

Recommendation of UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education on UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 (41 C/4)

We, the UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education, Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (**APCEIU**), Regional Centre for Adult Education (**ASFEC Sers Ellayan**), Early Childhood Development Regional Centre (**ECDRC**), International Centre for Higher Education Innovation (**ICHEI**), Institute of Early Childhood Development (**IECD**), Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (**IEPA**), International Mother Language Institute (**IMLI**), International Research and Training Centre for Rural Education (**INRULED**), Office for Climate Education (**OCE**), Regional Centre for Educational Planning (**RCEP**), Regional Centre for Quality and Excellence in Education (**RCQE**), and South Asian Centre for Teacher Development (**SACTD**), convened virtually at the **Meeting of UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education on UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029** on **Wednesday, 17 March 2021**, and agreed to adopt the following recommendations,

PART I: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DRAFT 41 C/4

Inclusive Education

1. Recognizing the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which further impedes the current global efforts in realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly in ensuring education for all, UNESCO should actively support the Member States to adopt and integrate information and communication technology (ICT) into their respective education system in a timely manner to ensure learners of all age groups with diverse socio-economic backgrounds have equal opportunity to continue their education.
2. While women and girls should be given special attention, UNESCO should consider shifting the language used within 41 C/4 surrounding quality education for "women and girls" to ensure inclusive education.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

3. UNESCO is recommended to generate a standard definition of the term 'quality' Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and identify the elements that Member States need to have in place to ensure quality ECCE.
4. Recognizing the limited or unavailability of the legal framework for the development of ECCE, UNESCO should assist the Member States in developing the legal framework and policies on ECCE.
5. UNESCO should consider developing a global strategy for training and capacity building in ECCE for Member States to address the limited formal training and needs of continuous professional development for ECCE teachers and professionals. This training and capacity building strategy should also include curriculum development training for ECCE professionals for effective ECCE implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
6. UNESCO should assist the Member States in supporting childhood programmes from 0-3 years old, particularly in developing policies and stimulation programmes that will contribute towards the holistic development of young children, and in readiness for non-formal and formal pre-school education.

Higher Education (HE) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

6. UNESCO should support the Member States to conduct in-depth context analysis and build a framework for action to realize the digital transformation of the HE and TVET sectors based on the Member State's infrastructure, labour market demand, and economic development.
7. UNESCO should support the Member States to strengthen the higher education-TVET-industry partnerships to inform and drive curriculum reforms and incorporate key competencies in emerging ICT-related fields, such as Cloud Computing, Artificial Intelligence, and Big Data, into the curriculum.
8. UNESCO should facilitate the Member States to adopt innovative technologies to improve their HE and TVET administration and management.
9. UNESCO should facilitate dialogues and discussions among the academia, industry and government in the Member States to establish multi-stakeholder partnerships for infrastructure, hardware and open educational resources for the digitalization of HE and TVET institutions.

10. UNESCO should develop a national quality assurance system and a qualification framework for online education that guide its Member States' HE and TVET institutions in designing and implementing high-quality online degree and certification programmes that are mutually recognized by countries.

Adult Education

11. UNESCO should encourage the Member States to upgrade their respective adult education programmes to be more flexible, inclusive, supportive and adaptive to the current challenges and urgent needs of digitizing curricula. In particular, the adult education programme should be directed to prepare learners with the knowledge and practical skills to adapt and innovate under various challenging circumstances and reflect the needs of the times.
12. UNESCO should support the Member States to develop or strengthen the policy to ensure adult learners, particularly those from vulnerable socio-economic backgrounds, can continue and complete their education.
13. Recognizing the current status and implications of the technological gap among different age groups, UNESCO should encourage the Member States to improve adult learners' access and skills, particularly older adults, related to science and technology.
14. UNESCO should encourage the Member States to entrust the university institutions in preparing adult educators in addition to the training programmes that have been offered to university graduates and/or education workforce with qualifications.

Capacity Building of Education Professionals

15. UNESCO should develop a competency framework and corresponding competency standards for the education professionals at all levels, including teachers, education managers and administrators, institutional leaders, support and technical staff, and officials.
16. UNESCO should support the Member States to develop, implement and share professional development programs, including the provision and training of tools and technologies to support the education process, for the education professionals.

17. UNESCO should support the Member States to create professional development opportunities that encourage collaboration among the education professionals through online and offline platforms.
18. UNESCO should encourage the Member States to provide special attention to the education professionals in low-income and emergency-affected areas to maintain the quality of education programmes at all levels.
19. UNESCO should strengthen the framework to ensure the Organization's programmes and initiatives related to capacity building of the education professionals are generated based on communication and consultation with the targeted participants.

Global Citizenship Education (GCED)

Given that the indicators for SDG 4.7 are to measure the extent to which GCED and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education, and (d) student assessment, UNESCO's action for GCED in the following years should be focused on these areas:

20. UNESCO should encourage and support the Member States to develop national education policies for GCED and integrate GCED into national curricula based on the local contexts and global issues.
21. UNESCO should assist the Member States in incorporating GCED in student assessment and seek to develop and enhance a global monitoring mechanism of GCED implementation.
22. UNESCO should encourage the Member States to take a multiple stakeholder approach in the implementation of GCED, involving schools, parents and local communities, as well as non-governmental organizations, to establish a strong partnership for GCED in the whole society.

