minister of Federal Education  
and Professional Training,  
Islamic Republic of Pakistan





# EQUITABLE INCLUSIVE QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL: THE PAKISTAN EXPERIENCE

## Mr. Shafqat Mahmood

Minister of Federal Education and Professional Training,  
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Excellency Dr. Salim Al Malik

Ladies and gentlemen

Excellencies,

It was indeed a pleasure to hear President Lula, Ms Alice Albright and my friend Dr. Salim Al Malik speeches outline the problems that the world faces in the area of education and I am very grateful to be invited to this gathering.

We have been living through a very difficult time. Covid-19 has infected all countries including Pakistan; and during this time our education institutions remain closed for 6 months and this was a great loss for our children because of many reasons. One of them was that not everybody was connected.

The digital divide that some of the speakers have been talking about earlier became far more visible and far starker during this crisis, so we have been facing many challenges even before Covid-19.

We were facing a challenge of out of school children but during the pandemic as schools remain closed many of the institutions, especially low fee-paying private institutions, have difficulty surviving. Our fear is that during this crisis, the number of out-of-school children has increased. We are collecting data, and

some of the children have stopped going to school particularly between the age of 10 and 15 and went to the job market and in that sense lost their education. So, among many challenges this is a challenge that we now face.

But there are other challenges that we had for sometimes in our country and the topic of this particular session is “Equitable inclusive quality education for all”. So, one of the things that we inherited was that our education system reflected the social divisions in our society. I think that is probably true for most societies, but one more problem for us has been that the curricula that are being taught in different schools, private schools, government schools and religious schools were so different from each other. So, in that sense, the whole idea of inclusive education was not a credible because the poor income students were studying curriculum that is not preparing them for the challenge that they face in the world. Therefore, one of the first steps that we have taken is that we are developing a national curriculum. This might be a routine for some countries, but for long time we did not have a national curriculum. As part of our desire to equitable education, we are trying to level the playing field for all children in learning outcomes, which obviously will take a long time for us. During the pandemic, a lot of work has been done on this and our national curriculum will be launched very soon.



We have one of the highest numbers of out-of-school children, which is about 20 million, and my fear is that we may add to this number because of Covid-19. So, we have launched multiple programs to reach the out-of-school children. In our social protection plan, in which we give cash transfers to poor families and during the pandemic we gave 150 billion rupees in shape of cash transfers. There is also component in the program that if these families send their children to schools, they will get extra staples, and this has specifically been launched to address the problem of out-of-school children, because many of the out-of-school children came from low-income families many of these families are receiving assistance in shape of social protection and therefore we have launched this program. We also did some research on our out-of-school children and we found that one of the reasons that many children don't go to school is because their parents don't see the value of education and they want their children to be in the job market as soon as possible. Therefore, we have started to introduce something that is very often happening in some other countries, especially in Europe. We are starting to add skills training as part of the curriculum for graduation for high school so that children can get some skills and parents can therefore see the value of having skills in education, which lead to better perspective in the job market. To reach the girls, we have also launched several programs. There are social factors impairing the education of girls because once they graduate to access to the secondary, the school is away from home and parents don't want to send the girls far away from their home. So, technology

is opening up many doors and helping us to reach out to people who don't have access to secondary school or high schools. We are seeing technology as a huge boost to many of our efforts to reach children who are not going to school. We are now going to use tablets, not only train teachers but also to reach out to informal schools and also reach out to women and girls. So, technology is going to be a big help. Technology has also helped with tele school that was launched and as soon as we close schools. The tele school is watched by 7 to 8 million children everyday so that was quite helpful.

Technology is the way forward and we are looking at education technology for development of new content, reaching out to children who are difficult to reach; and I have to say Global Partnership Education has been very helpful and Ms Albright has helped Pakistan in emergency systems for Covid-19, in reopening schools and making other arrangements to reach out to children who are out of school.

Just to sum up we are looking at variety of initiatives that will be helping us to ensure that every child is somehow reached out to. We followed the policy of No Child Left Behind by the grace of Allah we will try to expand our programs, and over a period of time, we hope to reduce drastically the number of children who are out of school.

I want to thank and congratulate Dr. Salim Al Malik. ICESCO has become vibrant in education and other fields.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be here.

*\* (Edited transcript from the minister's address)*



*“ Good quality education increases individual’s capacity to produce, grow and innovate. It guarantees the full enjoyment of human rights as fundamental to achieving sustainable development.”*





**Hon. Minister Claudiana A. Cole**  
Minister of Basic and Secondary Education,  
Republic of The Gambia





# POLICIES AND MECHANISMS FOR ENSURING EQUITABLE INCLUSIVE QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL: THE GAMBIAN EXPERIENCE

**Hon. Minister Claudiana A. Cole**

Minister of Basic and Secondary Education,  
Republic of The Gambia

Throughout the world, 258 million children, adolescent and youth between the age of six and 17 are out of school, according to UNESCO (2019). Additionally, one in 6 to -17year-olds will still be excluded from school in 2030, and %40 of children worldwide will fail to complete secondary education. To this grim picture, one can add that all those enrolled may not acquire basic skills. These issues must be addressed for a quality inclusive education for all.

## RELEVANCE OF QUALITY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR ALL

“Inclusive Quality Education, as Desmond Tutu put it, is a foundation for dynamic and equitable societies”. Education is the panacea for sustainable development and the most important tool to change one’s life. Good quality education changes lives of individuals and provides stability in life. It helps one to learn and develop one’s knowledge, skills and personality, mental skills, moral and physical.

Good quality education increases individual’s capacity to produce, grow and innovate. It guarantees the full enjoyment of human rights as fundamental to achieving sustainable development.

Education for All ensures that all children have access to basic education of good

quality by creating an environment in schools and in basic education programmes in which children are both able and enabled to learn.

Article 29 on the “Aims of education,” advocates for education to allow children to reach their fullest potential in terms of cognitive, emotional and creative capacities.

The UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) are other key international human rights treaties that not only emphasize the prohibition but also the active elimination of discrimination

Schools offer structure and routine, peer group contact, friendships, support, and safety. They also provide feeding programs in many places, which are sometimes the only source of a nutritious meal.

