The Commonwealth
Education Hub

Sustainable Development Goal 4

Discussion Summary

This e-Discussion was conducted by The Commonwealth Education Hub between 8 October and 3 November 2015.

Sustainable Development Goal 4

Introduction

The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and set of [17 Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) were unanimously adopted at the United Nations General Assembly Summit in September 2015. The goals will come into force in January 2016 and will drive international development work for the next fifteen years. Whilst education drivers and outcomes cut across the entire agenda, Goals 4 specifically addresses education — *ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*. The new agenda represents a fundamental shift in developing thinking by recognising the underlying and dynamic interlinkages between the three dimensions (social, economic and environmental), driving universal and integrated development across all countries, and promoting inclusivity, equity, quality and lifelong learning in education.

Given the importance of SDG4 within and across the Commonwealth family, the Education Hub hosted a related e-discussion. The objective of the three-and-a-half week discussion was to engage a wide range of education stakeholders from various professional and geographical backgrounds to critically reflect on SDG4 and explore actions to achieve this Goal.

The discussion reached out to 650 participants, comprising representatives from Education Ministries, development organisations, the private sector and academia. Responses were received from 10 countries spanning all five Commonwealth regions, and was moderated by Mr Vis Naidoo.

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About The Education Hub

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Conceived as a 'network of networks,' The Commonwealth Education Hub is intended to promote knowledge sharing and collaboration among policy-makers and practitioners across the Commonwealth. Through its virtual 'one-stop-shop,' the Hub offers an array of online knowledge services designed to enable easier access to relevant information and resources, as well as to strengthen the collaborative context within which approaches, solutions, and best practices can be shared and adopted at scale across the Commonwealth, and perhaps even more widely.

www.thecommonwealth-educationhub.net

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Discussion Summary

Key points

The discussion highlighted the complexity of the task ahead in turning SDG4 into action. Both support for and criticism of Goal 4 and the 2030 Agenda arose, with organisation and country-level examples emphasising the diversity of the work involved and need for an integrated and collaborative approach in achieving Goal 4.

Work that is already ongoing at a country- and organisational-level demonstrates the relevance of many projects and programmes already in place and will contribute towards achieving Goal 4. Examples addressed a range of areas in both formal and non-formal education sectors, and evidence the interconnectedness of education across the entire 2030 Agenda.

Issues discussed

Value of SDG4 and the Agenda for Sustainable Development

SDG4 has shifted the dialogue from universal primary and secondary education to also include the entire cycle from 'cradle to grave', spanning all levels and types of education. The discussion noted both positives and negatives to the new approach to global development. The SDGs help to align efforts internationally, regionally, nationally and locally amongst organisations and governments. This more inclusive and holistic approach to education diverges from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were narrow in focus, predominantly restricted to the areas of gender parity and primary school participation. In the same light, the SDG Agenda and Goal 4 were also criticised as potentially being overly ambitious, and as being vague, lacking in focus and with little chance of success. The discussion, however, also notes that perhaps not enough reflection was given to, and lessons learned from the MDGs in formulating the SDGs.

The discussion also reflected on the ability of governments and other stakeholders to determine national needs and priorities and develop policy, programmes and action to address these. In doing so, the SDGs may be approached in a manner which accounts for the broader global goals and the role of education to achieve these, while also accommodating for national needs and context.

Alignment to SDG4

Contributions from both members of governmental and non-governmental organisations reflected commitment to the new Agenda and Goal 4, despite any reservations that may exist. The discussion highlighted various existing policies and programmes whose objectives align with Goal 4, including those addressing issues of equity, access to quality education, and lifelong learning. These programmes and initiatives were started prior to the formal adoption of the SDGs, illustrating actions already embarked on to more broadly improve educational systems beyond the boundaries of the MDGs and within development more widely.

The list of numerous existing policies and programmes prompted the further question of whether countries and institutions are reviewing current education strategies and programmes to assess

effective alignment with SDG4. This question relates back to the criticism of the SDGs and Goal 4 as being overly vague. Progress towards the achievement of SDGs has the potential to be hindered if existing programmes/policies are assumed to be working towards SDG4 without review. This could limit the development of more effective and integrated programmes/policies which would better propel achievement of SDG4.

Link between education and other dimensions of sustainable development

The discussion illustrated the interdependence between education actions and outcomes and other drivers of sustainable development. The link between education and economic development was especially prominent in relation to post-secondary education and lifelong learning. Various projects/programmes discussed seek to align teaching and learning outcomes with employability and market needs, promoting productive employment and inclusive growth. Also highlighted was the link between education and agriculture to address various interconnected dimensions of sustainable development. This was illustrated through cross-sector projects employing education to improve food security, profitability and environmental sustainability.

Understanding these links is important to be able to develop policies and programmes where the impact being sought is well defined, effective and contributes to society.

Need for an integrated approach

The discussion emphasised the need for an integrated approach towards achieving the SDGs. This reflection relates to integration of efforts within the education sector, across sectors, and within and across spatial dimensions. Examples focused on the value of partnerships/collaboration and the role of different stakeholders in building effective models for positive change. The call for an integrated approach aligns with the emphasis placed on cross-dimensional initiatives, and the 2030 Agenda's focus on a collaborative and integrated approach to development. Financial and technical support and assistance in resource mobilisation were also noted as important drivers of success and as having inhibited progress towards MDG 2 and MDG 3. Similarly, meaningful participation and ownership were also highlighted as drivers for success; at a national level giving countries ownership of frameworks and methods of implementation, and at a sub-national level fostering meaningful participation in the implementation of action towards SDG Goal 4.

Contributors posed the question of whether formal education institutions and government structures will be flexible enough to adopt an integrated approach. While the discussion illustrates various countries taking such steps, broader results may be affected by whether policies are effectively reviewed and developed to make way for such an approach.

Role of technology

The discussion highlighted the role of technology in achieving SDG4 and the broader Agenda. Examples provided demonstrated technology's ability to support learning and development, to expand reach and interaction for students and teachers, and to promote lifelong learning. These projects included the use of online Communities of Practice, resource libraries, virtual classes; and other technology, such as radio, to improve access, equality, teacher development, and learner

outcomes. The use of technology demonstrates the importance of a broader understanding and approach to education, beyond the bounds of traditional formal education, with the use of non-traditional and innovative mechanisms to improve education.

Importance of post-secondary education and TVET

Post-secondary education and TVET programmes were repeatedly raised by participants as playing a critical role for both the attainment of SDG4 and in economic development. The potential of TVET and alternatives to public education were explored as being able to improve government capacity for provision of education and support of lifelong learning, and to address skills shortages, quality of work, and economic growth. In the new Agenda, the focus to incorporate post-secondary education and lifelong learning represents a profound shift in understanding the education cycle and link between social and economic development.

It was also mentioned that this shift now requires governments to look at adult literacy, non-formal learning and ensuring an integrated system, which goes beyond formal education.

