



Save the Children

FINANCING LEARNING FOR EVERY LAST CHILD

**Save the Children's Submission to the
Education Commission Consultation**

INTRODUCTION

Save the Children would like to thank the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity (the Education Commission) for this opportunity to feed into its work and conclusions.

In this submission you will find Save the Children's key messages to the Education Commission, and reports from Save the Children International country offices' engagement in the consultation. Four Save the Children International country offices (Haiti, Indonesia, Malawi and Zimbabwe) present summaries of their consultations with children and adults in their countries.

In addition, five Save the Children members (in Italy, Norway, Switzerland, the UK and the USA) have participated in consultations carried out by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) or other national civil society networks in their countries. There has also been great interest among several other Save the Children colleagues and offices that did not manage to include consultation activities in their already tight plans over the past two months.

It is our hope that this will be of help and inspiration to the Education Commission and its members.

Contents

Financing Learning for Every Last Child: Save the Children's recommendations to the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity	2
1. Placing equity at the core: Achieving learning for every last child	3
2. Reinforcing and strengthening domestic education systems and financing	6
3. An Action Plan for sustained political and financial commitments	7
Conclusion	8
Country consultations	9
Haiti	9
Indonesia	12
Malawi	22
Zimbabwe	24

FINANCING LEARNING FOR EVERY LAST CHILD: SAVE THE CHILDREN'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON FINANCING GLOBAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity (the Education Commission) was established in July 2015 to address the lack of financing for education, as a barrier to achieving the 2030 education goal and targets. Save the Children welcomes this initiative and supports the aims and objectives of the Education Commission. Save the Children International's Chief Executive, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, is one of the Commissioners. This policy brief sets out Save the Children's recommendations to the Education Commission, so as to help shape the Commission Report for September 2016 and any follow-on processes afterwards.

The challenge

The world is facing a learning crisis. More than one in three children (38%) are not acquiring basic literacy and numeracy.¹ 130 million children, having completed four years in school, still lack basic literacy and numeracy skills. Another 120 million drop out of school before they reach fourth grade.² Currently there are 124 million out-of-school children.³ These excluded children are not left behind by coincidence. Children are excluded from learning because of who they are or where they live; a damaging combination of poverty and/or discrimination.

Education is grossly underfunded, especially in low and middle income countries, and education financing is currently too regressive and disproportionately allocated to benefit the wealthiest.⁴ While the total volume of domestic public education spending has been rising in low and middle income countries during the past decade, the share of public expenditure allocated to education has been declining.⁵ Aid for education more than doubled between 2002 and 2010, but has declined since then,⁶ particularly affecting the countries that need it the most.⁷

If the world does not prioritise education, on current trajectories it will take until 2100 before every child born in a low-income country is provided primary education.⁸ Unlocking the financing to ensure every last child learns from a quality basic education will take political will. The Education Commission is well placed to use its analysis and influence to generate political will to tackle the education funding shortfall.

The opportunity and the role of the Education Commission

In September 2015, world leaders agreed on a new set of global goals -the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - to address inequality and end poverty once and for all.⁹ Inclusive and equitable quality education is central to achieving these new goals. It is both a promise in itself (SDG 4), as well as a prerequisite for achieving the other

¹ Robinson and Winthrop (2016): Millions Learning: <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Reports/2016/04/millions-learning/FINAL-Millions-Learning-Report.pdf?la=en>

² UNESCO (2014): Education for All Global Monitoring Report: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002256/225660e.pdf>

³ UNESCO (2015) : <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/fs-31-out-of-school-children-en.pdf>

⁴ The Brookings Institution (2015): Financing for education, opportunities for global action. <http://www.osloeducationsummit.no/pop.cfm?FuseAction=Doc&pAction=View&pDocumentId=63348>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ UNESCO, Global Education Monitoring Report (2016): Aid to education, no end in sight to the decline. <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/latest-aid-figures-show-support-education-falls-again-0#sthash.Mp5bO1yE.dpbs>.

⁷ The Brookings Institution (2015): Financing for education, opportunities for global action.

⁸ UNESCO (2015), referred in the Education Commission's live webinar December 2015.

⁹ UN (2015): Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

SDGs. This is an ambitious yet attainable goal for us all to work towards by 2030, but we will not get anywhere near achieving it unless we mobilise greater, and more equitably allocated education financing.

Therefore, the Education Commission could not come at a better time. Tackling the learning crisis hinges on children's ability to complete free, equitable, inclusive and quality education - as set out in the Addis Ababa Agenda for Action¹⁰. To do this, **we need to be innovative in the ways we mobilise and allocate resources to reach the most excluded children, and deliver against the SDG principle of 'leave no-one behind'**. This is the central challenge that the Commission can address, and around which it can mobilise political commitment.

Save the Children recommends 3 guiding principles for the education financing agenda:

- 1. EQUITY: Placing equity at the core of the Commission analysis and recommendations for action;** only then can we mobilise resources to ensure every last child learns from a quality basic education that is relevant and appropriate to their needs;
- 2. DOMESTIC SYSTEMS AND FINANCING: Reinforcing and strengthening domestic education systems and financing;** a condition for sustainable financing of education where the state is a guarantor of equitable and quality education for all, regardless of the provider;
- 3. ACTION PLAN:** Presenting an Action Plan for securing tangible and sustained political momentum and financial commitments and **follow-on after September, via the establishment of a High-Level Advocacy Group for Education.**

1. Placing equity at the core: Achieving learning for every last child

The task ahead of us is to ensure every child currently excluded from learning - because of their disability, socio-economic status, ethnic or religious identity, gender, discrimination, emergencies or other reasons - will have their right to free, quality education fulfilled by 2030. Save the Children therefore recommends that the Education Commission places equity at the core of its analysis and recommendations for action, with a focus on four key areas to ensure more equitable education outcomes:

- Starting early, when children's life chance and future learning capabilities are shaped;
- Focusing budgets on the most excluded children, who are least likely to attend, complete or learn;
- Making basic education free at the point of use, so that every child can learn regardless of income or status;
- Ensuring transparency and accountability, so that budgets are visible and communities have a say in school governance.