When students feel connected to their school as a caring community, they are less likely to engage in risky behaviors such as smoking, drinking, drug use and early sexual initiation, and perform better academically (Blum and Ellen 2002)

Inclusive education helps to accommodates all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. It creates an opportunity



for children with diverse abilities and from diverse backgrounds to have their needs met by creating a child-centered pedagogy capable of successfully educating all children

## CHALLENGES/ BARRIERS TO ATTAINING INCLUSIVE QUALITY EDUCATION

In The Gambia, the main barriers to participation and retention are a mix of family and school-based factors encompassing issues of affordability and accessibility of school, and family and cultural circumstance. They include:

- **Food insecurity:** inadequate nutrition has been consistently associated with poor cognitive, motor, and social-emotional development in children leading to poor attainment of quality education.
- **Poverty:** Adverse social and economic circumstances, including poverty, income inequality, interpersonal and collective violence, and forced migration, are key determinants that serve as a barrier to children acquiring education.
- **Vulnerability:** Children affected by war, armed conflict, terrorism and displacement etc. most likely not to attend school.
- **Disability:** Girls with disabilities may face additional challenges, as families may task them with additional household chores/duties during the lockdown, preventing them from learning or returning to school.
- **Access:** Lack of access to education can have significant consequences on children's physical and mental well-being.

- **Gender:** girls are more likely to be excluded from education as they may be exposed to early marriage or sexual harassment.

In addition to this, Children from the following groups are particularly at risk of being excluded: abused children, ethnic minorities, poverty-stricken children, children in conflict zones, children with disabilities, nomadic children, HIV/AIDS orphans, language minorities, child soldiers.

Goal 4 of the SDG creates an opportunity to ensure that opportunities are provided for all to attain accessible, quality, inclusive education. National documents in The Gambia acknowledge that Education for all is a human right issue through its pronouncements in the following:

- 1997 Constitution of The Gambia (chapter 4 section 30)
- Children's Act (article 28)
- Draft Disability Bill
- 2016-2030 Education Policy

## MECHANISMS FOR ENSURING INCLUSIVE QUALITY EDUCATION

National legal provisions are necessary to promote the education agenda. The adoption of a strong legal environment underpinning national policies and strategies would make a significant contribution towards achieving the right to an equitable and inclusive quality education for all.

Inclusive education must be harnessed, as a concept underpinned with the core principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunities; and Social Protection Mechanisms for all children must be put in place

A special emphasis should be placed on States' legal obligations to guarantee government accountability



and transparency, and to ensure this normative framework translates into concrete action and effectively supports efforts towards attaining the SDG 4 and its corresponding targets

## MINISTRY OF BASIC AND SECONDARY EDUCATION (MOBSE)'S STRATEGIES IN ATTAINING QUALITY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

MOBSE has put in place strategies to address the following:

- Access, Quality Education, vocational education, tertiary and higher education and capacity building as key priorities to attaining an equitable quality inclusive education
- Enrollment increased for all education levels from 2016 to 2020 with an average growth of %7.1
- Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) has increased between 2016 and 2020 and gender parity attained from 2017 to 2020
- Expanded Opportunities and Access for Out-of-School Children through support to majilis and Region 5 out of school children

## MOBSE'S JOURNEY TOWARDS THE ATTAINMENT OF AN EQUITABLE INCLUSIVE QUALITY EDUCATION

To attain an equitable inclusive quality education, MOBSE has taken the following steps:

- Improving Quality of Teaching and Learning through Curriculum revision and implementation and Strengthening

pre-service teacher education in Gambia College

- Enhancing access through the Expansion of the Network of Basic and ECD Classrooms and provision of school feeding for students especially those in deprived regions
- Creation of a Special Needs and Inclusion Unit and putting in place strategies for the Inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream
- Tuition fees has been eliminated from lower Basic to Senior secondary level
- Majority of teachers have gone through initial teacher training, while many have been trained in Special Needs Education
- Distance to school reduced and more community involvement in school related activities

## THE WAY FORWARD

MOBSE will strive to consolidate gains made in the achievement of an accessible, equitable, inclusive, quality education by regularly making reviews to take into consideration emerging issues to make the sector more inclusive to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

MOBSE reiterates its firm commitment to the attainment of an equitable, inclusive, quality education for all its students as enshrined in the 2030-2016 national education policy and other international legal frameworks.

\* (This text is adapted from the Hon. Minister's remarks)







*“ I am against cancelling debt;  
I am for recycling those debts into  
educational projects. We need  
financing and innovative ways of  
financing education.”*





**Dr. HATEM BEN SALEM**

Former Minister  
of Education of Tunisia



# THREE PILLARS TO BUILD AN INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR EDUCATION

**Dr. HATEM BEN SALEM**

Former Minister of Education of Tunisia

Today, Humankind is undoubtedly going through one of its most critical moments. The world, as we know it, is changing at a very fast pace. Nations are taking on these harsh challenges without any vision and without any means.

Based on my strong belief in international solidarity, I appeal today to all world leaders to support an initiative which main goal is to promote education and put it at the heart of each national and international project for sustainable development.

What do we need to make this initiative successful and action-oriented? We truly need a strong commitment of the international community and this involvement should be around an international plan of action for education based on a very concrete roadmap and especially on 3 main pillars.

The first one is vision. We are now living in a world where globalization is going at a very fast track. The only subject which is still fragmented and divided is education. National education systems need to be reinforced by an international platform of knowledge that could be shared by each one wherever they are on the planet. Having a clear vision is important because we need to put all our efforts together for the next 20 years in the education as we need to internationalize its issues. This is impossible without a strong commitment of the international community. We must accept that most countries will not reach the goal of SDGs. We need a vision, but we also need new approaches. The world is changing, and it is time to stop dwelling on the past and complaining about the bad situation of our educational systems.

We need to act now by having in mind that this evolving world needs new learning approaches.

## VISION



## INNOVATION





That it is why the second pillar, in my opinion, is educational innovation. We know now that artificial intelligence is rapidly progressing in every field. We need to get on track and be aware that in the future, artificial intelligence and ITC will be the core of every project of educational reform nationally and internationally. More than %60 of the jobs we know today will disappear in the next 20 years. We need to take this into account to change our programs as well as our methods and give our teachers and professors the skills to be able to adapt to these profound changes.