Commonwealth & other Case Studies

Universal Access Programme — ICT for education component, Vanuatu (*from David Leeming, Leeming Consulting, Solomon Islands*)

This programme integrates ICT and education to improve education training and resources, and foster continued collaboration for improved educational outcomes in rural and other communities where internet services are not commercially viable. The programme encompasses the ICT technologies, a digital library, training and an online Community of Practice to improve access and quality of education in programme communities. The programme is part of Vanuatu's Universal Access Policy.

http://community.nuzusys.com/

Bethel Business and Community Development Centre, Lesotho (*from Ivan Yaholnitsky, BBCDC, Lesotho*)

The Bethel Business and Community Development Centre (BBCDC) is a commercial and technical school providing skills and knowledge for well-being and self-reliance through experiential learning. The school aims to link learning to career and business development, the management of which pursues financial self-sustainability through self-reliance, commercial activity and responsible environmental management.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0By8T-PuCsgpbbUxJSDR2SnJfM0k/view?usp=drive_web&pli=1

Innovation Enterprise Institutions and Vocational Enterprise Institutions, Nigeria (*from Masa'udu Adamu Kazaure, National Board for Technical Education, Nigeria*)

Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IEIs) and Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs) are part of a government initiative to increase access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and provide an alternative route to higher education. IEIs and VEIs are private sector institutions boosting capacity for higher education whilst specifically addressing skills shortages and targeting market needs.

http://www.nbte.gov.ng/iei&vei.html

TES, United Kingdom (*from Lord Jim Knight, TES, United Kingdom*)

TES is an online teacher network platform, providing information for teacher employment, teaching resources, skills development courses and industry news.

https://www.tes.com/uk/

National Steering Committee on National Vocational Qualifications Framework, Nigeria (*from Masa'udu Adamu Kazaure, National Board for Technical Education, Nigeria*)

In 2010, the Nigerian Government set up a National Steering Committee to develop a draft National Vocational Qualifications Framework, for quality assurance across qualifications and the registration and regulation of TVET centres.

http://www.nbte.gov.ng/downloads/FINAL%20REPORT%20NVQF.pdf

Free Libre Open Source Software For Education (FLOSS4Edu) Africa Network, Africa (*from Nicholas Kimolo, FLOSS4EDU, Kenya*)

FLOSS4Edu Africa Network is an organisation working to make educational content and Free Libre and Open Software (FLOSS) tools available to educational institutions in Africa, and build a community of practitioners collaborating on the development of FLOSS resources.

http://wikieducator.org/FLOSS4Edu

Community Based Learning and Trading Program, Kenya (*from Nicholas Kimolo, FLOSS4EDU, Kenya*)

A collaborative project between FLOSS4Edu and the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation employing OER-based learning materials adapted to the specific local context to education farmers on for improved production and economic output.

University Education for Marsabit Girls, Kenya (*from Nicholas Kimolo, FLOSS4Edu)*

A collaborative project between FLOSS4Edu and Kenyatta University to develop a distance learning Bachelor of Education program. This degree module is offered to girls living within a nomadic community in North-Eastern Kenya.

Participatory Radio Campaigns (PRC), Sub-Saharan Africa (*from Ian Pringle, Farm Radio International, Canada*)

Participatory Radio Campaigns (PRC) were developed by Farm Radio International (FRI) as a way to help farmers learn about, evaluate and introduce new agricultural practices. During PRC broadcasts, farmers are able to explore, exchange knowledge, gain information and share experiences on new agricultural practice that can improve food and financial security. New information Communication Technologies (ICTs) such as mobile phones, MP3 players, interactive voice response systems, and bulk SMS messaging systems are linked with radio to boost the interactivity, reach and accessibility of PRCs.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0By8T-PuCsgpbV2F5VjFJOW5QV0U/view?usp=sharing&pli=1

OpenLearn, United Kingdom (*from Andrew Law, Open University, United Kingdom*)

OpenLearn is run by Open University UK and offers 1000+ free online courses. The majority of which are under Creative Commons licensing, which allows for free re-use and adaptation of materials.

http://www.open.edu/openlearn/

FutureLearn, United Kingdom (*from Andrew Law, Open University, United Kingdom*)

FutureLearn is a private company owned by Open University UK and working in partnership 70 universities and institutions across the globe. FutureLearn offers roughly 200 free online courses.

https://www.futurelearn.com/

Cuban Government Educational Strategy for Students with Disabilities, Cuba (*from Brennen Wood, Government of The Bahamas, The Bahamas*)

Mr Wood outlined a Cuban educational strategy for students with special needs, in which the Government pays the mother or father to remain at home and to educate the child, with the government providing curriculum and ancillary support for therapeutic needs.

African Entrepreneurship Hub, Africa (*from Victor Konda, the African Entrepreneurship Hub, Zambia*)

The African Entrepreneurship Hub is involved in promoting and supporting entrepreneurship in Africa, helping entrepreneurs develop market insights and business linkages, and offering training, mentoring and promotional opportunities.

http://aehglobal.com/

Vocational Education and Training Authority, Tanzania (*from Stephen Lazaro Tsaray, Vocational Education and Training Authority, Tanzania*)

The overall objective of the Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) is to oversee Vocational Education and Training (VET) system in Tanzania, to support national socioeconomic development. VETA plays an important role in the Tanzanian educational environment, to ensuring

quality and equitable VET to build a competitive labour force and a generation which contributes to socioeconomic development through effective regulation, co-ordination, financing and collaboration.

Related Resources

Universal Access Policy, Vanuatu (*from David Leeming, Leeming Consulting, Vanuatu*)
http://ogcio.gov.vu/UA%20Policy/Universal-Access-Policy-EN-FR-BI.pdf

> *Policy for improving access to telecommunications service for locations, which are not or not adequately served by existing services.*

Open Working Group Proposal for Sustainable Development Goals (*From Emily Hayter, Canon Collins Trust, United Kingdom*)

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsproposal
> *This document presents the Sustainable Development Goals developed by the Open Working Group with the mandate to develop goals that are coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015.*

Running While Others Walk: Knowledge and the Challenge of Africa's Development
Mkandawire, Thandika, 2011, Running While Others Walk: Knowledge and the Challenge of Africa's Development, The London School of Economics and Political Science, United Kindgom,
http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/55395/1/Mkandawire_Running_while_others_walk_LSE_African_Initiative_2010.pdf

HC 751 Department for International Development's Annual Report and Accounts 2011-12
Adam Smith International, November 2012, HC 751 Department for International Development's Annual Report and Accounts 2011-12,
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmintdev/writev/751/m07.htm

Education For All Movement
http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/
> *Stemming from the World Education Forum in 2000, the EFAs set out a global commitment to provide quality basic education for all children, youth and adults, and set six goals to be met by 2015.*

Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality For All
EFA Global Monitoring Report 2013/4, Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality For All, UNESCO,
http://unesco.nl/sites/default/files/dossier/gmr_2013-4.pdf?download=1

World Bank Data Bank
http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.MED.PHYS.ZS

The World Bank provides a free and open access data bank related to development in countries across the world.

Visual Impairment and Blindness, WHO
http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs282/en/
WHO fact sheet related to visual impairment and blindness, as part of the WHO Media Centre.

Number of Ophthalmologists in Practice and Training Worldwide
http://www.icoph.org/ophthalmologists-worldwide.html
Statistics provided by the International Council of Ophthalmology

Top Development Journals Dominated by Northern Scholars, SciDevNet
http://www.scidev.net/global/publishing/news/development-journals-northern-scholars.html
Article published on SciDevNet examining Northern journalist dominance in the top development journals.

Higher education in the post-2015 agenda: proof that it matters
https://beyond2015.acu.ac.uk/submissions/view?id=95
Article published by Beyond 2015 discussing higher education in the post-2015 agenda.

Pili contribute to biofilm formation *in vitro* in *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*
http://biomedfrontiers.org/infection-2014-4-15/
Tuberculosis research related to reducing persistence published in the World Biomedical Frontiers journal.

Hidden in the highlands: the description and phylogenetic position of a novel endemic freshwater crab species (Potamonautidae: *Potamonautes*) from Zimbabwe
http://www.publish.csiro.au/paper/IS13012.htm
An article on the discovery of a new crab species published in the Invertebrate Systematics journal.

Knowledge Capital of Nations (*from Jim Wynn, Imagine Education, United Kingdom*)
Hanushek, E., and Woessmann, L., 2015, *The Knowledge Capital of Nations: Education and Economics of Growth*, CESifo Book Series, The MIT Press.
This book examines the impact education has on economic growth.

Creating a Learning Society: A New Approach to Growth, Development and Social Progress (*from Jim Wynn, Imagine Education, United Kingdom*)
Stiglitz, J., and Greenwald, B., 2015, *Creating a Learning Society: A New Approach to Growth, Development and Social Progress*, Kenneth Arrow Lecture Series, Columbia University Press.

