



GCE 7th WORLD ASSEMBLY

22 - 24th November 2022
Johannesburg-South Africa

The Future of Education Re-Imagined

#EducationReImagined

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Day 2 Discussion Paper 10

How the movement can strengthen its representation and engagement in international bodies and fora

a. Introduction

Advocacy is the GCE's fundamental role to promote and defend the human right to education. It is a political process involving differentiated strategic approaches, that aims to strengthen the movement and end exclusion in education, thereby bring transformation and lasting change.

GCE advocacy is evidenced based, inspired by its Constitution, By-laws, policy resolutions, briefings and research. This process involves undertaking comprehensive action at multiple levels, through a series of activities, with diverse stakeholders in order to yield political influence, seek dialogue, persuade and thereby influence decisions to address: the regressive trends of national and international financing for education, privatization, the reductionist views on curriculum development and the barriers that affect the population discriminated against.

The education content, its transforming power, teachers' role (including their initial education and training), the right to education of people with disabilities and the fight for gender equality are, among others, issues of great interest for GCE's advocacy work and cannot be separated from other issues related to access and education availability.

Advocacy is at the heart of our work, feeds into, and reverberates at the global, regional and national levels and in the diversity of spaces, forums and environments in which GCE works. The interrelation of the different levels is essential to maximize our impact. In this way, international advocacy -as a resonance box- should be inspired by local and national actions, allowing a better understanding of trends and gaps.

b. Context analysis and how this relates to GCE

International Advocacy combines various action lines and working strategies, including communication, public relations, technical outreach and, of course, political work.

The development of these lines of action is based on the GCE strategic plan and operationally it aspires to build a common understanding and a common language regarding the movement priorities.

This allows GCE to adopt appropriate mechanisms so that our messages have visibility in international forums and help to identify allies to our causes.



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GCE advocacy processes commonly find feedback among our partners (be they UN agencies, academic and philanthropic institutions, and even governments), but sometimes it is up to GCE to maintain a strong position in the face of attempts by retrogressive forces, as is the case with the actors who seek to increase privatization or who reject gender equality.

We usually find in our international advocacy work, two scenarios, which are not mutually exclusive:

- a. Fora designed to hold states to account, such as the sessions of the Voluntary National Review (HLPF), the Universal Periodic Review (UN Human Rights Council) or Treaty Bodies sessions in which state reports are examined.
- b. Typical decision-making advocacy and coordination spaces, such as the Global Partnership for Education, Education Cannot Wait, UNESCO-CCNGO, HLPF Major Groups & other Stakeholders. International conferences are also usually events in which it is possible to carry out advocacy activities, especially those in which political and institutional actors participate.

As mentioned, sometimes accountability, advocacy and coordination activities can coincide in time and space and it is usual for GCE to consider these opportunities in their work.

The international context in which GCE works is extremely complex and sometimes makes it necessary to develop opportunistic interventions, as the need arises.

This context also involves private actors, especially corporate ones, which have made inroads into the space that was once destined exclusively for civil society organizations. We see a number of companies, corporations and their foundations presenting themselves as if they had some representation or civil constituency. Unfortunately, they have managed to find the attention of United Nations agencies and organizations, which have played this game, weakening the privileged role of civil society.

Other institutional actors, such as international development banks, conservative think tanks and mixed organizations of business and governments, continue to maintain erratic activities around international education policies without clear direction, confusing the international community with the duplication of initiatives and the dilution of resources.

These phenomena have weakened the multilateral bodies and have slowed down the development agenda.

c. Key issues GCE members are to consider

The movement is called on to strengthen its engagement at all levels, given that the interrelation between the national and international fields is increasingly evident. It is essential to build



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frameworks for strategic action that allow local particularities to be combined with international demands. This is possible thanks to the relevance of the 2030 Education Agenda and the binding relationship established by human rights instruments.

The alignment of each member's policies and plans with the GCE constitution and strategic plan is crucial to strengthen all advocacy activities.

CGE members should seriously consider strengthening their reporting capabilities. Spotlight reports, for instance, are instruments of the highest value in all accountability events and forums and could be important reference documents for research activities as well as for communications. Report production is a permanent practice that the GCE encourages.

d. Leading questions to support the discussion

What obstacles need to be overcome to achieve better alignment between the national, regional and global levels?

What measures should be taken to bring the reporting process closer to the bodies assigned to state accountability?

Can the corporate sector be of use to the GCE? In what ways and with what strategies?

How should GCE improve youth participation?