## FINANCING

The last and third pillar which is very crucial for this international plan of action is to find innovative ways to finance

education. Personally, I am against cancelling debt; I am for recycling those debts into educational projects. We need financing and innovative ways of financing education. I would reach out to the banks to tell them that investing in education is investing in the future. Our states are not capable of facing the huge challenges of financing education alone. For example, within the Tunisian budget for Education, which is the most important budget of the state, %95 of the budget goes to salaries. We need to invest in education as it is truly the key to future reforms.

We want societies which include education in every project of sustainable development. We have to take our responsibilities and face the new challenges together.





*“ Education has a key role to play as it is a foundation for human fulfillment, economic growth, decent work, gender equality, sustainable development, protection of the environment. It contributes to understanding all the human rights, to reducing off inequalities, eradicating poverty, promoting health, boosting the economy, and generating the opportunities for just, inclusive and sustainable societies. ”*





**MS. AÏCHA BAH DIALLO**  
Former Minister of Education  
of the Republic of Guinea





## FIVE PRIORITIES TO ADDRESS FOR BUILDING THE EDUCATION WE WANT

### MS. AÏCHA BAH DIALLO

Former Minister of Education  
of the Republic of Guinea

Excellency M. President Lula,

Excellency Director General of ICESCO

Dear Alice

Distinguished guests,

It is a great pleasure to be with you today to share a few thoughts on this theme that is so important to ICESCO. Indeed, we must recognize, together with our organization, the transformational nature of education and the importance of ensuring quality education in order to achieve other SDGs, including poverty reduction, improved public health, greater economic growth, environmental protection, safer and more peaceful, stable communities. Education cuts across all SDGs. It is the backbone of sustainable development.

More importantly, it is a powerful tool to help low-income countries boost their economies and get out of poverty.

Yet, 258 million children and youth including 132 million girls were out of school, by 2018, and over 60% of the adult illiterates were women and girls. This is so unfortunate as Education gives women resilience, promotes health for themselves and all members of the family. Educated women have fewer children that they educate better and keep healthier.

Women's education boosts country's economies, promotes more tolerance, sustains social cohesion, brings peace, contributes to protecting environment, and ensures peace as well as prosperity, and democracy.

Another area with high investment return is that of youth. The AU Summit in Addis Ababa in January 2017 recommended to harness the demographic dividend through investment in youth. The population of Africa is 1.2 billion people and 60% of them are below 25 years. In 2050 this number will be 2.2 billion (W.B. 2018). In 2100 this number will increase to 3.6 billion.

In a continent with high potential, each young woman and man has a potential and should have dignity, self-esteem, has a dream and hope. All they need is to be equipped with the right knowledge and skills including technical and vocational, STEM, and digital that will allow them to remain relevant on the global scale in and beyond.

It is only through education and provision of quality manpower that real economic growth and development could take place and drive change in Africa. To achieve this and move the education sector forward, it is critical to invest in 5 major areas:

- Upgrading the teaching profession;
- Promoting knowledge transfer:



- Reviewing the curriculum to cater for both present and future manpower as, in 10 years' time, %40 of today's jobs will disappear, %90 of future jobs would require ICT skills and 2 million new jobs will be created in the computer, mathematical, architecture, and engineering fields;
- Upgrading school infrastructure;
- Striving for the underprivileged, the left out, the disadvantaged, the poor.

As the latter is concerned, the Covid-19 outbreak has shown us that the poor students were not equipped with the appropriate technologies and did not have access to internet in order to have access to platforms put in place to ensure distant learning. Many of them will drop out, in particular women and girls.

With significant investments in education, countries would effectively participate in the digital economy. For this to happen, governments and corporations should join hands to act together to provide WIFI and electricity at affordable price. This will bridge the gap between those who have access to internet and those who have not.

To keep it short, in order to embark on a deep transformational process of our societies, education has a key role to play as it is a foundation for human fulfillment, economic growth, decent work, gender equality, sustainable development, protection of the environment. It contributes to understanding all the human rights, to reducing off inequalities, eradicating

poverty, promoting health, boosting the economy, and generating the opportunities for just, inclusive and sustainable societies. All this will contribute to promoting global citizenship, peace, social cohesion, and democracy.

Education helps bring about tolerance, intercultural dialogue and respect for diversity as these are more essential than ever in a world where peoples are becoming more and more closely interconnected.

Les « Sociétés Que Nous Voulons » doivent avoir pour fondation la liberté, la justice, l'équité sociale et la souveraineté nationale. Elles doivent être édifiées sur la base de la bonne gouvernance, d'une éthique politique responsable, de la transparence, de l'égalité des chances et de la solidarité, autant de valeurs qui constituent le terreau sur lequel peut s'épanouir la démocratie et la paix durable. Pour réussir ce défi, l'éducation y joue un rôle clé.

Mon dernier mot vient de Kofi Annan, qui a dit: « More than ever before in human history, we share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together». ICESCO is giving us this opportunity today.

Je remercie le DG de m'avoir donnée cette opportunité de m'adresser à vous et merci à tous pour votre aimable attention.

\* *(The title is from the Editor).*









**PERSPECTIVES FROM EXPERTS  
AND PRACTITIONERS  
IN THE FIELD**



*“ Education is subject to the economy and this is not the right path. We need to establish a new relationship between the economy and education. ”*





**Dr. DANIEL CARA**

Professor at São Paulo University  
Board Member of the Brazilian  
Campaign for the Right to Education





## RETHINKING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMY

**Dr. DANIEL CARA**

Professor at São Paulo University  
Board Member of the Brazilian  
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First of all, I greet the former President of Brazil, Mr. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the Director General of ICESCO, Salim M. Almalik, the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Kailash Satyarthi, and especially I greet my friend, the rapporteur for the Human Right to Education of the United Nations, Dr. Koumbou Boly Barry.

To discuss “Education and the Societies We Want”, the theme of this Webinar, we need to reflect beforehand on the relationship between the right to education and the economy.

Considering the current moment, it is impossible to make this reflection without addressing the impacts of the Covid19- pandemic on our education systems and our economies, as well as the impact of Covid19- on the global economy.

To address the issue, I will take Brazil, my country, as an example.