From the Facilitation Team

The 169 Commandments
The Economist, 'The 169 commandments: The proposed sustainable development goals would be worse than useless', 28 March 2015, The Economist,

http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21647286-proposed-sustainable-development-goals-would-be-worse-useless-169-commandments

Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld
> *The agenda was formally adopted at September 2015 United Nations Generally Assembly, and sets out a plan of action for the next fifteen years for people, planet and prosperity.*

The Sustainable Development Goals
http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals
> *The list of 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets*

Sustainable Development Goal 4
http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/
> *The United Nations webpage for SDG4 providing an overview of the goal and targets, and related news and information*

We The People: The Global Goals for Sustainable Development [*video*]
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpqVmvMCmp0#b09g28t20w15

Sustainable Development Begins With Education: How Education can contribute to the Proposed Post-2015 Goals
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002305/230508e.pdf

> *A UNESCO publication which addresses each sustainable development goals and how education links to and influences achievement of that goal*

Discussion Question

From: Education Hub Facilitation Team
Sent: 08 October 2015 15:08
To: The Commonwealth Education Hub
Subject: [edu-hub] DISCUSSION: SDG4 - Discussion ends 28 October 2015

Dear Education Hub Members,

Following the recent adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, we are launching a discussion exploring action towards *SDG4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.*

The Hub discussion will be guided by the following questions:
- **What is your view of Goal 4?**
- **Do you or your organisation have programmes that support this goal?**
- **What additional actions are you or your organisation planning to take to address the challenges of education globally, and in your country?**

The discussion opens today, and will be guest moderated by Mr Vis Naidoo. Mr Naidoo is a board member of Education without Borders, and recent past Vice President of the Commonwealth of Learning. Our team will post no more than one "digest" email per day, which will include all responses and the moderator's comments. All messages received will be reviewed by the moderator.

The discussion will close on **Thursday, 28 October 2015**, after which we will consolidate a synthesis of the discussion which will be published on the Education Hub portal (https://www.thecommonwealth-educationhub.net/). To assist, we will include below, brief background information and resource links.

To input to the discussion simply reply to this email or email edu-hub@groups.thecommonwealth.info.

We look forward to a productive discussion.

With best regards,

The Facilitation Team
The Commonwealth Education Hub
Email: edu-hub@groups.thecommonwealth.info

Full Responses

Responses received with thanks from:

1. David Leeming, Leeming Consulting, Vanuatu
2. Ivan Yaholnitsky, Bethel Business and Community Development Centre, Lesotho
3. Masa'udu Adamu Kazaure, National Board for Technical Education, Nigeria
4. Ivan Yaholnitsky, Bethel Business and Community Development Centre, Lesotho (2nd response)
5. Jim Knight, TES Global, United Kingdom
6. Masa'udu Adamu Kazaure, National Board for Technical Education, Nigeria (2nd response)
7. Sue Dale Tunnicliffe, Commonwealth Association for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Educators, United Kingdom
8. Nicholas Kimolo, FLOSS4Edu Africa Network, Kenya
9. Ian Pringle, Farm Radio International, Canada
10. Andrew Law, Open University UK, United Kingdom
11. Allah Bakhsh Malik, Government of Pakistan, Pakistan
12. Emily Hayter, Canon Collins Educational and Legal Assistance Trust, United Kingdom
13. Brennen Wood, Government of The Bahamas, The Bahamas
14. Victor Konde, African Entrepreneurship Hub, Zambia
15. Stephen Lazaro Tsaray, Vocational Education and Training Authority, Tanzania
16. Jim Wynn, Imagine Education, United Kingdom
17. Peter Williams, Commonwealth Consortium for Education, United Kingdom

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David Leeming, Leeming Consulting, Vanuatu

In relation to programmes that support SDG4, ICT can play an important role in providing universal access to education, and promoting inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities.

Vanuatu's Universal Access Policy (UAP) aims to provide telecommunications internet services to rural and unserved areas that are not commercially viable. The concept of schools as hubs for community access is central to the UAP's strategy, together with the provision of computer labs, class sets of tablets, solar power, broadband, and gateway servers with digital, educational resources to 21 schools nationwide. Integral to the success of these programmes is training for teachers and other key stakeholders. The school server technologies worked as a "local cloud", providing digital library and application services for the school and local community. Training workshops were also carried out to ensure supervisors of the facilities went away with a full set of essential operating, administration and maintenance skills, and explored educational resource collections provided on the servers and the local content tools. Teachers and educational officials are inspired and challenged to make connections with their teaching and curriculum, socialised into the world of "creative collaboration" and empowered with new digital literacies and local content capacities in line with the country's national ICT policy.

To learn more on the project, visit: http://community.nuzusys.com/

Ivan Yaholnitsky, Bethel Business and Community Development Centre, Lesotho

Bethel Business and Community Development Centre is a commercial and technical school located in a remote rural district of Lesotho. It began operations in 1993 on barren land with institutional support from UNICEF and the local RC Mission Church. BBCDC addresses several thorny and interdependent development problems, including: educational innovation, landscape regeneration and water resources improvement, financial independence, adoption of renewable energy platforms, appropriate technology, and design of the built environment for sustainability. The school's primary mission is to provide skills and knowledge to young men and women for well-being and self-reliance through experiential learning. BBCDC stresses the design, assembly, operation and management of complex systems as a key driver of wealth, value and order creation. Lesotho suffers from moderate to severe land degradation and high levels of youth unemployment. BBCDC promotes a rational and comprehensive transition pathway.

In August 2012 ground was broken for construction of a 242m^2 learning centre on the BBCDC campus which includes four distinct workshops and studios:
1. Food science and culinary arts;
2. Information technology and media studies;
3. Solar energy utilization and building science; and,
4. Environmental science and agro-ecology.

Students and staff built it themselves and as of Sept. 22, 2014 the facility is completed and fully operational. The learning centre also includes a central concourse which functions as a social space for students. It was financing endogenously through retained earnings from commercial operations.
Emergence, survival and success are not a smooth, calm or inherently orderly process, but are often gritty, chaotic, demanding and terrifying. BBCDC is where it wants to be because of critical decisions taken and followed up on, with hard work, perseverance, imagination and intelligence. BBCDC possesses a broad suite of infrastructure, programs, intellectual capital and experience that is appropriate for the context in which it operates. BBCDC is painstaking about avoiding moral hazard or pretentious social engineering, the twin pillars of doom threatening development programs. By building up individual people, giving them tangible skills, a sense of responsibility and self-confidence, BBCDC is fulfilling its mission. The four living laboratories just completed on the BBCDC campus provide exceptional education and meet present requirements.

The school has crafted a substantial income generating platform based on three sectors: building subcontracting and civil engineering; solar energy products sales and service; and conference and guest facilities. The built environment at BBCDC is resource efficient, and because of an extensive program of solar energy utilization, is able to provide high quality energy to sustain a multiplicity of operations on its campus for guests, in workshops, and food services operations. Available water, energy and biodiversity continue to grow each year and systems in place reflect evolution. The students at BBCDC cannot afford high tuition fees and there is very limited tax payer support. BBCDC and students partner to work hard together; operations generate revenues that sustain the school and provide the students with exceptional real world experiential learning. It is a strategy that works and is appropriate in this context. Students are often paid for attachments and special projects, and this enables them to share in commercial success. Exit level outcomes for students include: self-reliance, employability and business sense along with are over-arching framework of sustainable development.

The 2014 Annual Review of the Bethel Business and Community Development Centre is accessible here.

Moderator's Note, Vis Naidoo

Thanks to David and Ivan for starting this Education Hub discussion. Both examples quoted offer a short and rich description of programmes that help advance SDG 4. I can see how both focus on addressing issues of equity, access to quality education and technical-vocational skills, ensuring youth have relevant skills and the use appropriate technologies to advance Goal 4.

