1. 2019: Context and Background

General background

2019 is an important year for education. In the United Nations system, the Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education will be under review at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). This year's HLPF will happen at the head of States level at the same time as the UN General Assembly in September 2019.

2019 is also a moment for the movement as it marks its 20th anniversary. After 20 years of existence, the campaign must ensure to remain relevant and to reinvent itself where needed, to fulfil its mission to defend the right to education for all.

The Global Action Week for Education (GAWE) is a flagship event for the civil society education movement, and has been running successfully since 2003. In 2016 the choice was made to focus on Financing education, and it remained a core focus area in 2017 and 2018 (with a broader theme around accountability and civil society participation), especially in 2018 following the Dakar replenishment conference. This continuity is considered important, and new themes should prioritise linkages with the previous years. Education financing (GCE's strategic area 4) is key to achieve all the SDG4 targets by 2030 and thus education financing should remain at the heart of GCE's campaigns as an underlying theme with connections to all other themes. Education budget monitoring, and privatisation will be the main topics at the heart of 2019 financing campaign, along with the 4S framework and Tax Justice (developed in a separate note).

Another common theme that should run through all our coordinated actions is the strengthening of civil society. The exclusion of civil society organisations and trade unions by various governments at national and regional level undermines our ability to measure the commitments made towards SDG4. The Global Campaign for Education supports institutionalised civil society participation in the monitoring and implementation of SDG4 and Education 2030 at national, regional and international levels. Despite numerous commitments towards collective and inclusive participation by governments and the international community, a number of national education coalitions and various civil society organisations are excluded from planning, implementation and monitoring of SDG4, effective institutionalised mechanisms for social dialogue with the teaching profession are too often not in place, and education activists, union representatives and students are often criminalized, or brutally repressed for the work that they do. The exclusion of legitimate civil society is a contradiction of the collective commitment made to implement and monitor SDG4. In this context, it is extremely important to highlight civil society's strength and representativeness.

We are at a critical point that demands stronger commitments of all partners to ensure the timely delivery of free quality education for all as set out in the Education 2030 agenda: children starting school in 2019 will complete their 12 years basic education by 2030. It is an ideal moment to interrogate stakeholders on their commitment, and to assess if the fundamental human right to free inclusive quality public education for all will became a reality.

GCE's core focus areas

Equality and non-discrimination
GCE’s strategic plan area 1 strongly affirms that it is and will continue to be the role and responsibility of
the state to provide free, inclusive quality and public education to all, especially to excluded/marginalised communities and persons. The growth and support for private provision of education undermines the commitments made by governments in support of free, inclusive quality public education. It is important that civil society campaigns ensure that inclusive education is realised/accessible. Education for children, youth and adults with disabilities is part of the Education 2030 agenda, but is often neglected by states and ministries of education. Progressive education policies regarding access, equality, equity and inclusivity should not be omitted from public policies and education sector plans. Furthermore, States need to acknowledge that well trained, paid, supported and qualified teachers have a key role to play in delivering the right to education for all, and commit resources to ensure lifelong and inclusive teacher trainings.

Transformative education
Assessing education quality is not an easy task, and cannot be measured only through standardised testing means. Education should not be limited to the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills, but should also focus on preparing citizens to be active and assertive holders of their rights and play an active role in shaping the present and future of societies. As our first President highlighted in his video message, the right to education should go hand in hand with acquiring and claiming rights through education. This is the core of GCE's strategic area 2, and should be a basis for the movement's definition of education.

Education in emergencies
A clear risk to the commitment and achievement of the right to education is that of continued conflict across the world, as well as the threat of natural disasters, as highlighted by GCE’s strategic area 3. These include the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, but also hidden and protracted crises in other parts of the world. With an estimated 535 million children – nearly one in four – living in countries affected by conflict or disaster, this issue is of particular relevance today. The 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report addresses specifically the issues of migration, and education for displaced, migrants or conflict affected groups should remain a core theme of our coordinated actions.