Brazil was the ninth economy in the world in 2018, it is the largest economy in Latin America, the largest economy in the Southern Hemisphere and is a country with about 200 million inhabitants. Unfortunately, it is also one of the most unequal countries on the globe.

In educational terms, considering the current enrollments in basic education, dedicated to Brazilians aged 0 to 17 - and also to young people and adults who did not have the opportunity to study when they were children and adolescents -, we have almost 51 million students who every working day studied in our schools. In addition to them, we have almost 4 million education professionals dedicated to teaching them. In other words, %27.5 of the Brazilian population attends basic education schools.

And that is not enough, because we have almost 5 million children and teenagers out of school, 11 million young people and adults who are illiterate and 30 million Brazilians in a situation of functional illiteracy - that is, without the ability to read and understand a text or to carry out basic math operations. If everyone were in schools, about 97 million Brazilians should study in schools, being served by 7 million education professionals. Therefore, about %48 of the population of Brazil would be enrolled in basic education schools.

Children who are out of school are mostly black and indigenous. They live in the countryside or on the outskirts of large cities, in a condition of serious vulnerability. Many have deficiencies.



However, school exclusion is the most serious face of the problem, but not the only one. Among enrolled children and adolescents, many only eat in schools, live in unsafe housing and suffer from a lack of basic sanitation, both in their homes and in their school units. All Brazilian inequalities are also expressed in education.

To change this history, in 2014, Brazil approved the National Education Plan (PNE) at the National Congress, essentially an achievement of civil society, especially the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education. The text was sanctioned without vetoes by the then President Dilma Rousseff. If the PNE had been implemented, the situation of Brazilian education would already be better. (...)

In an unfair country, without access to school units, countless children and adolescents are left unprotected, because education ends up fulfilling tasks that are not theirs, but that cannot be exempted. The reality of Brazilian teachers and professors is to work miracles in the name of the right to education. And they are almost never recognized for that.

As we are far from controlling the pandemic, it is not safe to reopen schools, but the pressure from business and scientific denialists demands a return to face-to-face classes, given the failure of Distance Education, in a country where people do not have access to the Internet and broadband. Teachers and teachers, many of whom belong to Covid-19 risk groups, fight for a return to school only when it is safe. We are with them, who every day have done everything possible and impossible to maintain safe contact with their students, trying to teach.

The Brazilian case serves as a picture of the global problem. Education is subject to the economy and this is not the right path.

We need to establish a new relationship between the economy and education.

To do this, first of all, it is necessary to reiterate that education is a right, as determined by the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights.

And as Paulo Freire would say, what is education?

Education is the sharing of the human legacy. The human legacy is everything that women and men created to live in society.

Taking as reference the works of Paulo Freire, Emília Ferreiro, Florestan Fernandes, Anísio Teixeira, Lev Vygotsky, José Martí, Pedro Varela, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Erasmo de Rotterã, among others, it is also possible to say that education is appropriation of culture. Culture is everything we create to live in society: science, arts, sports, values.

The appropriation of culture and the sharing of the human legacy must be made an absolute priority, in the path of promoting a full education, dedicated to the promotion of human rights, combating all forms of discrimination.

Among so many losses, the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of the school, the relevance of teachers' work and the importance of science as an instrument for the quality of life of human beings.

It also showed that the societies we want need to reverse the current logic. For centuries, we have lived in a world where people are at the service of the economy. We need to reverse this logic: we need to create a world in which the economy is at the service of people.



The first step to this is to invest properly in education. In Brazil, this means - according to the National Plan and Education - investing %10 of the Gross Domestic Product in public education. Is it too much? It is not. It is the cost of including 46 million Brazilians in basic education, in addition to 7 million in higher education.

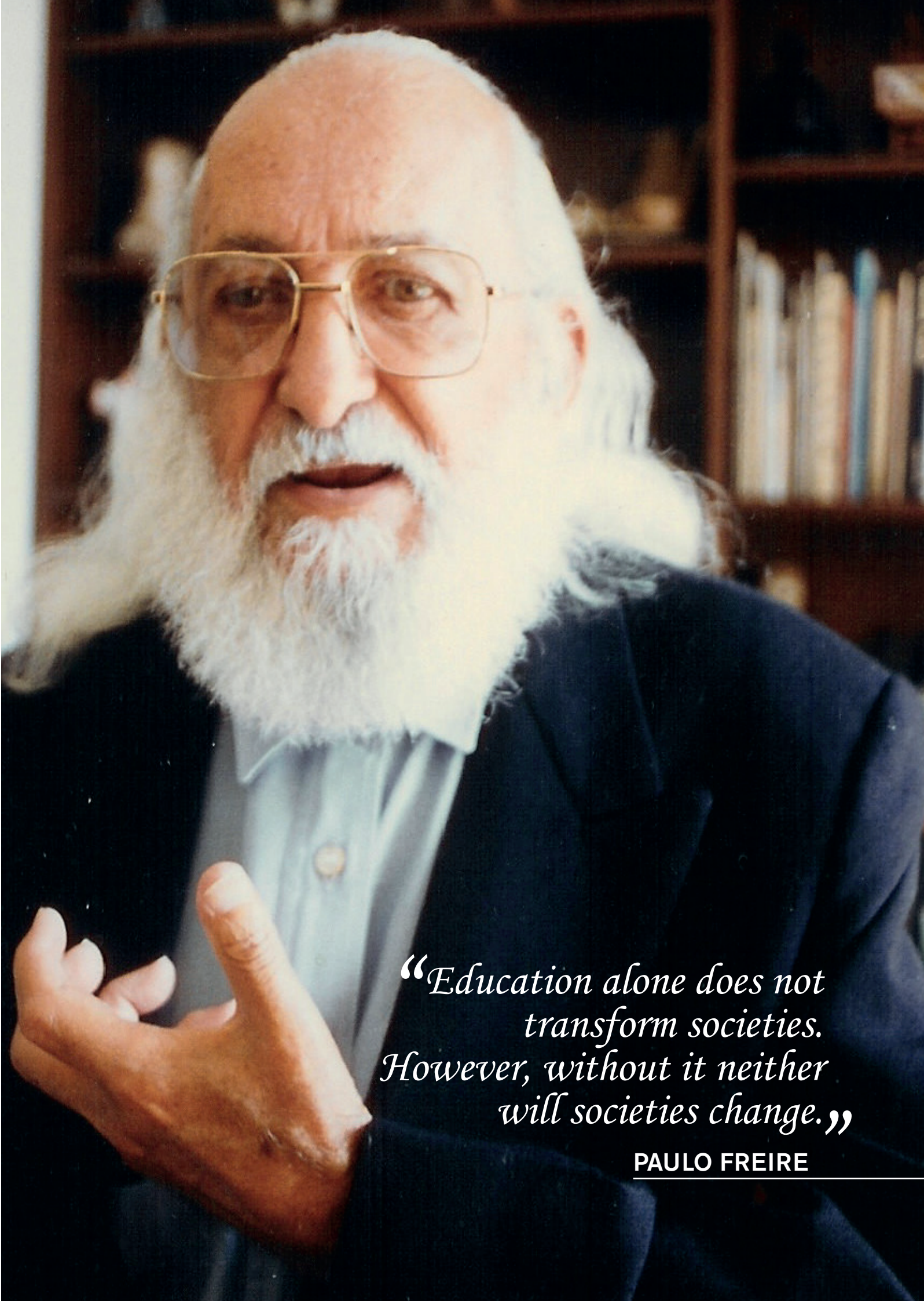
For that, it is necessary to retake the investment capacity of the National States, which must be unprecedentedly dedicated to the quality of life and freedom of their people. Especially because education is the pillar of true national sovereignty.