The two inputs raise further questions:
- Are Commonwealth Governments setting timeframes for the development of targets and clear performance indicators relevant to their country needs to ensure they are on track towards achieving SDG4.
- How are the Vanuatu and Lesotho examples contributing to the country targets that can be 'rolled up' to achieve Goal 4?
- Are there any other examples of programmes that have been developed based on a country policy, plans and targets that address Goal 4?

An important point raised by both programmes is how related areas, whether it is a country's technology policy, skills to maintain the systems, land and water resources or renewable energy are being addressed using an integrated programme approach. This offers an excellent example of how to address developmental challenges in a cohesive manner that starts to address other SDGs as well.

Masa'udu Adamu Kazaure, National Board for Technical Education, Nigeria

This response is in relation to the question regarding how the Commonwealth governments are setting time frame for the development of targets and clear performance indicators relevant to country needs to ensure achievement of SDG4.

Nigeria is a country with over 500 TVET institutions, including polytechnics, monotechnics, and technical colleges, under the supervision of the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE). This is the formal sector. The Informal sector works mainly through apprenticeships. The Polytechnics train graduates of senior secondary schools and technical colleges to the standards of National Diploma (ND), Higher National Diploma (HND) and Post-Higher National Diploma (Post-HND). The quality of academic programmes in Polytechnics and technical colleges is assured by the NBTE's curriculum development and periodic accreditation visits. Polytechnics and similar technical institutions administer their certification examinations while the National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB) is responsible for examination and certification of the occupational trades offered by the technical colleges and vocational enterprise institutions (VEIs).

A major recent initiative is the introduction of the Innovation Enterprise Institutions and Vocational Enterprise Institutions (IEIs and VEIs). These are private sector driven institutions targeting areas of skills shortage and market needs. They provide industry specific competences in such fields as oil and gas, communication, entertainment, fashion, hospitality, automobile, construction and welding sectors. While the programmes of these new categories of institutions are subject to NBTE accreditation, it is strongly felt that their key goals of providing employable skills and competencies could be better achieved if their products are subjected to work place assessment.

According to the National Policy on Education (NPE) the overriding goals of TVET in Nigeria are to:

- provide trained manpower in applied sciences, technology and business, particularly at basic and advanced technical levels;
- provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development; and,
- give training and impart necessary skills with a view to making the individual economically self-reliant.

Recently, a comprehensive review of the curricula was undertaken by NBTE and entrepreneurship education was duly embedded. There is a greater desire to deliver training to meet industry needs, but this is limited to deficiencies in areas of assessment, certification and instructional resources which needs substantial upgrading.

There is an education reform initiative by the federal ministry of education which is hinged on turn around strategies; activities with deliverables and timelines anchored to implementation agencies and sources of funding. The Nigerian government is committed achievement of SDG4.

Moderator's Note, Vis Naidoo

Thank you Dr Masa'udu Adamu Kazaure of Nigeria. Your summary of key developments within the TVET sector of Nigeria is helpful to understand how your country has interpreted SDG 4 and implementing programmes and initiatives. I make the assumption that many of the programmes and initiatives you refer to were started before the SDGs were formally accepted by UN Member Countries.

This illustrates a key point, many countries and institutions have already embarked on strategies to improve sectors within their education system, as Dr Kazaure has outlined. Perhaps an important question to raise is – **are countries and institutions reviewing their strategies and programmes to assess if these are aligned to SDG 4 and other Goals?**

Ivan Yaholnitsky, Bethel Business and Community Development Centre, Lesotho (2nd response)

I have to tell you a story about boots on the ground.

In Feb. I met Alex [*name changed for the purpose of this story*] at a funeral in Zastron RSA. He was living in Cape Town, working as a fashion photographer and finding life unfulfilling. He has a Bachelor of Commerce, is in his late twenties and comes from an upper-middle class family. In April he quit his job and came to Lesotho to try his hand at farming. The difference his presence has made is nothing short of miraculous. I was never satisfied with the performance or quality of our agricultural program at the Bethel Business and Community Development Centre (BBCDC) [*this project has been referenced previously in the discussion*]. There were always more than enough people around and there was no shortage of equipment or infrastructure, but it drifted and remained mediocre. Alex charged in like a ball on fire and without the slightest background or knowledge of farming has gotten the job done. It would be misleading to say that it is his victory alone; our students and other staff members have also caught the fever and pitched in. This morning we went for a quick walk around the estate, and I am stunned at what we accomplished this spring. I can safely predict that Alex will multiply. I have worked hard with him too, but if I was alone it would not have come off because of overstretch. From my vantage point there is always too much process and futile posturing in development, with the worst of it people just driving around in 4x4 double cabs on safari.

In a seminal survey of America in The Economist many years ago, the author of the essay attributed America's greatness to three factors: the society celebrates the frontier, the pioneer and the giant killer. I love the SDGs and the premise of local agency and self-sufficiency that underlies them. Our eager intern proves the point entirely. If you want success, you have to get boots on the ground, out in the field, here where the problems and opportunities are immediate. So now we have our very own Captain America, from Cape Town, working in Lesotho. Let us celebrate.

Jim Knight, TES Global, United Kingdom

Goal 4 is critical if we are to build the human capacity to really deliver on the rest of the goals and the overarching sustainability. The final target is key: *By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states.*

Without delivering on this the rest are very hard indeed. Within TES.com we are looking at how to collaborate with others on a set of global teaching standards and blended teacher development to address this need.

Moderator's Note, Vis Naidoo

Thanks to Lord Knight and Ivan Yaholnitsky. Both contributors make exceptionally important points:
- The role of the teacher; and,
- The role of the development practitioner.

Both require a particular passion, need to see their role beyond 'being a job' and bring positive energy to their work. So no matter how wonderful the SDGs are and the vision they espouse, the integral involvement of people is critical to making them a reality. Lord Knight focuses on the role of teachers and Ivan Yaholnitsky on the implementer, both of whom make massive contributions to achieving the SDGs and contribute to the global vison.

I salute both the teacher and implementer and invite others to also focus on people that make the SDGs a reality. What is your experience of people that has made a difference to social and economic development of people and communities in relation to education? How do we enable and encourage such teachers and implementers?

Masa'udu Adamu Kazaure, National Board for Technical Education, Nigeria (2nd response)

Dear Moderator

I refer to yours and my earlier contribution. It is not as if we are not doing anything in Nigeria before the advent of SDGs. Goal 4 which seek to ensure inclusiveness and equitability into quality education as well as promote lifelong learning opportunities has found us already focusing on access and equity to education, particularly TVET with emphasis on lifelong learning.

Bulk contribution to the national economy in Nigeria is through the informal and non-formal sectors that are unregulated, uncontrolled, unstandardized and above all unknown. In 2010 through 2011, we set up a national

steering committee for institutionalization of NVQs for recognition of skills and competences acquired on the job, or from formal or informal training organizations, based on nationally validated assessment and certification system. The objective was to enhance quality, accountability, transparency, access, progression and comparability of qualifications in relation to existing and future labour market and labour needs. Approval was granted for a six level framework defined by level descriptors and mode of articulation from one level to another. Procedure for approval of qualifications, registration of training and assessment centres, as well as identification of source of funds were made. Of particular note is the continuous engagement of the industry (both public and private) in the development and implementation of the NVQs project. So it is not as if we are not doing anything before the SDGs.

Recently, we have engaged in training and retraining of assessors, verifiers and other quality assurance managers. Approval was granted to some training centres and sector skills council to pilot the process. Also national code of practice was brought out construction of national occupation standards and classifying them.

From the above, one would have no doubt that Nigeria has set out the SDGs 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7. For example, in the coming 2016 fiscal year, we intend to achieve some aspects of our master plan by developing a comprehensive data bank of quality assurance managers (QAA, IQM, EVs, CM, and NVQ management course). We also wish to engage more stakeholders, through publicity and public enlightenment etc.