Starting early

The importance of early childhood care and development (ECCD) – whether preschool, kindergarten or other early literacy activities – on children's readiness to learn in primary school is widely acknowledged. Numerous studies show that pre-primary education is one of the most cost-effective investments donors and governments can make.¹¹ For example, a child's familiarisation with printed letters has a strong impact on her or his ability to learn to read. Being illiterate can itself lead to exclusion by acting as an additional driver of poverty and discrimination, whereas being able to read is a pathway to future learning, and a foundational skill that can unlock a whole world

¹⁰ UN (2015): 'Addis Ababa Action Agenda', paragraph 78: http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA_Outcome.pdf

¹¹ See for example Glewwe and, P., Krafft, C. (2014). 'Benefits and Costs of the Education Targets for the Post-2015 Development Agenda.' Working Paper, Jul., 2014; Executive Office of the President of the United States (2014). 'The Economics of Early Childhood Investments.'; Global Partnership for Education. (2014): 'Investing Urgently in Early Childhood Care and Education. Call to Action.'

of opportunities. Literacy is strongly associated with a person's health, employment and financial opportunities as an adult.¹²

In spite of the clear benefits of ECCD, there is a significant gap in global access to quality pre-primary education. Globally, the gross enrolment ratio in pre-primary education is only 48%, with rates as low as 15% in some low-income countries and on average less than 17% in sub-Saharan Africa.¹³ Worldwide, more than 200 million children aged under five do not reach their full potential due to the absence of ECCD programmes.¹⁴

Failure to invest adequately in and to effectively provide ECCD services is resulting in children's cognitive, linguistic, physical and psychosocial needs not being met. For education, this means that if/when those children reach primary school, they lack the basic skills needed to develop or learn in a classroom setting, leading to high numbers of drop-outs and children repeating years of schooling. This, in turn, is contributing to the global learning crisis.

Evidence shows that the most disadvantaged children experience the most dramatic gains from high quality ECCD programmes. Yet it is exactly these children who are least likely to participate in these programmes.¹⁵

Focusing budgets on the most excluded children

Every child will learn only if governments and donors prioritise investment in those children whose right to a quality education is currently unfulfilled, and remove barriers to learning:

- Refugees are five times more likely to be out-of-school than non-refugee children.¹⁶ The average length of time as a refugee is now 17 years, meaning millions of children miss out on some – if not all – of their education.¹⁷
- Children from ethnic minorities are significantly less likely to be in school and achieve good learning outcomes. For example, 40% of Roma children in Bosnia and Herzegovina receive primary schooling, compared with the national average of 92%.¹⁸
- 75% of girls enter primary school in sub-Saharan Africa, but only 8% finish secondary school.¹⁹ In the poorest households, only 84 girls complete primary schools for every 100 boys, on average.²⁰

How education budgets are allocated matters for learning and inclusion. Today, education budgets often disproportionately benefit the wealthiest, being skewed in many countries towards non-basic education and better-off urban populations.²¹ Teachers – one of the most important factors for a child's learning – are often grossly underfunded.²² Moreover, several governments lack reliable information about who is excluded from school, who is not learning and why.

We must make sure that education finance is instead firmly geared towards reducing disparities in education, and that allocations are based on accurate and reliable data. Every government must be enabled to, and prioritise, carrying out national analysis to identify the most marginalised children.

¹² Save the Children (forthcoming, 2016): 'Lessons in Literacy' report will present evidence and analysis regarding literacy.

¹³ See: <http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/call-action-investing-urgently-early-childhood-care-and-education>.

¹⁴ Save the Children (2012), 'Laying the Foundations: Early childhood care and development'.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ UNHCR Education Unit (2016): 'Refugee enrolment data'

¹⁷ United Nations Secretary General (2016): 'One humanity: shared responsibility. Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit' <http://sgreport.worldhumanitariansummit.org/>

¹⁸ Save the Children (2016): 'Every Last Child: The children the world chooses to forget', page 14.

¹⁹ Brookings Institution (2015): 'What works in girls' education: Evidence for the world's best investment'.

²⁰ Save the Children (2016): 'Every Last Child: The children the world chooses to forget', page

²¹ The Brookings Institution (2015): Financing for education, opportunities for global action.

²² See for example EI, ILO, UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF (2015): Joint Message on the occasion of the World Teachers' Day:

<http://iite.unesco.org/news/639217/>

Making education free at point of use

Every child has the right to free primary education,²³ and world leaders have committed to scale up investments to allow free early childhood, primary and secondary education.²⁴ The abolition of primary school fees has had a strong impact on enrolment in many countries and has often increased the enrolment of excluded groups and reduced the number of drop-outs.²⁵ For the poorest families, lowering indirect costs of education such as uniforms, textbooks and transport remains a decisive factor in ensuring children's access to educational opportunities.

Ensuring transparency and accountability

Public participation is key to ensure that education budgets and spending are responsive to the rights and needs of children, and to avoid mismanagement of funds. However, meaningful participation is only possible where adults and children have timely access to government data and information, and are empowered to engage. Ensuring that allocated resources actually reach learners, requires transparent budget and spending data, and it requires data to be made accessible to the public in timely, user-friendly and accessible formats.²⁶ Transparency and accountability are the fundamental pillars for building stronger and more responsive, quality education systems.