Climate Change Education (CCE)

23. UNESCO should further intensify the current efforts to ensure that the Member States integrate climate adaptation strategy in education in line with the international commitments pledged by the Member States, including the Paris Agreement and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

24. UNESCO should encourage the Member States to update their curricula to integrate climate science, climate mitigation and adaptation strategies and promote active pedagogies, critical thinking, interdisciplinarity, climate justice, and implementation of nature-based solutions. The emphasis of programmes should be made gradual, shifting from local (at primary and middle school levels) to more global (at high school and tertiary levels).
25. UNESCO should also encourage the Member States to put more emphasis on CCE teachers' continuous professional development. In particular, CCE teachers' professional development should include climate science, interdisciplinarity, inquiry-based science education pedagogy and project-based pedagogy to ensure teachers can support their students in their development and application of good critical thinking and reasoning skills as well as in the design and implementation of projects and solutions for climate change adaptation and mitigation.
26. Recognizing the critical roles played by the younger generation, UNESCO should acknowledge the student mobilization and youth movement for CCE and involve youth more in its CCE programme development and implementation strategies. A collaboration with the national Youth Focal points implemented in the UNFCCC Action for Climate Empowerment is advised.

Education in Emergencies

27. UNESCO should encourage and support the Member States to include programmes to enhance preparedness for a pandemic, increase awareness of extreme weather events related to global warming, and other emergencies in their curriculum.
28. UNESCO should support the Member States to strengthen their respective capacity building programmes for crisis and risk management targeting public officials and professionals in the education sector.
29. UNESCO should encourage the Member States and other related organizations to pay special attention to ensuring the continuation of education and physical and mental health of learners, particularly young learners who lose their parent(s)/caregiver(s), during the pandemic or other emergencies.

Local Contextualization in the Education Process

30. UNESCO should provide leadership for the Member States and other stakeholders in identifying socio-cultural, geo-political and context-specific inhibitors to implementing education for all policies and programmes aimed at reducing inequalities.
31. UNESCO should encourage the Member States to promote indigenous knowledge sharing culture through deliberate curriculum reform planning, design and implementation in education.

Partnerships

32. UNESCO is recommended to increase the involvement of Category 2 Centres in Education in the planning and implementation of the Organization's programmes on education.
33. While the emphasis on the strengthening of partnerships with the private sector is welcomed given its increasingly important role in our common endeavour for achieving SDGs, UNESCO should ensure that these partnerships are in line with its mission and objectives.
34. Recognizing the importance of diverse expertise, advice and support, UNESCO is recommended to strengthen the partnership strategy at the regional and inter-regional levels to expedite the implementation of Agenda 2030 of Sustainable Development, particularly on education.

Management of Funding

UNESCO should consider strengthening the coordination of funding from the Member States and/or private sources to better allocate resources for targeted educational programmes/initiatives.

35. UNESCO should encourage the Member States to increase the allocation of funding for the digitization of curricula and learning resources of formal education at all levels, and ensure the availability of sufficient structure, including access to Internet and electronic devices, to support the continuation of education processes.

Monitoring and Evaluation

37. UNESCO should strengthen its monitoring and evaluation systems 1) to measure the progress and identify the challenges experienced by the Member States in realizing Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, particularly on education, and 2) to assess the impact of the programmes implemented by the Organization in supporting the Member States to realize their needs and goals based on concrete, measurable and time-bound results.
38. UNESCO should monitor and evaluate the unbalanced distribution of digital resources in its Member States with a focus on supporting them and their institutions with the greatest needs and allocate resources in accordance with the Priority Africa and Priority Gender Equality.
39. UNESCO should provide the Member States with an impact evaluation model and strategy and review report of the implementation of the previous Medium-Term Strategy (37 C/4) to improve the Member States' strategy in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating programmes and other instruments to realize Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.
40. UNESCO should support the Member States in ensuring credible information for programme monitoring and evaluation through the sharing templates and standards for information collection and exchange.

PART II: COMMITMENT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 41 C/4

1. UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education are ready to support UNESCO, the Member States and other partner organizations with their expertise and capacities, such as through the implementation of research and capacity building programmes, provision of policy advice and technical assistance, sharing of best practices, material development and sharing, and partnerships and networking, in realizing Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 4 on education.
2. UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education are committed to regularly convening, provide updates on respective Centre's programmes and initiatives and seek potential area(s) of collaboration with the spirit of working as one UNESCO in achieving the common goals in education.
3. UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education will seek to establish structured information-sharing protocols among themselves to enhance collaboration.

4. UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education are committed to ensuring that the activities, as well as policies, programmes, and strategies of implementing 41 C/4 are underpinned and/or reflect principles of gender equality, non-discrimination, accessibility and inclusivity to ensure that inequality in education provision and learning is reduced to the barest minimum, if not eradicated completely.
5. UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education will prioritize evidence-driven policies, programmes and processes that assist the governments of the Member States, their civil society organizations (CSOs) and stakeholder in promoting and ensuring equitable, quality, inclusive and sustainable education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.
6. UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education will seek to establish a total quality assurance framework with focus on governance to support the implementation of their recommendations on 41 C/4.