Sue Dale Tunnicliffe, Commonwealth Association for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Educators, United Kingdom

I absolutely agree, teachers need a vision and passion, not just seen as a job, and dedicated tutors with the same feel. Difficult I know, but so much money is wasted on initiatives that may tick boxes of doing something but outcomes are not very often effective, teachers are the key and feeds to start in communities and early years too.

Moderator's Note, Vis Naidoo

Thanks Sue Dale Tunnicliffe and Dr Masa'udu Adamu Kazaure.

The connection between existing initiatives and how these contribute to the SDGs, and especially Goal 4 is noted in the TVET work described by Dr Kazaure. Thanks for your expanded overview of how TVET is contributing to Goal 4.

I am confident there are other good examples from the Commonwealth on how countries and institutions are addressing the issue of teachers and their role in building a quality education system as well as ensuring an alignment of policy and programmes in support of Goal 4.

Nicholas Kimolo, FLOSS4Edu Africa Network, Kenya

FREE LIBRE OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE FOR EDUCATION (FLOSS4EDU) AFRICA NETWORK

The FLOSS4Edu Africa network is an organisation that was formed in 2006 with the objective of making available appropriate educational content and Free Libre and Open Software (FLOSS) Tools to educational

institutions in Africa, while building the largest community of educational practitioners collaborating in the development of Free and Open Educational Resources in the continent.

It is a loosely knit network of institutions organised into 4 regional chapters: West Africa, Francophone Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa chapter. Each chapter is hosted within an educational institution except the East African chapter which is hosted within the FLOSS4Edu Secretariat in Nairobi, Kenya. FLOSS4Edu activities are focussed on building a broad network of educational practitioners, comprising of educational professionals in various sectors including tertiary and basic educational levels, vocational training, lifelong, open and distance learning.

Over the years FLOSS4Edu has been able to achieve the following:
1. Established in partnership with its University institutional members, relevant training and capacity building programs revolving around the use of technology in solving social economic development problems. Two of FLOSS4Edu initiatives in this area are highlighted with this submission below
2. Development of FLOSS solutions acting as enabling platforms to support educational or developmental activities at various levels. Worth noting here is the Integrated School Management Information System in use by several non-formal education institutions within the East African region to track student performance and progress, the eGranary platform providing a virtual warehousing, market information and order aggregation platform for farmers in rural communities in the Eastern part of Kenya. These solutions are available as Open Source Software freely available to Educational Institutions and other FLOSS4Edu members/partners.
3. Influence policy change in African Educational Networks to adopt the use of shared Open Educational Resources. Most notable here is the adoption of OER by several Universities who are FLOSS4Edu members including Egerton & Moi University in Kenya, Makerere University in Uganda and University of Jos in Nigeria.

The current FLOSS4Edu strategy revolves around:
1. Strengthening Institutional Capacity to mobilise continent wide development of OER materials with a key focus placed on Life Long Learning and training kits that focuses on addressing social economic development problems and which empowers rural communities
2. Establishing linkages with other institutions where the FLOSS4Edu membership is engaged in various ways to solve social economic problems using education and technology driven interventions
3. Expanding its membership base by recruiting more members and establishing a strong presence in the continent.

See below two projects which are currently in implementation and which have demonstrated potential to alleviate poverty if scaled and supported accordingly.
A. **COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING AND TRADING PROGRAM**
   This project is a partnership between FLOSS4Edu and the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (a network of Farmer organisations operating in the Eastern Africa region) to use localised OER based learning materials to train farmers in the Eastern part of Kenya on better grain/cereals production and storage techniques and the use of a custom developed Mobile Technology (SMS/USSD, Web, Android) eGranary platform (which is a virtual warehousing and trading platform for farmers produce) to empower the rural farmers to better store their crops and use the technology platform for order aggregation and access to higher market auction prices. In its one year of operation, the project has been able to help 500 farmers within the region to not only improve their production but also sell at better prices while avoid exploitative middlemen. The key lesson learnt is that an appropriate community based training

program coupled with relevant information and an open trading platform certainly improves the livelihood of rural communities.

The key objectives of this project have been:
1. To use Technology Mediated Learning Techniques to offer localised and free crop production and storage training to rural small scale farmers who are members of the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (with a membership of over 6 million farmers at the grass root within the East Africa region). A project pilot is currently underway in Eastern Kenya semi-arid lands.
2. To establish an electronic market place modelled on the success of mobile money solutions within the Eastern Africa region that will support the sharing of information and interaction of various stakeholders to the market place.
3. To offer self-taught or instructor led training to empower farmers and attract farmers to the electronic market place where farmers produce is searchable and can be aggregated where possible to take advantage of economies of scale and attract bigger market players. The electronic market place implements both locations based and multi-search services that enable lead generation and linking of farmers to possible buyers.
4. To create a self-sustainable value chain that attracts and retains key industrial players who are critical to the sustainability of the project all based on acquisition of empowering training accessible to the farmers.

Key achievements as to date are:
1. The development of localised educational materials on better crop management techniques by the Floss4Edu community members, experts from local Universities and research institutions. These educational materials comprise of multimedia (audio+video+animations), print based (posters and chats) and self-taught audio recorded materials which the farmers or extension officers use for field day trainings or in other information exchange programs.
2. Successful pilot with 500 small scale farmers with accumulated order values of about USD 200,000 at significantly better prices and thus achieve significant improvements on their returns.

B. **UNIVERSITY EDUCATION FOR MARSABIT GIRLS (A NOMADIC COMMUNITY LIVING IN THE NORTH-EASTERN PART OF KENYA)**
FLOSS4EDU in partnership with the Kenyatta University (a member of FLOSS4EDU) and the Kenya Education Network worked together to develop Bachelor of Education Degree program to be offered as a distance learning module to girls from a Nomadic community in the North Eastern part of Kenya. The Kenya's North Eastern region is affected by frequent drought and unrest due to ongoing military interventions to fight out Al Shabaab terrorists in the region. This coupled with cultural beliefs that discourages girl child education, made it difficult for girls to attend University education even when they have passed their secondary school examinations.

To ensure that the girls from this community were able to study even when at home, the partnership developed digital learning materials for the BEd program offered by Kenyatta University, packaged the materials onto low cost tablets and provided the tablets to the girls with support from community based educational institutions located in the region. The girls were required only to return to the community school after 3 months for examinations and for new materials to be loaded onto the tablets for a further 3 months.
Performance of the students under this program was at par with the students undertaking the face to face program at the University according to a recent monitoring and evaluation study.

The FLOSS4Edu network has demonstrated that well designed educational materials can be used to provide the required training and direction as the first point of intervention in solving social economic problems. Though education/training on its own may not offer complete solution, but if used with other interventions can work to alleviate poverty and thus achieve SDG4.

Ian Pringle, Farm Radio International, Canada

Participatory Radio Campaigns (PRC) were developed by Farm Radio International (FRI) as a way to help farmers learn about, evaluate and introduce new agricultural practices. With training and facilitation support from FRI, selected radio stations work closely with farmers and farmer organisations, agricultural extension and advisory services, researchers and other stakeholders to plan and deliver a four to six month radio campaign. During the PRC, farmers are able to explore, exchange knowledge, gain information and share experiences with a new agricultural practice that can improve their family's food security. New information Communication Technologies (ICTs) such as mobile phones, MP3 players, interactive voice response systems, and bulk SMS messaging systems are linked with radio to boost the interactivity, reach and accessibility of PRCs.

Small-scale farmers provide approximately 70% of the food eaten in sub-Saharan Africa. Yet despite being the prime food producers, small-scale farmers are more likely than any other segment of the population to be impoverished and to suffer the effects of hunger and malnutrition. This situation can change by providing small-scale farmers with the support they need to improve their productivity, enhance their resilience, and connect more successfully with markets.