To put equity at the core of the Education Commission's work, we recommend that the Education Commission:

- **Includes actionable recommendations for how to boost early childhood care and development**, particularly targeting the most deprived and excluded children. Actions should include parenting education and strengthening the home literacy environment, and training ECCD teachers in play-based early literacy and maths approaches.
- **Presents actionable recommendations on how to establish equitable budget allocation formulas**, giving priority to those regions and learners most in need. We recommend that the Commission highlights the importance of teachers, and the need to support governments' capacity to collect and analyse reliable, disaggregated data that enable equitable budgeting.
- **Advocates for donors to provide multi-year funding to education in emergencies** to allow sustainability in the provision of education for children trapped in long-term displacement contexts, and calls on refugee host countries and donors to collaborate to ensure no refugee child is out of school for more than one month, regardless of where they are.
- **Affirms the international agreed standard of free, universal basic education**. We recommend that the Commission present an analysis on financial barriers to education, and options for how to overcome them - including a call to governments and other financiers of education to make education fee free and free of indirect payments.
- **Provides advice on how to enable meaningful participation by children, their parents and the wider community in budget processes** (both budget and actual spending) at national, district, local and school levels, to improve transparency and accountability, aimed at ensuring that the most excluded groups of children are prioritised.

²³ UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, article 28: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

²⁴ UN (2015): 'Addis Ababa Action Agenda', paragraph 78

²⁵ Save the Children (2016): Every Last Child: <https://campaigns.savethechildren.net/report>

²⁶ SDG 16 highlights the need for public participation in decision making at all levels, and the need for public access to information.

2. Reinforcing and strengthening domestic education systems and financing

Achieving learning for every last child requires high quality education systems. What a good education system looks like, and the roles for different actors, will vary depending on geography, degree of varieties in cultures and languages, degree of peace, conflict, disaster resilience etc. But **a good education system will always be based principally on equity and learning as the core standards to be measured against.**

Education systems require sustainable and predictable financing. The largest source of such financing is domestic resources. External resources will still be needed in the poorest and most vulnerable countries, but the reliance on aid and other external funding would be significantly reduced if governments, international institutions and the private sector joined forces to boost domestic resource mobilisation by curbing illicit capital flows such as tax evasion and avoidance.

Setting and enforcing standards

It is the responsibility of the state to ensure that every child has access to compulsory primary education free of costs.²⁷ The state is also responsible for ensuring equity and quality in education and that education respects the child's cultural identity, language, values and more. Non-state actors are obliged to "conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State".²⁸ The state's role as guarantor for equity and quality requires strong institutions and ability to set and enforce standards for financing, provision and regulation of education. Today, many governments lack this capacity.

Domestic financing

Illicit capital flight is a main barrier for education financing. Conservative estimates show that in 2013 alone, US\$1.1 trillion flowed illicitly out of developing and emerging economies.²⁹ This capital, if reported and brought back into the tax system, could unlock key resources for reinforcing and strengthening education systems. In some countries the low priority given to education in national budgets, and the degree of corruption at various levels, represent other barriers to domestic financing of education.

²⁷ As set out in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, article 28 and 29: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

²⁸ The Convention of the Rights of the Child, article 29: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

²⁹ Global Financial Integrity (2013), Illicit Financial Flows from Developing Countries 2004 – 2013. <http://www.gfintegrity.org/report/illicit-financial-flows-from-developing-countries-2004-2013/>

To reinforce and strengthen domestic education systems and financing, we recommend that the Education Commission:

- **Encourages financing of education which strengthens states' ability to be effective guarantors and stewards** of reinforced and strengthened domestic education systems that provide inclusive, quality education. All public or private external financing and provision of education must follow international principles for aid effectiveness, and respect standards and national education plans set by each government.
- **Highlights how different stakeholders can join forces to remove barriers for increased domestic resource mobilisation for ECCD and basic education:**
 - Low and middle income country governments must work to progressively and equitably increase their tax revenue; prioritise education in national budgets; and ensure transparency measures are put in place to avoid corruption at all levels.
 - Donors must use their political leverage to support more transparency in international finance. They should require international companies to publically report financial data in each country where they operate (full country by country reporting), put in place public registers of the beneficial owners of corporate entities, and facilitate multilateral automatic exchange of tax information.
 - The private sector can also contribute to strengthening education systems and increasing domestic resources for education through maximising resources and expertise to support governments in the financing of education, through providing decent jobs and paying fair taxes.¹ But it is critically important that contributions are made in line with government policies and with financial and political transparency.
- **Provides options regarding how tax and other incentives can be used in innovative ways** to generate increased revenue to strengthen education systems. Innovative sources of financing can include taxes on public ills such as tobacco and pollution, financial transaction tax, and incentives for corporations to share technological developments with education systems at no profit.

3. An Action Plan for sustained political and financial commitments

The Commission's main test of success will be whether it uses its high-level political influence to mobilise increased and sustained political and financial commitment to education that benefits those children that are being left behind.

Action Plan to finance learning for every last child

Presenting tangible commitments, clear timelines and roles, the Action Plan must support and reinforce existing efforts to achieve the SDGs and the global education community's Education 2030 Framework for Action, deliver on the Addis Ababa Agenda for Action, and support a scaled-up and reinforced Global Partnership for Education (GPE). The Action Plan must build on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The recommendations need to be sufficiently context-specific to benefit children left behind because of their gender, geographical location, disability, discrimination and the degree of conflict and other emergencies around them.

The Action Plan should bring together efforts to finance education in a continuum of contexts, from humanitarian contexts, to fragile states, to more stable development contexts. The Commission can be instrumental in breaking the silo approach to education financing, by strengthening the link and continuity between humanitarian and development funding – for example, by calling for increased investment in disaster preparedness and risk reduction. The Commission can also help ensure that donor pledging to education is truly additional and does not re-channel

existing funds between long-term education financing and the humanitarian space, nor draws from other pledged humanitarian financing.