I close my speech by recalling one of the most important Brazilians in our history, my master and master of Dr. Koumbou Boly Barry. This Brazilian turned 99 on Saturday, September 19. He is known to all of you and his name is Paulo Freire.

Paulo Freire taught us that “education alone does not transform societies. However, without it neither will societies change”. Let's give some hope to the world, let's defend an economic project that prioritizes investment in education, Science, Technology and Innovation. A fair and equal world for women, men and all the peoples of the Earth.







*“Education alone does not transform societies. However, without it neither will societies change.”*

**PAULO FREIRE**



*“ [The Covid- 19] pandemic is exposing weak links in society and fundamental inadequacies of development models have been adopted. This is a critical opportunity to restructure and restore human dignity and equity in societies. ”*





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# BUILDING A POST-COVID-19 SOCIETY WITH A VISION FOR EDUCATION FOR ALL:

LESSONS FROM THE BURKINA FASO-KOREA COLLABORATION TO  
ALLEVIATE POVERTY IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION SECTOR, 2007-2020

**KI-SEOK “KORBIL” KIM, PH.D.**

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The World Bank estimates that the current pandemic is pushing over a hundred million people into extreme poverty. More than a billion children are out of school and facing learning loss, wiping out hard-won gains in human development. Based on data collected from 157 countries, the World Bank (2020) predicts a loss of between 0.3 and 0.9 years of schooling. Marginalized populations (including women and children) are particularly impacted by the pandemic-induced global crisis. This calamity demands immediate actions to fulfill urgent human needs. Simultaneously, however, these actions should be part of a broader development plan with a vision for an inclusive and resilient recovery and the rebuilding of a better society.

EWB (Educators Without Borders) believes that this pandemic is exposing weak links in society and fundamental inadequacies of development models have been adopted. This is a critical opportunity to restructure and restore human dignity and equity in societies. EWB believes that education and learning play a central role in accomplishing this goal. Investment in people should be a fundamental solution

for this Covid-19-triggered human crisis. Based on the strong track record of economic development in South Korea via education, EWB designed educational programs to alleviate poverty in the global south. EWB's educational plans are innovative and holistic, utilizing indigenous teaching materials and networks. These programs are designed to increase literacy rates, empowering students, and develop life and income-generating skills. EWB's programs aim to promote overall life literacy.

This paper presents three projects that EWB designed and implemented. Two of the three projects are implemented in rapid response to the pandemic and in preparation for reopening schools and community in post-pandemic time:

- Global Alliance for Poverty Alleviation (GAPA) in Burkina Faso 2020-2009,
- Collaborative responses to Covid19- in Burkina Faso in 2020, and
- Joining in global Anti-FGM campaign in Africa in years to come.



The last two examples demonstrate how EWB is responding to the current Covid19-related crises and is rebuilding better schools, communities, and societies that truly promote inclusive and sustainable human development and protect human security.

Since 2009 EWB has designed a non-formal education program coined as GAPA). (KIM, 2017, Kim and others, 2015) Its approach to eradicating poverty through literacy is unique in several ways

- First, it is comprehensive: it features a literacy campaign whose educational materials include lesson plans to promote student empowerment and political consciousness, exemplifying Paulo Freire's pedagogy. The educational content includes learning materials that build income generating skills. GAPA has been running in Burkina Faso since 2007, resulting in strong and robust reduction of poverty and illiteracy.
- Second, women take a central role in EWB's development projects. EWB believes that development solutions involving women are effective in the short-term as well as long-term.
- Third, EWB believes in collaborative and equal partnerships with local organizations. EWB builds strong relationships with local communities based on mutual trust. EWB's educational programs respect local culture and values while protecting human security.

## **COLLABORATORY RESPONSES TO POST-COVID-19 IN BURKINA FASO**

In response to the unfolding human disaster triggered by the pandemic, EWB

designed and is implementing in 2020 a rapid and organized evidence-based program in Burkina Faso. This project is funded by KOICA.

From the beginning stage of the planning, EWB contacted our local EWB subsidiary and long-time local partner (APENF) to conduct need assessment research on local health infrastructure, medical supplies, and other items to cope with the pandemic. This type of rapid response was possible because of EWB's preexisting partnerships with local community partners and responsible government offices that are based on mutual respect and trust.

The survey conducted by EWB-APENF alliance, revealed an urgent need for medical supplies and health education to deal with local medical needs and prevent further spreading of the virus. EWB provided medical supplies coupled with preventive health education. The health education program included lessons on wearing masks, handwashing, the importance of social distancing, and prevention of respiratory illnesses. A children's educational program, a Covid-19 prevention-focused animation in French, was developed by a Korean college and provided.

