At a glance

As the 2015 deadline for the EFA goals is approaching and discussions for a post-2015 education framework are intensifying, the international education community is concerned with if and what children are learning, and if their learning is going to make the world more peaceful and sustainable. In this context, Global Citizenship Education (GCE) has come to the fore, reflecting a paradigm shift around the purpose and content of the education we need and want to protect our world and transform our societies. This shift highlights the role of education in promoting understanding of social, political, cultural and other global issues and supporting peace, sustainable development, equality, human rights and learning to live together. GCE has acquired heightened momentum since the UN Secretary-General launched his Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) in 2012, placing education for global citizenship as one of the initiative’s three overarching priorities. In this context, UNESCO has focused much effort on GCE, building on the existing work of the Organization in related fields such as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) peace and human rights education, learning to live together, intercultural education, conflict resolution, health education and others.

Trends, issues and challenges towards 2030

Current and emerging global challenges and the intensifying process of globalization bring rapid changes and add greater complexity to the lives of many, particularly through the undeniable impact of these challenges on the environment. The intensification of globalization is leading to greater collective acknowledgement that individuals and local communities are affected by and in turn can themselves better influence global developments. Global phenomena or ‘civic megatrends’ such as the changing role of women in society, the impact of the global economy and changing patterns of work, advances in information and communications technologies, increasing global populations and the creation of new forms of community are also intensifying.

In the Asia-Pacific region, additional trends include that of regional cooperation and integration (which has brought and will continue to bring about freer flows of skilled and unskilled workers and their families) and rapid economic growth. At the same time, economic growth in the region has not resulted in reducing wide income disparities. The region is home to two thirds of the world’s poor with over 800 million living below the poverty
line, and in addition the Asia-wide Gini coefficient\(^1\) has risen from 39% in the mid-1990s to 46% in the late 2000s (ADB, 2012). From a demographic point of view, the Asia-Pacific is the most diverse region in the world, comprising more than half the world’s population, 51% of the world’s languages and incredibly rich cultural and ethnic diversity. The region is also marked by increasing migration and mobility, which has led to the forming of ‘multicultural societies’ in some cases and increased tension and discrimination in others. In addition, the Asia-Pacific has the highest number of deaths in the world caused by environmental disasters, and the figure is rising (CRED, 2013). In such a context, the promotion of GCE and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) becomes increasingly important.

GCE aims to equip learners of all ages with those values, knowledge and skills that are based on and instil respect for human rights, social justice, diversity, gender equality and environmental sustainability and that empower learners to engage and assume active roles both locally and globally and to become proactive citizens for a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world (UNESCO, 2013). In view of the “four pillars of learning” espoused by the 1996 report of the International Commission on Education (‘Delors Report’), it is based on the conviction that the pillars of ‘learning to live together’ and ‘learning to be’ as well as the emerging pillar of ‘learning to transform oneself and society’ should be as important as the other two pillars of ‘learning to do’ and ‘learning to know’ (Delors et al, 1996). GCE highlights the need to instill cognitive knowledge but also to cultivate the ‘non-cognitive’ aspects of learning (understanding, respect, empathy, communication, etc.) as well as to promote the well-being of learners and the global community. Against this background, GCE is necessarily transformative. It gives learners the opportunity and competencies to realise their rights and obligations to promote a better world and a better future for all.

UNESCO has been undertaking foundational work in order to help advance understanding of these concepts and identify good examples of policy and practice in this area. Two events were organized in 2013, the Technical Consultation on GCE (Seoul, September 2013) and the Global Forum on GCE (Bangkok, December 2013), with the support of key partners such as the Republic of Korea, the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) and others. Discussions revealed the need for improved conceptual clarity on GCE on the one hand, and on the other, for guidance on integrating GCE in formal and non-formal education. These meetings helped to initiate dialogue on GCE, to explore some of the megatrends in education discourse in recent years, and in particular the shift towards the ‘non-cognitive’ dimensions of learning. Based on these discussions and complemented through research, UNESCO has produced a key publication\(^2\) that makes the case for GCE whilst also providing practical guidance for its implementation. While this work has defined key parameters of GCE, it is acknowledged that it is neither possible nor desirable to come up with a specific definition of GCE as the term acquires different meanings for different groups in different parts of the world, and thus allowing space for flexibility and adaptability in various geographical and cultural contexts.

**Key strategies and action areas**

*Mainstreaming in curricula*

One of the key issues in looking towards 2030 is in regard to how curricula should be organized so that the skills, competencies, values, attitudes and behaviours associated with

\(^1\) The Gini coefficient is a measure of income distribution within a country’s population and a commonly used measure of inequality.