High-level Advocacy Group for Education Financing

Financial commitment frequently follows political trends and momentum. The Commission can create sustained momentum for investments in education by continuing the existing Commission or adapting it into a new High Level Advocacy Group for Education Financing. The mandate of the Advocacy Group would be to act as the political champions for increased and improved financing for education and leading on the implementation of the Action Plan.

A critical first step of the Advocacy Group should be to convene a high-level education pledging summit in 2017. The pledging event could help bridge the gap between humanitarian and development finance to education by linking closely to a possible GPE replenishment and other pledges – such as to the Education Cannot Wait Fund for Education in Emergencies.

To ensure there is clear follow-on after September, we recommend that the Education Commission:

- **Develops an Action Plan for how Commissioners will seek to ensure their recommendations are implemented, driven forward by a High-Level Advocacy Group for Education Financing,** particularly focusing on fairer financing to support the most deprived and excluded children.

Conclusion

The world has been bold in its promise to fulfil every single child's right to education and learning by 2030, and the Education Commission has taken on a great task in mobilising the financial resources needed to do so. Save the Children believes the success of the Education Commission must be measured in whether it uses its convening powers to mobilise political momentum and sustained financing to fulfil the world's promise to achieve learning opportunities for every last child.

We recommend that the Education Commission focuses on the following three priorities:

1. Placing equity at the core of the Commission analysis and recommendations for action;
2. Reinforcing and strengthen domestic education systems and financing;
3. Presenting an Action Plan for sustained political momentum and financial commitments.

Save the Children will work with the Education Commission to support its work and ensure that the learning needs of the most excluded children are genuinely prioritised and invested in. Children want education, and they prioritise it.³⁰ We need to be accountable to them and ensure we too prioritise education in the funding decisions we all take and how we build stronger and more responsive and quality education systems. It is their right, and we owe it to the future generation that every last child learns from quality education. The Education Commission can play a critical role in unlocking the financing to make it happen.

³⁰ See the Save the Children and Norwegian Refugee Council "Hear it from the Children" reports from DRC and Ethiopia (2014): https://www.savethechildren.net/sites/default/files/Hear%20it%20from%20children%20FINAL_WEB.pdf South Sudan (2015): http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/hifc_report_-_print_ready_version_-_final.pdf

COUNTRY CONSULTATIONS

This chapter presents summaries of consultations with children, teachers, local government officials and Save the Children staff, carried out by Save the Children International offices in Haiti, Indonesia, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

Haiti

“School is your future. School gives access to things that will allow you to live a good life, such as work. School can help you become a senator, president, secretary”
Magdala (14), Camp-perrin, Haiti.

Consultation with children

Save the Children International in Haiti facilitated a focal group interview to hear the views of children from schools in the Grande-Anse and Sud areas around the Park Macaya national park. The focal group of six children answered to and discussed questions relating to what education means, what obstacles there are for good education and what is needed to overcome those obstacles.

Child participation advisors from Save the Children Haiti interviewed four girls and two boys aged 12-15 years, and facilitated the discussion among them. The consultation was carried out in Haitian Creole.



Photo: Marit Aakvaag

Here are the children’s views and recommendations:

1. What does school represent for you?

- Education is very important because without it, you are not included in society;
- School is a good thing in everyone’s life, it is where you go to learn;
- Education is a treasure. It gives you access to new stages in life;
- School is your future. School gives access to things that will allow you to live a good life, such as work. School can help you become a senator, president, or secretary;
- School is very useful. Without school there would be no agronomists or teachers;
- School gives you access to some places that you cannot enter if you do not attend school.

2. Is school important for you?

- School can give you access to work;
- Education is very important because my mom and dad can’t read and write, I have to learn in order to help them in the future.

3. What do you think is necessary for a school to work well?

- The school should have teachers and discipline to work well;
- The PTA of the school should be created, there should be discipline, in order for the school to be successful;
- The school needs teachers, parents and students to work well.

4. What do you think a teacher needs in order to be efficient?

- The teacher needs skills; he should be educated;
- The teacher should be prepared.

5. What can prevent a school from working well?

- The state doesn't pay the teachers. Sometimes they don't come. Students are losing hours of class;
- The school lacks material for children, and teachers;
- My school doesn't have water and toilets;
- My school lacks space and it is near a cliff;
- The contributions requested from the parents are too high.

6. What obstacles can affect children's learning process?

- Sometimes I have headache, I don't feel good and can't pay attention to what the teacher is saying;
- My school is not well located, there is a cliff next to it. When it rains the water almost inundates the school;
- When it rains my school can't work;
- Parents don't have enough money to buy the books, we don't have books;
- The school is located too close to the street. When the teacher talks we can't hear him because people are talking too loud in the streets.

7. What needs to be done for a school to work well?

- Children should be provided with books to attend school;
- Children should come on time for school;
- Teachers must be well prepared;
- Teachers lend us books;
- Parent, teachers and school directors have to work together in order for the school to work appropriately.

Consultations with staff members at Save the Children International Haiti

The following perspectives on education financing are offered by staff members at Save the Children International Haiti. Two education staff members were interviewed for the purpose of this consultation. The interview focussed on consultation questions 1, 2, 4 and 5. This section presents a summary of their responses.

1. Given that there are clear benefits of education, why do you think people have not acted and invested in education at the level needed?

In Haiti resources are not allocated in an appropriate manner to give education the priority it deserves. There is a problem of centralisation where the provinces and rural areas are neglected. Resources should be distributed more evenly.

The government needs to build more schools, educate more teachers and pay them regularly and fair. The government should increase access to quality education for more children, with a specific emphasis on the most excluded children.