Donated items included:

- locally manufactured fabric for making masks,
- locally produced soap,
- potable washstands for handwashing,
- water purifiers,
- hand sanitizer,
- masks,
- thermometers,
- medical protective clothes, and
- Covid-19 prevention themed t-shirts.

The pandemic is not simply a health crisis but an economic crisis as well. The shrinking economy caused by the pandemic made the vulnerable households' daily survival dire. In



response to their daily needs, EWB provided emergency food (rice and chickens) for impacted families. The chickens were not only for consumption but could be used as an income-generating resource. EWB's past project was to provide income generating opportunities by teaching local families how to raise and market chicken which has presented robust results in alleviating poverty in low-income households.

EWB's Burkina Faso project demonstrates that long-term sustainable partnership between local community organizations and NGOs makes rapid responses possible in a timely manner. EWB's response projects are primarily local solutions based on local supplies, which makes the responses not only meet the urgent immediate needs but become part of long-term solutions for existing community issues and future global challenges.

## JOINING END-FGM GLOBAL CAMPAIGN

Women are part of the vulnerable population, disproportionately experiencing poverty and marginality, particularly during this pandemic. EWB believes that women must play a key role in accomplishing development goals and responding to the pandemic-induced crisis. That is why EWB focuses on girls' education. In promoting girls' education, EWB believe that FGM is a barrier for girls' education and an enormous human security issue. In order to rebuild the post-pandemic school and community, dealing with FGM is critical.

According to UNICEF (2013), more than 200 million girls and women today have undergone FGM. It is estimated that 3 million girls are at risk of undergoing FGM every year. The pandemic, resulting school closure, and economic insecurity increase the risk of FGM and gender-based violence. As the Ebola pandemic revealed, after pandemics many girls will

not go back to school, making them more vulnerable to FGM. Thus, any post-Covid response and school reopening programs should include plans for lowering the risk of FGM and gender-based violence in promoting girls' education.

From March, 2020, EWB started to work with local partners and schools to develop educational programs to stop FGM in Kenya. Specifically, EWB's FGM programs are geared to different target groups with different emphases:

- First, a program for community leaders and parents of school-age children provides accurate information on health risks related to FGM. This type of community dialogue about FGM is critical, since there is a perception that FGM is part of the religion and tradition.
- Second, the educational programs for girls are designed for two purposes:
- First, it provides health education about the physical and mental health consequences of FGM, gender-based violence, and good hygiene practices.
- The second aspect is the empowering component. The goal is to empower girls, so that they will be able to resist the peer and family pressure around the practice of FGM.

EWB's project concerns those who have undergone FGM as well. The plan intends to equip them with income-generating skills and provide them with educational and employment opportunities. By empowering FGM victims to transform to "survivors," EWB encourages them to be advocates for ending FGM efforts so that we could call the girls "winners". Sustaining transformation of victims, survivor and winners, we could pave a way to reach societies we want to build.

Covid-19 has exposed all the preexisting problems and weaknesses. The marginal



segments of society disproportionately are suffering physically, mentally, educationally, and economically, exacerbating inequality and threatening human security. Without undermining the weight of Covid-19 induced human tragedy, however, this pandemic presents a rare and much-needed opportunity to make a course change for social and economic development and growth on a local, national, and global level. This is a critical time to reflect on what development models are inclusive, equitable, and sustainable.

This pandemic exposed the fundamental flaws of the development model that are fundamentally based on the experiences and values of global north. It reveals that these development strategies are seriously inadequate to build an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable future. To design development programs that are more inclusive and equitable, and sustainable, we need input from non-Western societies. In this sense, we need to pay attention to and include non-Western NGOs, like EWB, in the conversation in rebuilding and restoring an inclusive and sustainable future for all.

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*“Education in the highest sense,  
is the foremost urgency for society, for  
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sustainable development goals and for  
living together in peace.”*





**MS. DELIA MAMON**  
Chairwoman of Graines de Paix  
(Seeds of Peace)





## FIVE STRATEGIC SHIFTS FOR A FULL QUALITY EDUCATION

**MS. DELIA MAMON**

Chairwoman of Graines de Paix  
(Seeds of Peace)

Dear honorable Participants,

I am personally particularly motivated by the topic The Societies We Want and its relevance for Education policy. Indeed, the very essence of “Graines de Paix” is to transform education policies and refocus teaching from basic instruction to student self-realization. Why? Because this is the foremost means to bring about an appeased, more appreciable world.

“Everyone dreams of quality education: parents for their children, teachers for their students, leaders for future generations, and companies for their future staff. We all hope that every student will be successful in their education, be driven by human values, know how to prevent violence and replace it with dialogue, and become a citizen who proactively contributes to sustainable development, to a harmonious society and towards a better world. This is what quality education should be.” . But is it?

Measuring school success based on rote learning has lost its purpose, leaving behind a large mass of students who feel disoriented, disconnected and thoroughly unprepared for leading their lives as teens and adults. They tend to become oversensitive, aggressive, sometimes violent. Their concerns become limited to their immediate surroundings as this in itself is a huge challenge for most.

Teachers are increasingly ill-adapted to this paradigm shift. Yet teachers are stuck having to do school programmes that do not respond to the needs of their students for self-esteem, consideration, healthy growth, belongingness and a sense of purpose. Nor are teachers trained to manage such emotional needs. This leads them to becoming increasingly frustrated and unwittingly violent on the psychological level - by belittling, devaluing and punishing even young schoolchildren.

The Child's Right to education thereby becomes meaningless if it leads to contravening the Child's Right to be protected from all forms of violence, discrimination and mistreatment. So, we must act!

But why has this paradigm shift taken place? What make students more unprepared and disconnected than in previous times?

One reason is the disruption of family teaching due to the evolution of society. Values, attitudes and behaviours are no longer sufficiently transmitted. Parents work, families are no longer large units made up of several generations that help children develop their human values, their emotional skills and their thinking capabilities. Children are left alone and seek comfort from their screens instead of playing and exchanging with family and friends. Many are left to grow up with insufficient nurturing or guidance.



Another reason is that children are obliged to go to school from very early on (sometimes at 4, sometimes at even 2). But in public schools, there are virtually no opportunities for self-development, only for rote learning. Self-development comes from interacting with one another, but most public schools punish talking instead of stimulating dialogue between schoolchildren, not realising how important this dialogue between children is for developing a better world.