GCE's Policy context
GCE's policy positions related to these focus areas, and which should frame our campaign and activities objectives, are that:

- SDG4 targets are intertwined and interrelated, so a holistic focus is necessary for the full realization of the human right to education.
- Focus on the most vulnerable and discriminated ones would allow to maximize the SDG impact, so “leaving no one behind” actually poses a strategic focus on these populations.
- Increasing access to education cannot be achieved without responding to social and cultural context where children, youth and young adults live and learn, including in conflict and disaster settings.
- Adapted curriculum is a key requirement to reach the most marginalized population, including persons with disability and newcomers.
- Quality public education for all promotes the principles of human rights and contributes to social justice, inclusion and cohesion: education empowers youth to understand, embrace and claim human rights, and become active citizens.
- Human rights education can be a defense against the rise of violence, discrimination, exclusion and intolerance.
- Adaptability also implies a strong commitment on the decolonization of curriculum, which actually allow the gender transformative aims of education.
- Adequate education financing, according to the international state obligations, is a pre-requisite for the full implementation of a progressive human rights-based agenda.
- Efficient utilization of the allocated funds is equally important for ensuring the delivery of rights to quality education.
2. 2019 - Theme, slogan and dates

Global Action week for Education

Overarching theme: Making the right to an inclusive, equitable, quality, free public education a reality

This proposed theme encompasses several of the draft strategic plan focus areas. It relates closely to the strategic focus area 1 on ‘Equality and non-discrimination’ and key actions related to developing a rights-based campaign and exploring the justiciability of education as a human right, which reads thus:

The notions of equality and non-discrimination draw on international human rights law. ‘Equality’ refers to the fundamental right established in article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which asserts that “all human beings are born free and are equal in dignity and rights”. ‘Non-discrimination’ is a principle in international human rights law. It refers to the prohibition of “any discrimination under the law and guarantees to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; article 26). [...] GCE will develop guidelines to support its members to raise policy attention to the issues of inequality, exclusion, and discrimination in terms of the provision of education infrastructure, in particular in rural areas, as well as in terms of access of quality education for all. Moreover, a targeted campaign will be designed and implemented to call local and international attention on the need to address all forms of inequality, exclusion and discrimination within and beyond education systems. In order to secure that the proposed strategic plan reaches the education needs of groups that have been historically discriminated and excluded from their right to education, GCE will primarily, but not exclusively, focus its actions on the following groups: girls, women and youth; children with disabilities; indigenous communities and cultural, ethnic, and linguistic minority groups; migrants, including internally displaced persons, asylum seekers, and refugees; and people with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity. Additional populations can be targeted according to the multiple forms of inequality, exclusion, and discrimination identified in the different contexts by the GCE members.

The theme also has linkages with the strategic area 'Education in emergencies' as described below:

[...] To begin with, GCE will undertake policy strategies to promote the right to education for people who in the context of climate change-related emergencies struggle to enjoy their right to education. It includes children and youths whose education were interrupted because of the destruction of education facilities and those who have been out of school in situations where the reconstruction of education facilities has been either ineffective or simply unplanned. GCE will encourage national and local governments, in particular in areas recently affected by natural disasters, to develop a comprehensive framework to assess and address the educational needs and rights of people living in areas potentially or already affected by emergencies.[...]

It also articulates with the strategic plan focus area 2 on Transformative education and with SDG4 target 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.

This theme may blend different approaches depending on context and relevance to our members:

- A focus on children and youth with disabilities, calling for accessible and inclusive school
infrastructures and materials, teachers training including for teachers with disabilities;
- A focus on gender disparities, and LGBTI rights;
- A focus on vulnerable, disadvantaged and poor communities (including child labourers);
- A focus on indigenous people;
- A focus on migrants/ refugees and students in the conflict zone;
- A focus on teachers as per the World Teacher’s Day 2018 slogan "The right to education is the right to a qualified teacher”.

**Proposed slogan: My Education, My right(s)**

The proposed slogan is framed within the overall SDG4 targets and focusing on claiming the right to education. The campaign proposes to "personalise" its policy claims around youth from all around the world, to align with the will to give more place in the movement to youth-led organisations and voices, and also to feature students and adults claiming their right to education. The slogan encompasses the proposition to consider a holistic approach of SDG4, giving the opportunity of our members to focus on all or the most relevant SDG4 targets in their context. The reach of the movement at every level will allow us to collect and highlight impactful personal stories to support the campaign & policy claims.

We propose this GAWE is supported also by a public call to action, to show the representativeness of the movement to the highest political level. We also believe that a global public facing campaign supported by local activities can have a strong impact into shifting mindset, which is much needed to achieve the right to quality inclusive public education for all.

The public call to action will be decisive into moving from the individual slogan "My Education, My Right(s)" to a more holistic and global: "Our Education, Our Right(s)" by the end of the campaign and a transition to the HLPF (NY in July, which main theme is "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality").