A positive feature in Haiti is that parents value education a lot. They worry about education fees because they are so eager to give their children education. It should be free. Free education in the constitution, and should become a reality.

2. What do you think has been the biggest single obstacle to raising educational quality in developing countries? How can we overcome this obstacle?

Lack of investment in education has long been, and still is, a deep problem in Haiti. Quality education needs strong economic investments, and a good education policy must become a priority for the government in Haiti. We need to see the prioritisation of education visible in the budgets. The so-called Universal, Free and Compulsory Schooling Program (PSUGO) commits the government to invest 90 dollars per child, but this is too little. There is also lack of training for teachers, and lack of involvement of parents. The government's challenges in the education sector blocks quality education.

There must be an increased mobilization of resources. More money needs to be allocated to education, including by increasing tax collections.

4. How do you think education/school will look different in 2030? What implications does this have on the Commission's recommendations?

Our vision for 2030 is that the government of Haiti has reached a point where education is inclusive, everyone can reap the fruits of education. The school will welcome all children, and they will learn together. Now, in 2016, ten per cent of children in school age are excluded from entering school in Haiti.

5. What will be the most important (new) sources of finance for global education over the next decades? How could these sources be harnessed?

Technological development and a global tax for investment in education.

The National Education Fund (FNE) bill, which is part of the Universal, Free and Compulsory Schooling Program, should be approved in order to ensure more resources are available for the education sector.

Indonesia

“...opportunities to participate in collective decision making and scope for independent initiatives by children are very restricted. This is due partly to an unwillingness to change social relationships and partly to the fact that policy-making is dominated by the perspectives and interests of adults. It is absolutely essential to involve children and young people if the alienation of young adults is to be avoided and opportunities to build a dynamic society for the future are to be created”

(Save the Children, 1997)



Photo: Save the Children International Indonesia

Details about the participants to the consultations

No. of consultation/s held and areas

Four consultations in four cities/districts

1. Langsa, Aceh-Sumatra Province
2. Sumba, East Nusa Tenggara Province
3. Belu, East Nusa Tenggara Province
4. Jakarta, Capital City of Indonesia

Data and information in relation to the children's profile per consultation:

Area	Group of children	Age	# of children
Langsa	Children on the move	8-17 years	Girls: 10 Boys: 18
Sumba	Children with Sponsorship Program	10-14 years	Girls: 12 Boys: 7

Belu	Children with literacy program	8-12 years	Girls: 10 Boys: 10
Jakarta	Children who are the respondent of Free Violence School research	10-12 years	Girls: 13 Boys: 7
Total			Girls: 45 <u>Boys: 42</u> Total: 87

Data and information in relation to adults' profile per consultation:	Area	Group of adults	# persons
	Langsa	Teachers, NGOs	12 persons
	Sumba	Teachers	9 persons
	Belu	Teachers, local government officials from Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and the Local Planning Agency	11 persons

The objectives of the consultations

- To share information about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the International Commission on Education Financing Opportunity (The Education Commission);
- To explore the challenges for access to quality education from children's and teachers' perspective;
- To gather inputs from children and teachers on better access to quality education in Indonesia;
- To raise the local government's awareness about the SDGs and to gain information about the preparation of the sub-national level in the implementation of the SDGs.

Consultation with children

Structure of the consultation

1. Introduction of the children in the group;
2. Sharing expectations and the objective of the consultation, and introduction to the Education Commission;
3. Refreshing knowledge about child rights, with emphasise on the right to education.
4. Sharing the existing situation that children experience in relation to education.
5. Building dreams for better quality education in 2030.
6. Providing recommendations on what can be done to make the children's dreams come true

Introduction of the children in the group

The children in the group were introduced to each through a local game that made them have fun together. Children also shared their feelings about joining the consultation by sticking a post-it on a mood-meter; a ☹️ ----- 😊 chart. Most of them felt happy to join the consultation. A few of them felt sad since they were a bit sick, but they still wanted to join. The children were also invited to define the house-rules of the consultation. They mentioned punctuality, respecting others' opinion, listening when others are raising their opinions, the need to be brave and active, keeping the consultation area clean.

Objective of the consultation and introduction to the Education Commission

The children were informed about the consultation on education financing, so they can raise their ideas and opinions in relation to education and how it can ensure the best interest of children. Moreover, the children were informed about the Education Commission and the fact that President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, is one of the Co-Convenors, and that the consultation results will also reach the President. The core objective of the consultation was discussed so that the children got clear idea the consultation was organised and the importance of consulting children.



Photo: Save the Children International Indonesia

Refreshing knowledge about children's rights, emphasizing the right to education.

The consultation was organised with children who had already received basic training in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), since they are beneficiaries of Save the Children in Indonesia. A short refresher on the CRC, its principles and in particular article 28 was discussed with the children.

“Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education.”

Children were asked to state key words of article 28 of the CRC. They said:

1. Every child has the right to an education
2. Primary education must be free
3. Schools must respect children's dignity and their rights
4. International cooperation

The children's views and recommendations

Children's experience with education

We used three different methodologies when facilitating the sharing of information about the children's experience with education. We used different methodologies in the different areas, adapted to the specific age groups and backgrounds. We used drawings, making of daily activity cycle, and questions and answers.