Unlike top-down, externally-driven campaigns, PRCs engage farmers as active participants from day one: the focus of the campaigns is farmer-approved; the time of the day and day of the week of broadcast is farmer-selected; and farmers are intimately engaged in the knowledge sharing process throughout. The purpose of the PRC is to help farmers evaluate and make an informed decision about a new practice that could help them.

The communication for development approach is akin to lifelong learning and the main expected results are increased knowledge and the application of knowledge in relation to livelihoods, health and wellbeing. It acts as an informal educational mechanisms for the adoption of agricultural practices for improved livelihoods.

Currently, about 30 projects of this sort are run in nine countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

A detailed overview of the project is available _here_.

Moderator's Note, Vis Naidoo

Thanks Ian and Nicholas for two very useful contributions to this discussion on SDG 4.

It illustrates the role of technology in support of learning and development, to expand the reach and interaction & promote lifelong learning. These projects demonstrate the importance of a broader understanding and approach to education and how it supports other SDGs in working towards sustainable development outcomes.

Both examples also focus on the value of partnerships and collaboration in building models that make a difference to the lives of people. It is this integrated approach which is resonating strongly with community

organisations, social development groups and increasingly with development agencies. Can the formal education institutions break their mould and adopt an integrated approach?

The link between non-formal learning (as part of the lifelong learning approach) and livelihoods is well described in both these examples. This is important when governments, corporates and institutions/organisations develop policies and program and the impact they are seeking to achieve.

Moderator's Note, Vis Naidoo

Dear Education Hub Community,

As we enter the final week of the SDG 4 discussion (*ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*), now is a good time to reflect on the contributions of members and identify some of the more contentious issues regarding the SDGs and Goal 4 that the education and development community face.

The formal adoption of the 17 SDGs and resulting 169 targets sets an international development agenda for the next 15 years to 'end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all' [un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals]. There have been many positives from the process and the resulting goals.
Our discussion started with three key questions:
- What is your view of Goal 4?
- Do you or your organisation have programmes that support this goal?
- What additional actions are you or your organisation planning to take to address the challenges of education globally, and in your country?

Members have offered rich descriptions of programmes in both the formal and non-formal education sectors from various developing countries. These examples address access to education, equity, quality, skills, use of technology, building partnerships and institutional commitment. The link between these programmes and broader social and economic issues (*e.g.* livelihood, environment) was evident in some of the contributions. I framed questions based on the contributions to further shape the discourse and identify how institutions and governments are addressing the new global goal for education.

It is too early in the process to see any new programmes being developed, and those discussed represent pre-SDG programmes, likely shaped by the Millennium Development Goals and Education For All agenda. These programmes, however, all fit into the SDG 4 umbrella. This highlights one of the main criticisms of the SDGs - that they are of a general nature within the existing economic and industrial framework, therefore not helpful to shape a new approach to development. The print edition (28 March 2015) of Economist noted the 169 proposed targets were misconceived, very expensive and unlikely to be achieved. They went further to call this "a betrayal of the world's poorest people."

As we enter the final week of our discussion, perhaps consider the following questions:
- Is SDG 4 likely to help your government and institutions reshape policy and programmes?
- Is the Goal and targets in such a general nature that most policy and programmes currently in place likely to contribute to its achievement?
- What can the Commonwealth do to support governments and institutions determine policy and programmes are appropriate that contribute to Goal 4?

- How do we enable an integrated approach (as outlined by a few contributions) so that Goal 4 contributes meaningfully to other Goals and vice versa?

I look forward to your contributions in the final week.

Andrew Law, Open University UK, United Kingdom

On the OpenLearn website we have provided free learning to around 40million learners worldwide, with around 5m new learners every year (meaning it has more users than most of the world's MOOC providers combined). OpenLearn supplies around 1000 courses on a wide range of degree level subjects. Most courses have short printable certificates (many will be available as eBook or in print formats) and some now have digital badges (which can be displayed on LinkedIn and other social network sites). The majority of the site is Creative Commons licensed – allowing free re-use, and adaptation of materials. It was started with Hewlett foundation grant – but for the last 5 years has been sustained as part of business as usual for The OU UK. It is regularly referred to by the BBC and is also supported by a Google adword grant (helping raise its discoverability). It is produced by the Open Media Unit at the OU, UK.

Elsewhere we work with partners (and seek to develop new partnerships). The OU's International Development Office is working with partners to bring our expertise in open and distance education to a range of projects in Africa and Asia. For example we have developed health care and teacher education programmes (in India and Africa) impacting millions of professionals on these continents.

The OU's MOOC engine FutureLearn provides around 200 free courses from around 70 other Universities form around the world. It has over 2.5 million users and can claim the largest ever free online course anywhere in the world!

Allah Bakhsh Malik, Government of Pakistan, Pakistan

SDG 4 is a very well-articulated ambition to achieve the goal of inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all. SDG 4 is comprehensive and all-encompassing goal to achieve the targets and meet challenges of education in the new millennium.

The Government of Pakistan fully supports the Goal and we are in the process of formulating a national strategy to achieve the targets of SDG 4. We are cognizant of the fact that targets of MDG 2 and 3 could not be achieved, due to variety of reasons. One of the prime reason is inadequate financing for education in Pakistan and other developing countries.

The targets of SDG are helpful but the real maverick lies in the implementation by setting the policy and programmes right and reviewing of previous practice. We cannot achieve different results without positive financial and technical support, and a core group of well-trained teachers.

- The global community needs to extend expert advice, adequate financing and effective technical guidance to ensure timely achievement of the targets of SDG 4. Enrollment and retention of girls in schools is a gigantic task for which not only sufficient number of primary schools would be required, but the entire programme has to be tailored to develop the skills for decent work and livelihood.

- To ensure meaningful participation of stakeholders, advocacy and awareness campaigns for community mobilization and association of school management committee in the process of dissemination needs to be given active attention.

Moderator's Note, Vis Naidoo

Thanks Dr Allah Bakhsh Malik and Andrew Law. Both useful contributions on the ways in which countries and institutions are reflecting on SDG4 and working towards its achievements.

Dr Malik raises two important points – funding requirements for countries to address SDG4 and expert technical advice to support policy and program development (including modalities for stakeholder involvement). Is this an issue for other Commonwealth countries and institutions? Perhaps as a follow-through from the MDGs, the funding models and technical support is already in place and needs to be expanded.

Andrew notes the learning opportunities available through OpenLearn. This is part of the global movement to provide increased access to learning, making resources available as open educational resources (OER) and enabling the learners to use such resources. It is the latter point, enabling learners to use such resources that become an important point in terms of access, equity and as part of building any lifelong learning system. Many countries have established digital platforms for learners and teachers, provided mechanisms for devices to access learning resources and train teachers to use the resources. Have these developments showed results? Have we seen any improvement in learner achievements? Has this contributed to improved livelihoods?

Emily Hayter, Canon Collins Educational and Legal Assistance Trust, United Kingdom

From technical expertise to empowerment: why higher education matters
Canon Collins Trust has always held the belief that higher education is emancipatory for individuals and transformative for societies. We have therefore been pleased to see increasing recognition of tertiary education in drafts for the post-2015 goals, and specifically of scholarship provision in the Open Working Group's recent proposal.

1. **Technical expertise**: In his inaugural address as Chair of African Development at the LSE, Thandika Mkandawire noted that there are over 100,000 foreign experts in Africa, at a cost of USD 4 billion. This is a staggering figure, especially considering that a significant portion of this money is spent by the aid industry itself—the UK Department for International Development (DfID) and other bilateral donors, NGOs and the UN—on consultants who charge up to GBP 850 per day at the lower end of the scale. DfID's 2011-2012 budget included £500 million for technical assistance. Looking towards the Post-2015 goals, we need to recognise that complex international development problems in health, infrastructure, governance and other sectors require high-level technical, research, policy, and other kinds of expertise; that this expertise involves postgraduate qualifications; and that it costs a considerable amount of money. We would argue that some of this money would be more appropriately spent on providing people from the Global South with higher education opportunities in key fields. This can and should be achieved by investment in university capacity in the South and in accelerated investment in individuals through scholarship programmes.