**Proposed dates: April 24th to May 1st**

Traditionally most of the coordinated actions during the GAWE happens between the last week of April and the first week of May. We propose to echo on the lessons learned from 2018 and launch the week with an international event on April 24th.

### 3. GAWE 2019 - Campaigns aims & objectives

2019’s timeline of events presents an opportunity to campaign on all the issues mentioned above. The flexible structure and inherent diversity of the GAWE offers a particularly well adapted framework to deliver on an "umbrella" campaign, as well as the sequenced major education related events throughout the year (GAWE, April; HLPF, July; UNGA, September; 20th Anniversary, October). These themes can all be addressed through the scope of delivering (respecting, protecting, realising and financing) the human right to education, and within that broad theme each member coalition can chose to adapt one or several of these topics to their particular context. Regarding the challenge of continuity with other events during 2019 and beyond, opting for a human rights-based campaign inclusive of diverse strands of work in 2019 can help develop linkages to more focused campaigning themes in the following years up to 2022.

**Aim of GAWE 2019**

The aim of this year’s Global Action Week for Education is to highlight education as an enabling human right that we all have the right to claim and enjoy, and to put pressure on governments and international bodies to take appropriate measures, including financial ones, to fulfil this right.
a) Mobilisation & communications objectives:
1. At least 100,000 individuals sign our petition or participate in our call to action worldwide
2. The campaigns mobilise and engage citizens and communities from the 5 continents
3. The media activities have a reach of 50M worldwide and include pieces from top tier broadcast or print outlets; ideally a dedicated coverage from a top tier media house in a form of a series of articles
4. The social media activities total 500,000 engagement worldwide

b) Campaigns targets:
1. 80% of GCE members engage in at least one activity during the GAWE
2. 70% of GCE members use at least one of the global messaging, policy demand, campaign branding tools
3. 70% of member launch the campaigns for enhancing coordinated works/actions for the SDG realization and implementation
4. the campaign gets support from at least 60% of targeted potential allies
6. 50% of members organise at least one event engaging both the public and the authorities (at national or local level)
7. 50% of members approach and develop intersectoral relationships or partnerships
8. 30% of members develop joint activities with youth-led groups
9. 50% of the members discuss with ministry of finance, parliamentarians and political leaders in fulfilling their commitments.

c) Expected or desired policy outcomes

- Strong commitments toward the right to education in countries where there is no such commitment to date
- Specific laws or improved laws are passed in countries where the legislative framework is weak, including legislative frameworks on progressive budgeting for education.
- Strengthened implementation in countries where laws do exist but are not enforced
- Real accountability measures for countries who have all the above and still fail to deliver
- Increased and institutionalized participation of CSOs, including youth-led and student-led organisations, in decision making and monitoring education sector plans and recognized CSO’s role and contribution in SDG realisation and implementation.
- The safe school declaration is adopted
- Members are empowered to promote and defend international norms on fundamental rights

4. 2019 - Framework for Policy demands

Governments must:

- Subscribe to, ratify and implement the human rights treaties and optional protocols
- Commit to the full realisation and implementation of SDG4
- Invest in public education systems, according to international standards (at least 6% GNP, 20% public budget) and ensure that 3-5% is used for accommodations for students with disabilities.
- Raise the attractiveness of the teaching profession, ensuring that teachers have decent employment and working conditions, enjoy their full trade union rights (especially freedom of association and collective bargaining) and are well supported with quality initial and continuous professional training.
- Develop gender sensitive education sector plans, including a participatory monitoring and evaluation with civil society organisations.
- Provide a framework, allocated resources and planning for delivering education in context of emergencies, and to IDPS and migrants.
• Address exclusion and discrimination in curriculum, teaching and learning materials and school governance
• Foster children and youth participation as a key strategy for the education public policies
• Provide progressively free of charge public quality tertiary education, including university education.
• Foster the proper CSO monitoring mechanisms for increasing efficiency in spending of education budget and its proper utilisation.
• Ratify ILO Convention 138 on the Minimum Age for Employment, which stipulates that the permissible age of entry into employment "shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and, in any case, shall not be less than 15 years.
• Provide a second chance to out-of-school children and child labourers, by implementing accelerated learning courses to mainstream them to their age-appropriate classes in the public education system.