1. Drawings

Children draw and explained their feelings in relation to their existing education:

- Happy, because:
 - Can learn new things in schools;
 - Play together with friends;

- There are books in schools;
- Clean schools with toilets.
- Flat, because:
 - Going to school is just a daily routine, meet the same teachers every day.
- Sad, because:
 - The school is too far from home, need to walk for more than 2km;
 - Some teachers are still doing corporal punishment such as hitting or pinching, and asking students to stand up in front of the class;
 - Classrooms are cramped and hot, which is an obstacle for learning. In the rainy season the roof is leaking;
 - Limited number of books
 - The number of teachers in their schools is very limited. This has led some teachers concurrently to teach multiple subjects. But unfortunately, some teachers don't deliver well, and sometimes the students find it difficult to understand the material being studied;
 - The school is prone to flood, so that sometimes students are asked to stay at home;
 - Classrooms are still poorly constructed and tend not to be well maintained;
 - Some children said that they feel uncomfortable at school because the school environment and dirty toilets.

2. Daily activity cycle

The children were divided in groups of 4-5 persons. In the groups, they drew a clock and defined their daily activities based on time. It was found that not all of them go to school. The children listed the following reasons for being out of school:

- Poverty;
- Public schools are not free;
- The political situation is the cause they are not able to access education. This is the case for children on the move. The requirement for citizenship has rendered many children stateless and hinder them from access to education;
- The awareness of the parents about the importance of education is still low. Some of the children are asked to work in order to help their parents earn money;
- Some of the children are just able to access religious schools.



Photo: Save the Children International Indonesia

3. Questions and Answers

The children were asked to share what they feel and experience about their existing education.

"I feel sad. For years, the toilet, classrooms and school surroundings have not been healthy and clean. Sometimes the teachers are ignoring me"

Dewi Chandra, 11 years old, Belu - East Nusa Tenggara

"I am happy to go to school since I could go to the library to read books, and I can play together with friends afterwards,"

Dona M, Da'Costa, 11 years old, Belu - East Nusa Tenggara

Building dreams on better quality education in 2030

“I want to have a school that is not dirty, not flooding. I want to have a safe school and a lot of plants that grow outside the school. While studying, if there are no books in the school, I want the school to provide more books”

Naila Apriliani, 11 years old, SDS Kampung Sawah, North Jakarta



Photo: Save the Children International Indonesia

Through drawings, children expressed their dreams for education in the future. Then children were asked to tell the story about their drawings. Their dreams are:

- Free education for all, until universities;
- Quality teachers and no more corporal punishment;
- Distance from home should be shorter;
- Vehicles to pick and drop students from home to schools;
- More books;
- Schools that
 - Have two floors;
 - Have colourful wall-paintings;
 - Have big yard or park;
 - Have computers;
 - Teach skills such as foreign languages, computer skills, mechanic skills (vocational);
 - Welcome young mothers;
- School facilities and infrastructure should support children to gain a lot of knowledge and develop their potential and interest. The children described these ideal conditions as:

- Spacious classrooms and a school roof that does not leak during the rains so that students will be able to follow the teaching and learning activities in the classroom with ease;
- A large number of books in the school is an ideal condition that should exist in every school, including their school. With a large number of books provided, students will no longer have difficulties in accessing knowledge that can support their academic performance;
- Teachers at the school were also supposed to be better trained to convey the material in a way that is enjoyable for the students;
- For non-academic performance, students also have a dream that school will provide some extracurricular activities to develop the potential and interest of students;
- In addition to these, the children also considered that creating a school environment that is comfortable, clean, and well maintained is important for quality education.

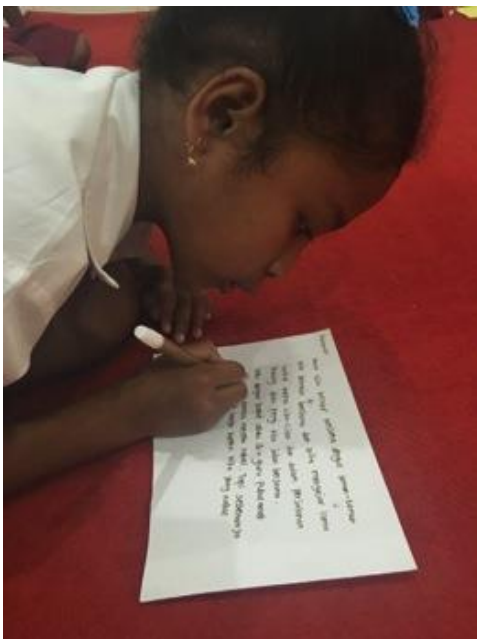


Photo:
Save the Children
International Indonesia

Recommendations for making the children's dreams come true

The children were asked who can help them to make their dreams come true, and what their roles are. The children were divided into groups where they classified the stakeholders and their roles as follows:

- Family
 - All parents should support their children to go to school instead of asking them to work, and should assist the children while studying at home;
 - Family can support the establishment of a quality education or school. This can be done by the involvement of the family to get together with the school community to clean the school (most of the student lived near the school area), raise funds to build school infrastructure, and also donated plants to the school;
- Schools
 - The school can create a rule that everyone must dispose of waste in place, but the school must also provide some bins;
 - The school also had to urge everyone to worked together to clean the school environment and improving school facilities (e.g. fix the leaking roof) in order to create a comfortable school environment.



Photo: Save the Children International Indonesia

- Society

- To create a comfortable and safe school environment, the community can help the school to create a vision and mission to make a more convenient environment free from violence;
- Interestingly, the children mentioned that the woman religion group has a role to play in creating an educational or school quality, because a religion group is a space where communication can be established between citizens;
- The village government can contribute to build schools close to people's houses;
- People in the village can contribute their time and power to build the schools.

- State/Government

- Provide free schools for all children;
- Provide books as much as possible and help establish a school library;
- Give financial assistance to the school to renovate classrooms so that students feel comfortable when studying;
- Provide janitor for schools in order to create a clean school environment;
- Not only related to the facility, the State also has a role to provide training for adults to become teachers and also make policy or strict rules to prevent violence in schools;
- The Minister of Education should provide quality teachers and find support from private sector to build good quality schools;
- The president should build more schools, provide free schools for all children including for children on the move, give equal access and opportunity for children who are from poor families;
- The governor should allocate budget for free schools.