2. **Key sectors need more trained professionals:** The higher education sector has a vital role to play in building up national workforces in key sectors, including education itself. School enrolment has

increased enormously in Africa since the introduction of the Education for All movement, but in order to achieve the development goal of universal primary education, we need 1.6 million more teachers globally, most of them in Africa. And not just any teachers: there are growing concerns about the quality of education and teacher training, with millions of children being left without basic literacy and numeracy skills even after years in school, and learners with special needs continuing to be left behind by school systems all over the world. UNESCO has identified teacher training as a major global concern going into the Post-2015 landscape. Another sector which is in need of trained professionals is health. The United Kingdom, for example, has 27 times the number of doctors per 1000 people than Zambia. And with 90% of visually impaired people living in low-income settings and 80% of visual impairments preventable or curable, southern African countries including Botswana, Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique and Namibia have just one ophthalmologist per million people, compared to 52 in the UK. Of course, health issues in sub-Saharan Africa are complex and the solutions involve more than simply increasing the numbers of trained professionals. But it is hard to imagine how the region will sustainably address any of the multiple health crises it faces, from Ebola to HIV, without them.

3. **Ownership:** The need for developing country 'ownership' of the frameworks and methods of international development has been an increasingly common refrain over recent years. Many of the key approaches to development—our understanding of what works and why—are not conclusively proven, and are subject to heated debates. Yet much, perhaps most, influential high-level research and debate on development still happens in the Global North (for example, less than 15% of papers in top development studies journals are authored by scholars from the Global South). Canon Collins South African Board Chair, Dr Maano Ramutsindela, from the University of Cape Town, compared this situation to the exploitation of raw materials: developing countries are almost seen as labs in which to gather data and test ideas, the results of which are then synthesized, published and analysed in Western research centres. Compounding the problem, published research on development is not easily available to students at public universities in the Global South, where libraries are often under-resourced and peer-reviewed journal subscriptions prohibitively expensive. If the development sector really wants to generate nuanced, meaningful, in-depth perspectives from the Global South on the purpose, frameworks and agenda of development beyond 2015, it should invest in strong, vibrant and independent local research communities which can truly take ownership of the entire 'value chain' of knowledge production.

4. **Universities support good governance and democracy:** In addition to building expertise in key sectors and gaining ownership over the framing of international development itself, there are inherent benefits for universities in the Global South. Research summarised by Susy Ndaruhutse in her submission to the ACU's Beyond-2015 campaign shows that higher education can improve governance and state-building and foster more pluralistic and open societies. Universities can also provide critical spaces for reflection and dissent, and as the Council for Assisting at-Risk Academics has noted, the intellectual community has often been one of the key targets of persecution by repressive regimes. There are numerous examples, from Nazi Germany to Pinochet's Chile and apartheid South Africa. Tertiary education therefore has a critical role to play throughout the developing world. Many states in these regions are little more than 50 years old, democracies are often even newer, and governance challenges are complex and far-reaching.

5. **Higher education is empowering**: 'Knowledge is power', so the saying goes. Therefore it is a bizarre situation we find ourselves in when secondary education is sometimes viewed as 'enough' for the developing world, or that developing countries should not focus on higher education 'yet'. Of course, not everyone wants to enter tertiary education, and not everyone needs to. But we should see it as a

key part of a continuum leading on from early childhood education, primary and secondary. People everywhere, whether they are girls from underprivileged rural families in Zambia or boys from underprivileged urban families in London, should be able to access high quality tertiary education should they wish to pursue it. And it is abundantly clear that very many people in sub-Saharan Africa *do* wish to pursue it. As Professor Mabel Imbuga shows in her piece, the number of public universities in Kenya increased from 7 in 2010 to 32 in 2014. At Canon Collins Trust we received 2,400 applications for postgraduate study in South Africa for the 2015 academic year, of which we have been able to support only 31. About 1500 people start PhDs in South Africa every year, and 750 apply to us for funding. People in the countries where we work are desperate to further their education, and their conception of education does not stop at the secondary level. Why then should ours?

Canon Collins Trust is proud to be supporting some of Southern Africa's most exciting researchers at the region's leading universities. In the past year, our scholars have been involved in everything from ground-breaking TB research to the discovery of a new species of crab. We hope that the post 2015 agenda recognises the important work being done by African research communities and that stakeholders are willing to increase their support to scholars and institutions in the Global South in years to come.

Brennan Wood, Government of The Bahamas, The Bahamas

Thank you for an opportunity to contribute to the discussion on SDG4. The Bahamas government and the Ministry of Education are committed to this goal insomuch they have included the words inclusive, quality education and lifelong learning in their yearly themes for the past five or six years. It will be tantamount to failure as an educational entity if you were to do anything less than to commit to inclusive and equitable practices while making learning opportunities accessible throughout the life span.

Technology has become the great equalizer for persons desirous of obtaining quality education. Here are a few examples:
1. Children or adults with handicapping conditions that prohibit them from being in a traditional classroom may access learning in a variety of virtual classrooms.
2. A rich variety of virtual programs may also be accessible to the gifted and talented learner.
3. An interesting phenomenon in the Caribbean region is the growing number of students who are student athletes-those who would like to achieve academically and develop to their greatest potential in a specific sport while still in high school. These objectives are totally achievable with virtual programming that have instructional and assessment components created for student athletes.

I wish to share also an interesting educational strategy that Cuba uses for special learners who have multiple handicaps, where the government pays the mother or father to remain home and educate the child. The government provides them with curricula support and ancillary support for therapeutic needs. This fulfils the goals for equitable quality education throughout the life of the learner.

Moderator's Note, Vis Naidoo

Thanks Emily Hayter and Brennen Woods for your contributions.

Brennen's comments focus on technology and examples of how it is being used to ensure equity. Emily raises the important issue of higher education, the need for greater resources to support increased access to universities, more research and agenda setting by institutions from developing countries.

SDG 4 has shifted the dialogue from universal primary and secondary education to also include post-secondary education. This includes technical and vocational skills, university-based programmes and teacher development. The use of the term 'lifelong learning' in the Goal is critical to ensure we are focused on learning from 'cradle to the grave'. This goes further than formal education and also requires governments to look at adult literacy, non-formal learning and ensuring an integrated system.

Is this a realistic expectation for governments and institutions, development agencies, NGOs and others to construct policy and programmes that build the lifelong learning system? How is this being done?

Both Brennen and Emily focus on two different aspects that play a role in such a system – technology and higher education. Are there other examples of how institutions and countries tackle the need for a lifelong learning system?

Victor Konde, African Entrepreneurship Hub, Zambia

In line with building the link between education and economy, the African Entrepreneurship Hub is actively involved in promoting and supporting entrepreneurship in Africa. The Hub helps entrepreneurs develop market insights and creates businesses linkages, and trains, mentors and promotes emerging entrepreneurs and firms. In the past two years, AEH has worked in collaboration with the University of Glasgow to assess how ICT use can promote and drive entrepreneurial activities of SMEs in Africa (Ghana and Zambia), and is currently implementing an Accelerated Identification and Realization of Agricultural Business Opportunities of the Youth in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and designing an open innovation platform and technology market.

Stephen Lazaro Tsaray, Vocational Education and Training Authority, Tanzania

The overall objective of the Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) is to oversee Vocational Education and Training (VET) system in Tanzania, to support national socioeconomic development. VETA plays an important role in the Tanzanian educational environment, to ensuring quality and equitable VET to build a competitive labour force and a generation which contributes to socioeconomic development through effective regulation, co-ordination, financing and collaboration. Along with regulation and promotion of equitable access, VETA runs 28 model VET centres and coordinates VET provision in 700+ centres across the country.