Donor countries must:
• Increase their aid to education to at least 0.7% of their budget
• Support education programmes for migrants, IDPs and allow a greater part of their humanitarian aid to be allocated to education
• Support development programmes targeted at improving teachers' recruitment, training and wages; school infrastructures; and transports with the aim at providing education services to the most marginalised or vulnerable groups
• Work to harmonise the financing architecture and provide predictable and sustainable aid
• Withdraw support to profit making education providers
• Avoid loans as a development strategy for cooperation in education
• Condition their aid to the respect of fundamental human rights and International labour standards and strengthen the linkage between child labour and education applied in their policy framework.

5. Targets

1. National political representatives at the executive level (Heads of state or Education ministers and Nodal ministries for SDG implementation like Finance ministers) and the legislative level (Members of Parliaments, parliamentary oversight committees on education, party parliamentary groups, other relevant political groupings on education).

2. International organisation representatives as leaders engaged in supporting our campaigns and advocacy demands.

3. Potential donors (ie. both in the sense of gathering donors to support our 2019 campaigns and also the 2019 campaigns will aim to raise the profile of GCE to new possible donors).

4. CSOs intersectoral platforms looking at SDG implementation and human rights.

5. Children, youth and adults claiming their right to education.

6. Media outlets and journalists working on education issues.

7. Advocates and lawyers, academicians and analysts.
6. Key messages

- Education is a basic and fundamental human right that everyone must claim.
- Education impacts people and communities - Their needs and rights should be at the heart of every education policy.
- Youth are the best placed to claim their right to education, and their voices must be heard.
- The right to education is universal, therefore girls, boys and youth, adult, disabled, displaced, migrants or vulnerable and marginalised populations rights must be reflected in national education plans.
- The right to education is universal, and doesn’t stop or isn’t suspended in times of conflicts, wars or natural disasters.
- The right to education needs trained and qualified teachers to be realised.
- Quality Education is a human right; not a finance-based or profit-making opportunity.
- Making the right to an inclusive, quality, public education a reality needs adequate funding, efficient utilization and equitable distribution.
- Education is not a one-stop spending: it is a continuous investment that benefits the whole society.
- Education is key to form tomorrow’s citizens, it is not only a right but an enabler to all rights.
- Education is a pillar for growth, sustainability and equity, and is as such at the centre of all the SDGs.
- The fulfilment of human rights is central to the SDG agenda, and the measurement of the success of the SDGs must maintain this commitment and standard.
- Civil society is a strong and valuable partner and should be consulted and involved with decision making at all levels.
- CSOs are the strong partners to make the voice of voiceless to be heard and reflected in the policies.
- The engagement of civil society allowed for many critical advances in the education sector for the last 20 years.

7. Proposed activities

From the Global Secretariat

A global launch event

The 2018 GAWE started with an international roundtable event, which significantly helped raising the profile and define the purpose of the Week. We suggest thus to follow up on this good practice, and to plan a similar international event.

Objectives:
- Launch the Global Action Week for Education and introduce a high-level debate on the Right to Education
- Raise the awareness on the GAWF and the planned activities around the world
- Increase the visibility of GCE & GAWE to the public
- Strengthen GCE’s relationship with local actors/ stakeholders
- Showcase GCE’s membership and work to potential donors

Proposition for launch event

It would consist of a series of short speeches from selected guests followed by a public panel discussion on the right to education in the different regions of the World, including South Africa. The discussion would focus on GAWE’s theme, the particular issues of youth engagement in decision making, privatisation in South Africa, inclusive education, gender and the right to education in emergencies. A session of questions from the audience would close the official event.
We propose to then have a more informal networking/ cocktail activity for the different guests and panellists to interact, and leave space for more dialogue with the audience. In the networking/ cocktail space we will have a photo exhibition from Leeroy Jason (who covered the Fees must Fall movement) and propose to have selected pictures from Light for the World around inclusive education. Leeroy Jason would be present to talk about his work.