Consultation with teachers and local government officials

Structure of the consultation

1. Introduction to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the SDGs;
2. Discussion of key successes and challenges to better access to education and higher quality education;
3. Building dreams for better quality education in 2030;
4. Recommendations to what can be done to make their dreams come true, including financial aspects.

Introduction to the MDGs and the SDGs

The teachers and local government officials were presented to information about the MDGs implementation in Indonesia, key successes of the implementation of the MDGs in Indonesia, and the challenges. They were introduced to how Indonesia is preparing to implement the SDGs to end poverty, reduce inequality and to build a sustainable environment. The facts and figures were specifically related to education.

The teachers' and local government officials' views and recommendations

Discussion about key successes and challenges for better access and quality education

Participants were asked to explore further on the following questions:

1. What were the key successes in achieving better access and quality education in your district?

- Indonesia has reached 20% of National State Budget for Education. Therefore, Indonesia can reach nearly 100% net enrolment of basic education;
- Policy on education that supports children to learn, such as:
 - Free tuition for public schools (elementary level).
 - The national government gives additional financial support such as operational funds for students on a monthly basis.
 - Other social protection schemes such as Bantuan Siswa Miskin (aid for poor students), Program Keluarga Harapan (family-based poverty alleviation program) from the national government have had impact on parents' ability to send their children to school.
- The role of INGOs such as Save the Children in bridging the gap of government's effort, for example trainings for teachers.

2. What are the challenges to have better access and quality education in your district?

- Poverty;
- Policies that are not well implemented and not well distributed to the lower level, such as villages;
- Higher level of education is costly;
- Teachers;
 - Quality of teachers;
 - There are still un-qualified teachers, not having a bachelor degree;
 - There is a limited numbers of teachers in remote areas;
 - There are limited opportunities for capacity building.

- Remuneration of teachers;
 - There are still lot of teachers are not well paid.
- Infrastructure: bumpy roads, school is too far from home for the children to access it;
- Lack of nutritious foods to support the learning ability of children;
- Family factors;
 - There are still a lot of parents that asked their children to work to help them earning money;
 - Lack of attention and care from the family.
- Early Childhood Education is still not priority;
- Lack of learning equipment in schools.

Building dreams on better quality education in 2030.

Most of the participants stated:

“Quality education for all and free of charge”

- Quality educations means education that can create students that are having good skills, independent, able to compete with others, able to create achievements, have good capability in information technology;
- Quality educations means that the number of graduates should be followed by increased quality.



Photo: Save the Children International Indonesia

Recommendations for what can be done to fulfil their dreams, including financial aspects

Participants were asked who have the responsibility to make their dreams come true, and what their roles are.

- Family
 - All parents should support their children to go to school instead of asking them to work;
 - The family should give nutritious food to the children;
 - The family should intensively follow the progress of their children's academic achievement by consulting teachers from time to time;
 - The family should pay attention to their family's health and hygiene.
- Schools
 - Provide a convenient environment of learning for children.
- Society
 - Create a comfortable and safe school environment;
 - Undertake periodic joint activities with the school, for example clean the school and its environment.
- State/Government
 - Provide free schools for all children;
 - Provide decent-job opportunity for fresh graduates;
 - Provide scholarships for students from poor families;
 - Provide more funds support for Early Childhood Education.

Participants were asked to raise ideas on the financial aspect of making their dreams come true. They mentioned the following funding sources:

- State Budget
 - National: 20% of total state budget;
 - Sub-National including Village Funds that amounted Rp 20.8 trillion (US\$1.48 billion) in 2015.
- INGOs or development agencies support;
- Private sector;
- Crowd funding from society for scholarships.

Malawi

"I long for the day I will go to school and find resources. We don't have books, desks and teachers are not enough"

Elinor, Standard 7 learner at Chisasa Primary School.

Consultations with children

In relation to Save the Children's Every Last Child campaign,³¹ Save the Children International Malawi carried out consultations with 40 children. This section presents a summary of responses to the Every Last Child consultation, of relevance to the Education Commission consultation.

Children have a very colourful picture of what education should look like. Even in the remote Gumba education zone in Mchinji, Malawi, children say they know that a school should have all the necessary resources for them to be encouraged to stay and learn. They want books, desks, more teachers, more classrooms and libraries. The primary school children are also aware of the fact that there is no full secondary school in the area. So they want one, because they want more than a primary education.



Photo: Save the Children International Malawi

In this zone, the pupil-teacher ratio is high and this is confounded by high teacher absenteeism, particularly towards the end of the month. The children therefore want the government to address the critical shortage of resources and teachers available in school throughout the school day.

³¹ Please find more information about the campaign here: <https://campaigns.savethechildren.net/>

Consultation with Civil Society Education Coalition

Save the Children International Malawi interviewed the Head of the Civil Society Education Coalition in Malawi, for the purpose of the Education Commission consultation. The section presents a summary of his responses.

1. The problem

In Malawi, as in many other developing countries, resources are extremely competitive between and within sectors. The economy is underperforming and the available tax opportunities are limited, so the government cannot generate adequate revenue to adequately finance education. In addition, emerging global issues dictate the use of aid so that new and existing priorities are competing for the same limited resources- Too little attention is paid to ensuring new, additional resources to be directed towards international development.

However, the challenges around education financing in Malawi and a number of other developing countries, go beyond the resource constraints and into the political domain where the benefits of investing in education have remained a contentious issue. In Malawi, we see that political leaders often focus on short term rather than long term results. Education investments take long to bear fruit, so many political leaders are not always eager to adequately invest in education.

