

# Formal dialogue on the Initiative of the evolving right to education in a lifelong learning perspective

## Celebration of 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and 63<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education

UNESCO Headquarters, Room X and Online  
Fontenoy Building, Paris, France  
14 December 2023, 13:30-17:30 CET

### Provisional agenda

As a contribution to the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and to mark the 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, UNESCO – in partnership with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and in consultation with the Permanent Delegations of Mongolia and Portugal to UNESCO – is organizing a formal dialogue on the Initiative on the evolving right to education to discuss the findings to date, foster a global consultation, and explore the ways forward in addressing the twin crises of equity and relevance through the normative framework on the right to education throughout life.

### Main expected outcomes:

The formal dialogue, which is conceived as a follow-up discussion to the Transforming Education Summit (TES), aims at discussing and defining the future roadmap towards the development of a framework for the review and expansion of the international normative framework, placing a particular emphasis on the legal implications of the implementation of the TES vision and flagships.

In this context, its specific objectives are to:

- Share the findings to date of the Initiative on the evolving right to education including from the research policy paper and the road map developed, and discuss them to gain further feedback;
- Based on the research policy paper, discuss the areas that need further regulation and clarification in the international normative framework to discuss what it takes to address the twin crisis of equity and relevance in education, including specific suggestions put forward, in light of education trends and emerging challenges;
- Discuss and agree on modalities and next steps, with a view to engaging in the process of strengthening the normative framework on the right to education.

## Resources

[Event website](#)

[Website on the Initiative on the evolving right to education](#)

[Working paper \(main reference document for the event\)](#)

Background Thematic Reports on right to education and evolving agenda<sup>1</sup>:

- [Building and strengthening the legal framework on ECCE rights: achievements, challenges and actions for change \(2022\)](#)
- [Right to higher education: unpacking the international normative framework in light of current trends and challenges \(2022\)](#)
- [Minding the data: protecting learners' privacy and security \(2022\)](#)
- [The impact of climate displacement on the right to education \(2020\)](#)
- [Global report on climate change and right to education \(2023\)](#)

### Thursday, 14 December 2023: 13:30-17:30 CET

13:30 – 14:15

#### Opening

**MC:** Rolla Mourné, Specialist and Coordinator, Right to Education Programme, Section of Education Policy, UNESCO

#### Opening remarks:

- Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO
- Nada Al-Nashif, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR

#### Minister's interventions:

- H.E. Enkh-Amgalan Luvsantseren, Minister of Education and Science, Mongolia
- H.E. João Costa, Minister of Education, Portugal

**Presentation of the Initiative, its findings, and objectives:** Gwang-Chol Chang, Chief of Section of Education Policy, UNESCO

14:15 – 15:20

#### Interactive discussion 1: Expanding rights and obligations to ensure equitable inclusive learning throughout life

*The discussion will aim to share views, insights and perspectives on expanding rights and obligations to address persistent inequalities and disparities across all ages. The session will address access to early childhood education and care, free education, inclusive education, youth participation and education governance.*

**Framing the issue and moderation:** Farida Shaheed, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education

- **Panelist 1:** Dylan Yap, Youth activist, Philippines
- **Panelist 2:** Ann Skelton, Chair, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and UNESCO Chair Education Law, University of Pretoria, South Africa
- **Panelist 3:** Luke Pye, Coordinator, INEE
- **Panelist 4 (Country experience):** Isabel Flores, Executive Director, Institute for Public and Social Policies of ISCTE-University of Lisbon, Portugal

<sup>1</sup> The following reports are forthcoming: Report on lifelong learning entitlements (2023); Report on the regulation of non-state actors (2023); Report on homeschooling (2024); and Report on the impact of digitalization on the right to education (2024).

	<p><b>Open discussion</b> with all participants based on guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As it stands, the international legal framework explicitly guarantees free primary education and encourages states to introduce free secondary and higher education progressively. In your view, which levels or forms of education should now be offered on a free basis and why?</li> <li>• Beyond higher education, what learning opportunities and pathways can be envisaged to support equitable and inclusive participation in learning at all stages in life?</li> <li>• What specific obligations on States are required when it comes to education governance and regulations to ensure more equity in education, so that every person can realize their right to education?</li> </ul>
<p><b>15:20 – 15:35</b></p>	<p><b>Coffee break</b></p>
<p><b>15:35 – 16:45</b></p>	<p><b>Interactive discussion 2: Strengthening the legal framework on right to education in light of new and emerging realities</b></p> <p><i>The discussion will aim to share views, insights and perspectives on strengthening the international legal framework on the right to education considering emerging realities. It will focus on the relevance of education and the new and emerging challenges that confront it, for example, the digitization in education, new demands being posed on teachers and the resilience of education systems in the face of crises.</i></p> <p><b>Framing the issue and moderation:</b> Borhene Chakroun, Director for the Division for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Panelist 1:</b> Michael Fung, Executive director, Institute for the Future of Education</li> <li>• <b>Panelist 2:</b> Gina Pancorbo, Coordinator of Research, Policy and Advocacy, Education International</li> <li>• <b>Panelist 3:</b> Fanny Rotino, Child rights specialist, child online protection Officer, ITU</li> <li>• <b>Panelist 4 (Country experience):</b> Oyunaa Purevdorj, Acting Director of Education Policy and Planning Department, Ministry of Education and Science, Mongolia</li> </ul> <p><b>Open discussion</b> with all participants based on guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As we navigate through new and emerging digital transformations in education, what strategies should be implemented to ensure equitable digital access and critical digital literacy for all learners?</li> <li>• Given the demands on education today, including for lifelong learning approaches, how can we ensure more sustainable funding?</li> <li>• What are some other new and emerging challenges and opportunities in education that we need to consider and what guarantees are required to face these challenges?</li> </ul>
<p><b>16:45 – 17:25</b></p>	<p><b>Open discussion with delegations: Institutional modalities and possible next steps</b></p> <p><b>Moderation:</b> Borhene Chakroun, Director for the Division for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO and Farida Shaheed, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education</p> <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When considering the next steps that the Secretariat should take to advance the Initiative on the evolving right to education, what could be envisaged?</li> <li>• Could we envision a new Convention on the right to education throughout life or a revision of the 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education or should we explore other options?</li> </ul>
<p><b>17:25 – 17:30</b></p>	<p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <p><b>Concluding remarks and way forward:</b> Borhene Chakroun, Director for the Division for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO</p>