
22nd Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers

Chair's Statement

London, United Kingdom, 16-17 May 2024

Strengthening Education Resilience and Advancing SDG4 Goals: proposed action plan

1. A statement by the Government of Kenya in their capacity as Chair of the 22CCEM which met at Marlborough House on 16-17 May 2024. This Chair's Summary and the recommendations from the ministers' caucus and ministerial breakout sessions (to be added) seek to reflect the discussions held, as well as set out key considerations which were noted for further time bound actions, including priorities to accelerate efforts towards SDG4 goals and beyond 2030.
2. **Reaffirm Commitment to Prioritising Education:** Ministers commit to prioritising education as a fundamental component of sustainable development, reaffirming their dedication to the recommendations of the 21st Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers (21CCEM), which highlighted the imperative of addressing inequality in learning opportunities, including gender and disability related disparities, and adapting education to meet the demands of a rapidly advancing technological landscape. Ministers commit to tackling violence in and around schools and ensuring that education settings are safe for all.
3. **Values and Principles in Education:** Ministers agree that national education systems in Commonwealth member states should now, more than ever, be underpinned by values and principles of dignity, fairness, respect, and compassion, as embedded in the Commonwealth Charter. These core values are essential for fostering inclusive and equitable societies, preparing students to become responsible global citizens, and ensuring that education contributes to the holistic development and well-being of every individual.
4. **Address NCDs:** Additionally, ministers acknowledge the intrinsic link between education and health, especially in combatting Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and associated risk factors. They pledge to exploring collaborative endeavours in these areas including initiatives focused on health education.
5. **Promote Education Financing:** Ministers pledge to promote both domestic and international education financing to bridge existing gaps in educational access and quality. They commit to exploring innovative financing mechanisms tailored to national contexts to effectively support education initiatives.
6. **Increase Climate Finance for Education:** Ministers advocate for a significant boost in climate finance investment in the education sector, aiming to triple the current allocation of USD 70 million from the Building the Climate Resilience of Children and Communities (BRACE) initiative. This includes strengthening climate education through initiatives like the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) to

ensure education systems are adequately equipped to navigate a climate-resilient future.

7. **Embrace Greening Education Initiatives:** Ministers welcome the Greening Education Partnership (GEP) and express readiness to explore the adoption of Green School Quality Standards and Curriculum Guidance to foster environmental stewardship and sustainability.
8. **Common Agenda for Education and Climate:** Ministers note the Declaration for the Common Agenda for Education and Climate (COP28). Those who are already partners commit to undertake actions to adapt, mitigate, and invest in and through education systems. Those who are not, commit to explore joining the Declaration in due course.
9. **Facilitate Local Research Collaborations:** Ministers pledge to foster collaborations among educational institutions, local research organizations, and communities to research the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on educational outcomes. This involves funding research projects, granting access to data and resources, and supporting interdisciplinary initiatives to identify local challenges and opportunities for resilience-building.
10. **Prioritise Human Capital Development:** Ministers emphasise the centrality of human capital for sustainable development and commit to investing in education and skills across all ages. Focus areas include ensuring foundational learning and foundational skills for all learners, improving outcomes for disadvantaged students, promoting 21st-century skills, enhancing teacher development and school leadership, and strengthening research and development capabilities.
11. **Address Skill Gaps through TVET:** Ministers commit to bridging skills gaps in sectors critical to the green economy through Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems. These systems aim to equip learners with the knowledge and competencies necessary for sustainable and responsible participation in low-carbon economies.
12. **Harness AI for Inclusive Education:** Ministers acknowledge the profound economic and societal implications of artificial intelligence (AI) and commit to proactively addressing its impacts within the education sector. They pledge to ensure inclusive AI development to mitigate digital divides and harness transformative technology for a sustainable future.
13. **Promote Digital Transformation:** Ministers prioritise digital transformation in enhancing the resilience and inclusivity of education systems, emphasising considerations such as cyber resilience, data protection, and data sharing. They commit to addressing the digital divide through education, especially for underserved populations, as well as data gaps within the education sector to drive inclusive educational policies and initiatives.
14. **Enhance Multilateral Collaboration:** Ministers emphasise the critical need for ongoing collaboration among diverse stakeholders to foster global growth, particularly in the realm of post-secondary education. They commit to accelerating joint efforts to promote a sustainable, digital, and inclusive future through robust international cooperation and enhanced multilateralism.
15. **Take Decisive, Agile Policy Actions:** Ministers agree on the need for decisive, well-calibrated, and agile policies tailored to country-specific circumstances to

strengthen the resilience of education systems. They commit to proactive, collaborative action in this uncertain global context, aiming to ensure access to education and learning opportunities for all individuals, especially the most vulnerable populations.

16. In conclusion, policymakers endorse immediate and mid-term actions aimed at fortifying national education systems and advancing SDG4 goals. They recognise the importance of proactive collaboration and decisive policy actions to navigate challenges and seize opportunities for building resilient education systems and fostering sustainable development. They also aim to ensure that national education systems are underpinned by the values and principles of dignity, fairness, respect, and compassion, as embedded in the Commonwealth Charter.
17. This Chair Summary will be included in the key documents for the upcoming Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) to be held in Samoa in October 2024.
18. Annexes