2. What should be done?

The solution lies with developing countries themselves. Domestic remedies must be encouraged because foreign aid and other external resources are unpredictable. Developing countries must develop mechanisms to fill in the deficit and stand on their feet.

There is need to optimise domestic revenue collection and to broaden the tax base. In Malawi for example, the government needs to do more to organise and regulate the informal sector so that it becomes an additional source of revenue.

There is need for clear mechanisms for corporate social responsibility.

Malawi should also be clear about where within the education sector it direct its limited resources. Sometimes resources are available, but the question becomes whether we are we investing in critical areas. Critical areas include infrastructure, teaching and learning materials as well as teacher training and deployment.

Finally, there must be a clear framework for private sector contribution to education. Private sponsorship of students, particularly at tertiary level must also be encouraged.

3. Education in 2030

Driven by the challenges that developing countries are facing today, by 2030 they will have devised innovative ways of reducing over reliance on foreign aid and donor support, and finance education domestically. With sustained political will and a clear and collective vision, there shall be greater focus within curriculum design on matters of science and technology. Because in 2030, science and technology will be the currency for economic growth and social development. This will change the architecture of education in general.

As societies evolve, better ways of delivering education are likely to develop. However, it is also likely that the financing trend will not change much, aid will still be a major source of finance for global education.

Consultation with staff members at Save the Children International Malawi

This section builds on consultations with two education experts at Save the Children International Malawi.

Education specialists within Save the Children in Malawi believe that quality education can only be achieved if learners are able to realize expected learning outcomes within a well-resourced-system. Learners and learning institutions must also be supported by households and communities. None of this is prevailing in the current Malawian context.

Limited financial resources for infrastructural development, procurement of teaching, and learning materials are coupled with poor accountability systems for the available financial and material resources. These remain major challenges in the education sector.

Budget tracking for the education sector in Malawi is critical, and the results of the tracking would be a good advocacy tool. With budget tracking, funding gaps could be exposed, along with weak links in financial accountability and transparency. Under-financed but important elements, and vice versa, would be identified to provide context to lobby for additional donors for specific areas of interest.

Reputable budget tracking would also be a reference for micro and macro level budget formulation debates, including parliamentary approval of the national budget.

Zimbabwe

Save the Children International Zimbabwe carried out focal group discussion with children in one group and adults, including teachers, Ministry of Education officials and parents, in another group. Consultations were carried out in three schools where Save the Children has project activities that engage teachers, parents, children and local leaders –both traditional leaders and the local District Council.

Details about the participants to the consultations:

Ganganyama Primary School

- 20 learners: 10 boys and 10 girls.
- 35 adults: 10 males and 25 females.

Mubvundudzi Primary School

- 17 learners: 5 boys and 12 girls.
- 36 adults: 15 males and 21 females.

Chimhanda Primary School

- 20 learners: 10 boys and 10 girls.
- 57 adults (parents and teachers): 26 males and 31 females.

Here is a summary of their responses to the consultation questions:

1. Given that there are clear benefits of education, why do you think people have not acted and invested in education at the level needed?

Benefits of education are generally clear and appreciated, particularly by ‘advantaged’ or ‘enlightened’ groups in our nation. This is probably because their children currently have greater opportunities for economic engagement and employment here and outside Zimbabwe after schooling. This makes them get direct benefits from education. On the contrary, learners from an average background might still roam the streets despite having acquired high skills and even university education.

In some geographical areas in Zimbabwe, particularly those bordering the Republic of South Africa and Botswana, the youth in particular drop out of school to seek greener pastures in the neighbouring countries where they can get employment, lead a reasonable life with some amassing wealth or property in the short to medium term. In such cases, education for those who will have stayed in school in Zimbabwe does not provide immediate benefits.

2. What do you think has been the biggest single obstacle to raising educational quality in developing countries? How can we overcome this obstacle?

In Zimbabwe the demand for education rose drastically in the eighties after independence and, following government initiatives on education for all the black majority who had been deprived of this social service and right. There was no matching supply of resources such as school buildings, furniture, textbooks and qualified teachers, all of which are critical for quality education. Currently there is a shortage of over 2400 schools in the country. There are temporary satellite- or annex schools, some of which are lowly resourced and learners hold classes in shifting structures such as farm sheds or farm houses or pole and dagga sheds with inadequate toilet facilities or water sources. These were created to lessen the burden of learners walking long distances from home to school.

One way of addressing such an imbalance is for the government to review its priorities and place education in pole position, or at least for education to be ahead of such expenditure as government sponsored luxury vehicles and international trips for top government officials, or allowing extremely high salaries or exit packages for executives of poorly performing parastatals. Another option would be for government and partners to expedite implementing the reviewed curriculum reforms such as the STEM which encourage and support the teaching of sciences and mathematics, which are critical and relevant for inducing economic production and growth by funding the initiative.

3. For those countries which have made the greatest improvements in education in recent years, what do you think have been the critical factors in their success?

Answering this demands more research such as identifying the countries that have made the greatest improvements in education and thence the contributing factors.

4. How do you think education/school will look different in 2030? What implications does this have on the Commission's recommendations?

If no meaningful investment is done in schools, 2030 would see many public schools in Zimbabwe still struggling to provide teaching learning resources. The quality of education would still be low, while private schools offer a better quality education, but at a price that will remain expensive and not accessible to the majority.

5. What will be the most important (new) sources of finance for global education over the next decades? How could these sources be harnessed?

Currently the greater part of education funding in Zimbabwe is placed on parents, except for salaries of those in the education ministry that are shouldered by tax payers. Parents of learners pay school fees and levies that support the keep up of the schools. Government grants allocated to the schools are just a drop in the ocean and therefore, not adequate to meet most of the needs of the schools.