\(^2\) This publication entitled Global Citizenship Education: Preparing learners for the challenges of the 21st century, can be found at: [http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002277/227729E.pdf](http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002277/227729E.pdf)
GCE and ESD are transmitted. In examining experience in Asia-Pacific countries, it seems that the skills associated with this area generally seem to be promoted via different curricular approaches. This includes via dedicated, stand-alone subjects (e.g. life skills, civic education, moral education, religious studies, health education) and/or through academic ‘carrier’ subjects (e.g. social studies, history, second language, environmental studies) or non-academic ‘carrier’ subjects and extra-curricular activities (e.g. arts, physical education, community service). UNESCO Bangkok’s study on learning to live together conducted in 10 countries of the Asia-Pacific region revealed that a variety of approaches are used, as summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1: Overview of subjects of potential relevance to ‘learning to live together’ in primary education in 10 Asia-Pacific countries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Dedicated Subjects</th>
<th>Academic Carrier Subjects</th>
<th>Non-Academic Carrier Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Life Skills</td>
<td>Social Science, The Holy Quran and Islamic Education</td>
<td>Art, Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Civics and Citizenship Education</td>
<td>History, Geography</td>
<td>Art, Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Religious and Moral Education, Pancasila and Citizenship Education</td>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>Arts and Culture, Physical Education and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>Moral and Civic Education, Life Skills</td>
<td>History, Geography</td>
<td>Physical Education, School Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Moral Education</td>
<td>Social Science, Population Education</td>
<td>Health and Physical Education, Creative Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Philippines</td>
<td>Values Education</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Music, Arts, Physical Education, Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>Moral Education</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Art, Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Environment-Related Activities, Religion</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Aesthetic and Physical education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Religion, Morality, Ethics, Civics and Cultures (as modules of social studies)</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Art, Health and Physical Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNESCO, 2014a

The above suggests that a number of countries in the region have already integrated content relevant to GCE and ESD in their curricula, while others are working to do so (UNESCO, 2014a). Challenges in this area include a lack of instructional time, curricula which are already dense and overloaded, a bias towards academic subjects and the so-called ‘cognitive’ aspects of learning and potential dissonance over which aspects of GCE and ESD should be integrated within curricula. When these topics are reflected in curricula through the various approaches summarized above, the actual teaching of them is an additional challenge on its own, as much of the subject area requires a pedagogy which is transformative, learner-centred and action-oriented. If teachers and school leaders are not
trained, supported and committed to teach and promote teaching in these ways, then the delivery of GCE and ESD will inevitably suffer.

A number of organizations are deploying efforts to assist Member States with these issues. UNESCO, using its expertise, convening power and extended network, is collecting and analysing information on GCE practices from around the world in order to build a wide-ranging knowledge base on GCE and to distil this into age-specific topics and learning objectives that can be readily adapted and applicable in all its Member States. This would serve as a guiding framework, intended primarily for policy makers and curriculum developers, but also other education stakeholders, and it will be used to guide curriculum development at the country level. This is done through a consultative approach with experts from different parts of the world taking account of cultural relevance and sensitivity. For this purpose, an Experts Advisory Group (EAG) was established and its members met on 25-26 June 2014 to review the first draft of this emerging resource. In addition, Teach UNICEF has developed lesson plans and materials on global citizenship for educators, while the Asia Society’s global competence programme is another effort in this regard. A number of Asia-Pacific Member States have also developed resources which may also be helpful.

Learning assessment

Measuring progress towards GCE and ESD is an immediate concern for Member States and for UNESCO. GCE and ESD are both considered as targets of the proposed education goals in the post-2015 development agenda. Despite the fact that GCE and ESD are recognized as central in the future vision of education, there has been some question about their measurability. Is it possible to measure citizenship, awareness and sensitivity about global social issues and if so, how?

The assessment and evaluation of GCE and ESD is also closely linked to UNESCO’s ongoing work on developing a guiding framework on GCE with age-specific topics and learning objectives. In order to facilitate work in the area of GCE and ESD, UNESCO established the GCE Experts Advisory Group (EAG) and an Ad-Hoc Measurement Team (MAT) with experts on education assessment within and outside UNESCO who met on 25-27 June 2014 at UNESCO Headquarters to consider the development of a framework for measuring the GCE and ESD target in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. The EAG and MAT identified four overall areas for measurement and confirmed that it is possible to measure both GCE and ESD through existing or new surveys:

1. Learners have acquired knowledge, understanding and critical thinking about global issues and the interconnectedness/interdependency of countries and different populations;
2. Learners have a sense of belonging to a common humanity and sharing values and responsibilities and holding rights;
3. Learners show empathy, solidarity and respect for differences and diversity;
4. Learners act effectively and responsibly at local, national and global contexts for a more peaceful and sustainable world.