A third reason is that teachers have been trained to teach as they themselves learned: by lecturing. Children are meant to be passive sponges. But to build a better world, children need to be stimulated to think on their own, to think wider, higher and to propose creative solutions. Yet how many primary school teachers or Math teachers are trained to do so or feel adequate to do so?

## THE END-GOAL OF QUALITY EDUCATION

Most educational decision makers and practitioners still believe that Quality Education simply means teaching better. Yet, already in 2000, UNICEF had outlined that Quality Education is also defined by its outcomes: “Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.” But please note societal goals were not mentioned in the paper .

In 2015, the UN put its weight to make Quality Education the 4th Sustainable Development. It redefined the goal of Education as: to provide the “knowledge and skills” for developing all the other development goals (4.7) so that Education can become “genuinely useful” (4.1). These goals also include Equality of access and inclusion of diversity. In other words, Quality

Education’s goal aims indeed at building fairer societies.

## IS THE DEFINITION OF QUALITY EDUCATION ADEQUATE?

Naming Quality Education as one of the new Sustainable Development Goals has been a huge stride forward for guiding Education policies, but are its outcomes sufficient for bringing about the Societies We Want? What could be lacking?

First and foremost, the mention of student development and fulfilment, and of teacher development and fulfilment. Enabling self-realization through Public Education is not yet on the SDG Map. Yes, benefiting from equal access to learn to read and count, and gain professional skills do contribute somewhat to student development, but it’s a narrow perspective of what student development should mean. Are they sufficient to learn to dialogue and collaborate? To demonstrate consideration and empathy? To help them prevent and refute violence? To help them solve larger issues and build the Societies We Want?

In addition, the definition of Quality Education doesn’t indicate which competencies are to be developed in teachers and in students. Shouldn’t Quality Education be enlarged to include emotional and thinking competencies? Aren’t self-esteem and confidence essential Education goals if students are to engage in sustainable development goals? And how about humaneness, the human values, attitudes and behaviours that will empower them to overcome societal violence (Peace culture education)?

SDG 4 mentions Peace culture education as a mere topic amongst others, when in fact it is the very means to nurture students in the development of their qualities and



competencies whatever the subject being studied.

Furthermore, the World in 2020 is already quite different from 201: issues such as climate degradation have made no progress to speak of. Artificial intelligence is reaching a point where human beings may become belittled by it, and may one day lose control. The COVID Pandemic has disrupted education and highlighted how human beings can fall into fear, be manipulated by fake news and see the world over simplistically, where all but a few are bad or wicked. The opinion divides between people are close to explosive, marked by the inability to hear diverse views, while the geopolitical divides between the most powerful countries are becoming alarming. Instead of coming closer to the Society We Want, we are moving away.

## A PROPOSAL FOR FULL QUALITY EDUCATION

As we witness this, what should Education teach, transmit, develop and nurture?

Let us call this Full Quality Education: an encompassing education defined to help students and teachers develop their full potential and wellbeing. Encompassing in that it is:

- a fully inclusive education meaning that all students are encouraged to develop their full potential whatever their differences or disabilities;
- First, a program for community leaders and parents of school-age children provides accurate information on health risks related to FGM. This type of community dialogue about FGM is a nurturing education that strengthens their self-esteem and confidence, the very basis for positive learning outcomes;
- an experiential education that stimulates their emotional intelligence

and enables them to hone their psychosocial competencies;

- a questioning education that exercises their thought processes and develops their discernment capabilities;
- an empowering education that will help them use their creativity for resolving societal issues and become the agents for transformative societal change;
- a peace culture-based education that develops their values and skills for bringing harmony in the classroom, overcoming harassment and teacher violence, preventing violence and radicalization, resolving conflicts, appeasing persons and situations, developing cohesiveness and harmony with the goal of building safe and peaceful societies.

Four words can sum up Full Quality Education's objectives: Humaneness, Discernment, Creativity and Engagement. These concern as much teachers as students.

Students find fulfilment when teachers treat them with humaneness, not coldness and when teachers are able to discern that something is going wrong for them. And the same goes for students between themselves.

What is interesting is that these four Education Objectives are the same for three separate end-goals: helping students reach fulfilment, prevent violence and help them differentiate themselves from AI-powered robots.

You may wonder whether such an education program can be implemented, especially in developing countries? The result can be overwhelmingly positive. Here is what one of our recent participants wrote to us:

"Graines de Paix, is an opportunity for Benin and a substantial schooling for me. Opportunity for our country because one had to listen to the participants of the training; inspectors, counsellors and School Directors



demonstrated this with stirring testimonies; a school for me because, ever since the training for teacher trainers, I have learnt so much that I am tempted to say that I knew nothing. I was going to live and die ignorant if I had not had the chance of knowing Graines de Paix". (Moumouni, teacher trainer, Benin)

## WHAT TEACHER-TRAINING REFORM IS REQUIRED FOR FULL QUALITY EDUCATION?

Because Full Quality Education focuses on student and teacher fulfilment and societal fulfilment, it 5 major shifts in Teacher Training Reform.

### These 5 shifts concern:

- **the focus:** shifting to matching learning objectives to the end-goals for both Education and for Society which means shifting from rote learning to dialogue-based learning.
- **the learning methods:** shifting from passive to experiential, participative and collaborative learning.
- **the teaching postures:** shifting to attentive and focused on each student vs. self-concerned.
- **the style of authority:** shifting from punitive to encouraging authority.
- **the renewed role and value of the teacher profession:** for the Societies We Want.

### Shift 1: the double focus on education and society

Changing the focus of education is the largest and most inspiring change. It requires moving teachers from providing rote learning, which is teacher-centered, obliging students to remain passive, to student-centered learning, in which student

participation is constantly activated and stimulated, focused on learning while thinking about society.

### Shift 2: the learning methods

The best way to achieve this is by using interaction-based and experience-developing learning activities. These bring about two advantages: interest in learning and interest in interaction. Interaction skills are honed as students learn experientially. Students learn to listen, dialogue and collaborate. They learn how to decide collectively and how to reflect and resolve with mutual inclusion, respect and consideration. Every experiential activity should finish with a range of questions that further develop their emotional and thinking skills. These questions can help children learn to discern rather than criticize, to observe with perceptiveness rather than jumping to hasty conclusions or hurtful prejudices. And especially, it is the only way to provide inclusion of all children, whatever their differences and disabilities.