VETA works not only hand-in-hand with SDG4, but towards various other SDGs, to promote a sustainable future for future generations. Along with other mechanisms, VETA conducts labour market surveys to determine skills demand, and importantly links education to economic outcome. The ultimate objectives of VET are to cultivate employability (through wage employment and self-employment) and career progression (through further education). Understanding and engaging the interlinkages between these two areas will help develop a skilled labour force for the future of Tanzania.

Moderator's Note, Vis Naidoo

Thanks Stephen Lazaro Tsaray and Victor Konde for providing good examples of how African countries are addressing both SDG 4 and the linkages with other Goals. This integrated approach is valuable in ensuring there is a strong link between education and economic outcomes.

Sustainable development focuses on three primary areas – (1) social development, (2) economic development and (3) protecting the environment. In the two examples below, what is the level of addressing issues related to the environment?

As we close this discussion, it will be useful to reflect on our work as government, as institutions, within civil society organisations and communities – does it reflect sustainable development and will it advance the global goals leading to a better world?

Jim Wynn, Imagine Education United Kingdom

May I draw attention to the book The Knowledge Capital of Nations by Hanushek and Woessmann. The text looks closely at the impact education has on economic growth. The conclusions from this book are listed below. What I draw from this is that whist SDG 4 is overtly about education we must make sure that education systems look closely at all 17 goals and see where curricula can support our citizens understanding of each and what actions are necessary to help achieve them. If we only focus on sdg4 I think this will be a big mistake. A coordinated and synchronised approach is crucial and is a subtext in the book from 2014, *Creating a Learning Society: A New Approach to Growth, Development, and Social Progress* (Joseph E. Stiglitz and Bruce C. Greenwald.)

Conclusions (From The Knowledge Capital of Nations by Hanushek and Woessmann)
- In short, to us the evidence points to unwaveringly toward a unified theory of long-run growth based on the knowledge capital of nations
- Nations that successfully reform will systematically pull away in economic terms from those that do not
- In the long run, a nation's prosperity is directly related to the skills of its population
- The most productive reform involves aligning incentives with achievement through better educational institutions
- Reform is possible even if difficult
- As demonstrated by historical experience, relatively modest improvements in in skills can be worth multiples of a country's current GDP
- The relative cognitive skills- what we call the knowledge capital of a nation – can be measured well by performance on international maths and science assessments

Peter Williams, Commonwealth Consortium for Education, United Kingdom

The best thing about the new global goals for education set out in SDG4 is that they span all levels and types of education, emphasising the holistic nature of the education system. The previous two education-focused Millennium Development Goals dealing with universal primary schooling and gender equality in primary and

secondary education always seemed too narrow. The education community, as distinct from political activists, generally preferred the broader EFA Goals to the MDGs as a statement of where they wanted to go.

The MDG campaign always posed a problem for Commonwealth dialogue, given that our association spans countries at such very different stages of development. Given that Commonwealth countries are a large part of the world problem - the Commonwealth-dominated regions of South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa are the locus of a large part of the world's out of school population, and of gender inequality in basic education - it may seem natural that the Commonwealth should have devoted six successive CCEMs between 2000 and 2015 to themes embracing access, equity and quality of school education. Yet two thirds of Commonwealth countries at the Conferences had to all intents and purposes attained both the MDG education targets even before they were promulgated and might well have preferred other themes.

Leaving that aside one has to admit that the very simplicity of those two MDGs lent them considerable force as a call to action. The possibility of constructing international league tables showing how far each country was from attainment of UPE or gender equality was a gift to education pressure groups, both national and international. It is true that the data in those tabulations concealed nearly as many truths - about actual daily attendance as distinct from enrolment, or about learning as distinct from school attendance - as they revealed. The targets were also in some respects and some places damaging, because they appeared to prioritise short-term objectives of getting children enrolled, even if in classes of 120 children with poorly trained teachers, over long-term quality and sustainability of education provision. But it has to be admitted that they were powerful drivers of action to expand access to school. As a result, progress in education is generally regarded as one of the big successes of the global MDG enterprise between 2000 and 2015.

By contrast the problem with the new set of SDGs - SDG4 on education in this context - is their multiplicity, vagueness and lack of focus.
- Multiplicity: Is there not a danger that by attempting everything, we shall not know where to start and may achieve nothing much?
- Vagueness: Terms like 'free', 'equitable' and 'quality' are easily tossed around but what do they mean in practical terms? Does the right to 'free' education mean that state schools should not charge for anything; or that private schools should not charge tuition fees? Should equity reflect reward for effort or entitlement on basis of need? Is 'quality education' to be reckoned in terms of vibrant classrooms, or individual exam performance at graduation?
- Lack of focus: If the goals are to have traction, each country will need to develop indicators of performance and set targets appropriate to its situation.

The education goals are in some cases hopelessly over-ambitious. Is it really in any sense meaningful to expect achievement of 4.7

> *4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the 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*

It is perhaps a pity that the 19CCEM was held at a juncture slightly too late to influence the Goal, already virtually 'signed' off at the Incheon World Education Forum and yet too early to exchange views on future operationalisation of what had been agreed. Countries will no doubt be considering this at UNESCO's General

Conference this week. In a Commonwealth context we may have to wait for the meeting of the Education Ministers Action Group heralded in the Nassau Declaration from 19CCEM.

The Commonwealth should certainly use any leverage provided by clause 4.9 on Scholarships to mobilise additional support for the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, and for its Endowment Fund specifically designed to facilitate provision of study opportunities in developing-country universities. And, maybe the inclusion of clause 4.10 on the need to expand teacher training will serve as a reminder that in the earliest days (1960s) of Commonwealth educational co-operation the Commonwealth used to operate a substantial Commonwealth Bursary Scheme to boost the supply of teachers in developing member countries.

Moderator's Note, Vis Naidoo

Thanks Peter Williams and Jim Wynn for your most interesting contributions to this discussion.

Peter notes the value of having global goals – to align efforts of the international, regional, national and local organisations and governments. An interesting view based on the analysis of the MDGs – have we learnt from the efforts of the MDGs and EFA actions and have these been taken into account when constructing the SDGs. I get the sense that not enough reflection and incorporation of the lessons were taken into account when debating the SDGs.

Perhaps it is up to governments and other stakeholders to determine national needs and develop policy, programmes and action to address these. In doing this, the point made by Jim and noted in the book he references is important – to ensure any policy, programmes and action takes account of the broader global goals and what role education plays to achieve these. The call for greater co-ordination and synchronisation is loud and clear.

As this discussion forum ends, there are a few key lessons emerging and of value to the Commonwealth:
- The global goals offer a framework for action and are shaping the education and broader development agendas. We need to embrace it, with all its challenges and support governments and organisations in their planning and implementation.
- There are already great projects being implemented that address SDG4 and are also focusing on other SDGs. This level of integration where education is the platform to address economic, environmental and other key issues facing countries is an important point of departure and one that needs support.
- The role of technology has also been noted in the discussions and would continue to play an important role in support of building the lifelong learning system of member Commonwealth countries.
- Our ability to monitor the work being done, capture data and analyse how this addressing key priorities need to be strengthen in member countries and institutions. Such analysis will point to further strategies, address what is working and needs to be scaled and what needs to change or stop.
- Many contributions noted the importance of how governments, institutions and organisations plan to address SDG 4 and other Goals. This requires reviews of current policies and plans based on needs and key issues. Support, including financial, is going to be important for governments and organisations to address the needs and develop programmes that are integrated, thereby addressing other SDGs. Organisational change will become an important process.

Thanks to all the contributors for their thoughtful input and for informing the education Community of Practice within the Commonwealth. I hope these inputs together with useful links and the moderator's analysis will

support all Commonwealth countries and organisations make a valuable contribution to the achievement of SDG 4, support the other SDGs and build a better world for all.

My thanks to the Commonwealth Secretariat for the privilege of moderating this discussion and in particular, to Paul West and Emma Findlater.

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