Learning should not be measured simply in terms of memorization of facts but should capture all aspects such as knowledge and skills (e.g. facts about global issues and how they apply knowledge), attitudes (e.g. how respondents view others and those that are different from them) and behaviours or intended behaviour (e.g. demonstration of interactions with others). A variety of approaches can be used for monitoring and assessing GCE, taking into consideration inputs (educators’ competencies, learning environment, etc.).
processes (teaching modalities, learners’ engagement, school and classroom ethos, etc.) and outcomes (knowledge, values, attitudes, skills, behaviours, impact on communities, etc.).

Existing tools for measuring GCE and ESD components include: the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) which measures among other skills civic knowledge and engagement as well as knowledge about environmental issues; the World Values Survey (WVS) which measures tolerance and trust; and; the European Social Survey which measures engagement in civil society, community and political life and democratic values. Numerous other approaches to evaluation are already used to assess learning outcomes on GCE at national levels. For example, Plan International and the University of Melbourne’s Youth Research Centre used the Most Significant Change technique to capture the outcomes of a GCE programme for young people in Australia and Indonesia (Dartrand and Davies, 2003). At the same time, there are promising approaches from international schools and others that focus on innovative ways of recognizing and demonstrating learning in relation to GCE (and ESD), such as through student portfolios and blogs.

To help fill the knowledge and data gap in education, the Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF) was convened in 2012 by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution. Involving over 30 organizations and consultations with 1700 participants from 118 countries, the LMTF reached a consensus on the skills and competencies that are important for all children and youth to develop as well as a small set of indicators that are feasible and desirable to track at the global level in regard to the learning outcomes of education. Through this process, the LMTF identified “global citizenship” (or “citizens of the world”) as one of the main indicators to measure fundamental learning opportunities over a child’s educational career.

Most recently, and following the Global EFA Meeting held in Oman in May 2014, and the UNESCO EAG and MAT meetings in Paris in June 2014, the EFA Steering Committee Technical Advisory Group (TAG) proposed a set of indicators based on existing tools and survey questions, which can be used to measure knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required to establish sustainable and peaceful societies, as well as participation in global citizenship education and education for sustainable development. These are summarized below.

### Some ideas for targets and indicators

Learning outcomes of GCE and ESD include knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours, and encompass cognitive interpersonal and intrapersonal domains. These learning outcomes are considered relevant across all countries, although it is clear that the cultural and country context influences both the learning process and the learning outcomes. The Global Education for All Meeting held in Oman earlier this year, in considering the post-2015 education agenda, proposed the following overall global target in regard to this area:

*By 2030, all learners acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to establish sustainable and peaceful societies, including through global citizenship education and education for sustainable development.*

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3 EFA Steering Committee Technical Advisory Group (TAG) is composed of experts from the EFA Global Monitoring Report, OECD, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank. Its role is to provide feedback on the post-2015 targets, to develop recommendations for indicators and to set out a measurement agenda that meets the demands of the new education and development frameworks.
The Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals, on the other hand, has formulated the following potential target:

**By 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.**

Regardless of which target is established at the global level, specific indicators for measurement will need to be developed at the regional and/or national levels. Through its work, the TAG suggested some examples of indicators for measuring GCE and ESD that are already in use in some countries:

- Percentage of 15-year-old students showing proficiency in knowledge of global issues including knowledge of environmental science and geoscience.
- Percentage of 13-year-old students endorsing values and attitudes promoting equality, trust and participation in governance.
- Percentage of adults who respond positively to the statement: “Protecting the environment should be given priority even if it causes slower economic growth and some loss of jobs”
- Percentage of 13-year-old students participating in citizenship education.

Given that a number of Asia-Pacific countries measure learning in this area in some way, national experience and knowledge could be most useful in determining the overall indicators that should be established.

**Questions for discussion**

- What are the skills, competencies, values and attitudes that are expected to be acquired through GCE and ESD?
- What are the current policy trends to operationalize GCE and its related programmes into education systems (including in curriculum, teaching practice and assessment)? Are there good practices and outcomes of GCE and ESD which can be reported on and shared in this regard?
- What are the most effective pedagogical approaches for teaching and learning about GCE?
- How can teachers be trained and supported to ensure good quality learning about GCE?
- Can the learning outcomes of GCE be measured at the classroom, national and international level?
- What are some of the current methods and promising new approaches to assess GCE?
- What should be the overall target for the region (and/or sub-regions) in terms of learners’ achievement of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours acquired through GCE and ESD?
- What concrete indicators can be applied at the national level to measure the above target?
References