### Shift number 3: the teaching postures

For this, teachers themselves need to develop their own scale of human values: will they limit themselves to being tolerant or maybe respectful, or will they see their role as being kind, considerate and empathetic? Will they appreciate developing their own human, social and intercultural skills? Training should include helping teachers visualize themselves as guides and gardeners that care for, nurture and inspire young learners as opposed to enforcers of a standard program that doesn't fit all? Here, humaneness is at the heart of the shift.

### Shift number 4: a major change in Teacher authority

Another training objective concerns Teacher Authority: training should seek to help teachers gain confidence in exercising positive authority and discipline. These are based on encouragement and appreciation,



as opposed to punitive means. Always using experiential learning, teachers learn how to manage classroom dynamics and bring about a positive learning climate.

### **Shift number 5: Giving full value to the meaning of the teacher profession**

Even more important is helping teachers and their hierarchy understand the full value of the role of Teachers in students' lives, in their future and in the future society they will live in. While today, most are extenuated and rush home to flee the misery of the negative classroom dynamics, the shift aimed for is to help Teachers realize within Teacher training how key they are for inspiring children to build the Societies we and they Want.

Such shifts are already starting to take place. What Full Quality Education does is to make these explicit to teachers, together with the societal outcomes they should better achieve. Most importantly, we need tools for training and guiding teachers. This is what "Graines de Paix" has been

providing to several developing countries, in addition to Switzerland, including by visioconferencing.

We are at a tipping point. Too many youth and adults of all ages, even educated persons in terms of diplomas, are left so unskilled emotionally and thinking-wise, so filled with anger and fear from being overwhelmed by current developments, that they adopt over simplistic thinking. Leaders and diverse groups of persons alike can become their enemy to combat. Clearly, civil violence and wars are looming ever closer. This is why Education in the highest sense, is the foremost urgency for society, for wellbeing, for reaching all the other sustainable development goals and for living together in peace.

Yet, I wish to conclude by stating that Teaching is one of the most beautiful and rewarding professions of them all and that Full Quality Education restores the true value of teachers in society.

Thank you.







*“When schools are in partial or full lockdown and people do not feel safe, the institutional message should be focusing on mindfulness, community, appreciation for one another, kindness and peace. It is easy to lapse into panic, anger, blame and racism.”*





**Dr. Conrad Hughes**

Principal at the International School  
of Geneva's La Grande Boissière



### Dr. Conrad Hughes

Principal at the International School  
of Geneva's La Grande Boissière

## EDUCATION FOR PEACE IN TIMES OF CRISIS

There is something of a global consensus that educational objectives need to be reformed to meet the needs of a globalized world which is subject to rapid advances in technology and major social and environmental disruption.

21st Century Skills matrices such as those promoted by the World Economic Forum, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the McKinsey group or the World Bank tend to emphasise creativity, critical thinking, decision making, communication skills and similar higher-order, transferable cognitive skills.

The United Nations, UNESCO and UNICEF, on the other hand, emphasize social and environmental prerogatives as part of the design of a 21st Century educational skills matrix: sustainable development, the right to a quality education and education for more inclusivity and peaceful collaboration. For example, UNESCO IBE's Prospects special edition entitled Preventing violent extremism through education: From policy to practice (Hughes, 2020) discusses the need for the global educational paradigm to re-centre its prerogative on a more just and humane society be that in the domains of non-violence, anti-racism, education for less prejudice, human rights education or peace and conflict studies.

However, if we are going to be honest, both of these schools of global citizenship

education (neoliberal and humanistic [Hughes, 2020a]) remain on the periphery of what is actually happening in most schools, which is an examination-driven, stress-inducing approach to performance, ranking and competition. Discourses about reforming education remain largely rhetorical as what happens on the ground remains very much anchored in an early 20th Century model - even a 19th Century model, of academic knowledge transmission.

The idea of educating for peace, which involves not only bold decisions around curriculum design but a careful investigation of the culture of schools, the way that they deal with symbolic and structural violence (exclusion, bias, extreme hierarchy, punishment, grade-based coercion) is a distant reality from many educational institutions.

The Covid pandemic has focused minds on short-term goals such as keeping schools open, taking learning online, reducing learning gaps, ensuring some degree of wellness among students and staff while dealing with the emotional and psychological discharge created by the trauma of the pandemic. This has meant that the vision for an education for peace has become even more distanced, something of a nice-to-have that might be considered once there is some sort of return to normalcy, whatever that might mean.

However, this is a mistake, for it is precisely in times of extreme disruption and dramatic



societal transformation, that educational values must be cherished and safeguarded above all else. If not, an atmosphere of anxiety and fear allows hidden agendas to take control, cultural mutations to take place without anybody noticing and, in many cases, the driving purpose and societal goal of an education changes. It is well known from glancing through the history books that the most bellicose educational philosophies (facist education, Nazism, Bantu Education in Apartheid South Africa and others) grew against a backdrop of economic depression, social upheaval when the uglier sides of humanity (scapegoating, xenophobia, abuse and discrimination) were more easily manipulated.

When schools are in partial or full lockdown and people do not feel safe, the institutional message should be focusing on mindfulness, community, appreciation for one another, kindness and peace. It is easy to lapse into panic, anger, blame and racism. United Nations statistics have shown that Covid has caused a global surge in hate speech.

Therefore, let school leaders not lose sight of the bigger picture as the planet relapses into multiple spikes of Covid. Yes, ensuring that schools function during the pandemic is of urgent importance, yes, we must not lose sight of the need to ensure that creativity and soft skills develop in our curricula, bit above all else, let us ensure that the long view is for a more sustainable, peaceful and caring world. Four critical steps to move in such a direction are:

- The highest standards of child protection and counselling for victims of potential violence, abuse or psychological distress;
- Restorative practice and not punitive retribution as a system of conflict resolution;
- Humanities lessons focussed not just on imperialism and war but on peacekeeping and human rights
- Inclusion and diversity as cornerstones of school recruitment, vision and practice

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