**Agenda:**

Selected guests would be invited to deliver a 3 to 5 minutes address (15 to 25 minutes)
Panellists will gather on stage for an opened discussion (30 to 45 minutes)
Questions from the audience and members of the press to both selected guests (if still presents) and panellists (20 to 30 minutes)
Networking/ cocktail/ informal discussions between participants and audience (around 1 hour) and individual media interviews
Duration: around 1h40 for formal event, 1 hour for informal gathering

**Media opportunity**

This event would be an opportunity to strengthen our presence in the media, to raise the profile of GCE and the GAWE. The main messages for the media would be:

- the launch of innovative, worldwide public campaign,
- bringing youth voices in the education debate,
- opportunity to get interviews with VIPs

**Audience**

We propose to invite the following to attend the event:

- Youth Caucus participants from Africa
- Donors and foundations: OSISA, OSF...
- Staff from bilateral/ multilateral aid agencies
- GCE Members and CSEF partners, particularly those in or close to South Africa (EI, ActionAid, Light For the World, MEPT, ECOZI, ZANEC, Swaziland, Lesotho...)
- Representatives from local groups working on education
- General public: GCE Secretariat staff and relatives, open invitation on social media

**Youth Caucus**

Since a second youth caucus is under discussion, it would be advantageous to hold it during the Global Action Week for Education, as part as its activities. With the youth caucus happening in South Africa as well, we could invite the Youth Caucus representatives to attend and participate in the GAWE launch event, which would give them the opportunity to interact with the guests and the audience during and after the formal event. We could also consider strengthening the relationship built with local stakeholders (youth group, academics, celebrities) and invite them to talk and interact with youth representative during their meetings, and exchange ideas on how to best claim their right(s) to education and make their voices heard.

We would look particularly to invite:

- Representatives from Equal Education
- Representatives from the Fees Must Fall movement
- A local celebrity which is also a young education activist
- Influential and engaged academics

**Calls to action**

This year’s Global Action Week for Education is geared towards public engagement. We propose at the
Secretariat level to develop two calls to action for our members to adapt in their own context.

1. Share your story!
To build up the momentum to the launch of the campaign, we are asking our members to share impactful personal stories about individuals achieving their right to education through public education systems and how it changed their lives.
We will also launch a public call for stories through social media, with the aim to:
- encourage people to share and participate and thus be inclusive in our campaign;
- gather more content and positive stories to build our narrative;
- increase the reach of the campaign - with people's content published, they'll be more likely to share to their followers.

2. Ask your government to deliver on your right(s) to education!
One of the key action of the Secretariat this year will be to improve the GAWE digital platform, transforming it into a mobilisation tool. Members will be offered a space where not only they will be able to upload their events, but also use it to interact and invite their stakeholders. All the events uploaded by members will be grouped under a GAWE general umbrella, allowing us to visually showcase the reach of the campaign through a global interactive map.
This platform will be linked to a master online petition, which will be made available in all 5 languages, and which each member can chose to adapt to their own context if they so wish. The platform will also offer the option to print the petition to gather offline signatures. The aim of the petition is for our member to showcase national support for the right to education, which gives them an additional edge when negotiating with their governments. We will strongly encourage our members to use the wealth of their coalitions’ network to reach as many people as possible. At the international level, the petition will be an indicator of the movement representativeness in terms of grassroot support. The aim is to gather globally 100,000 signatures from individuals.
Trainings will be provided for our members to use the platform, and for those not too digital savvy, the Secretariat will have the possibility to directly input information about their events from a word file.

Other possible Secretariat outputs:
- A policy briefing paper setting out a positive vision for the role of CSOs in delivering the right to education for all, and detailing our main policy focus for the different events.
- A campaign pack with messages, proposed activities and tools.
- A blog on the Human Right to Education with RTEI.
- A media and social media pack including designs, stories, pictures.

Suggested activities for the membership:
- Host national, regional or local roundtables around the right to education, and with a focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups, inviting parliamentarians and political leaders for fulfilling their commitment made to the people.
- Organise public debates with relevant Ministries, communities, inform on the campaign through community radios or local newspapers.
- Organise public protests, demonstrations or installation to make the right to education visual and real.
- Work with schools in vulnerable communities to collect stories, testimonies, and invite the communities' representatives to an official meeting with authorities, thereby personalising the right to education and giving it a human face.
- Publishing alternative reports or case studies on the right to education for specific groups.
- Adapt the global public petition to call on governments to realise the right to education for all, and tweet and write letters on ‘ My Education: My Rights’ or Emails to your President, Minister and MP to share your views on the performance of education in your country.
• Use art and local artists to convey our messaging and engage grassroots, through art installations, music, poems or photo contests.
• Mobilize different media; online, social media for disseminating the messages

8. Allies

GAWE seeks engagement and involvement from across the GCE movement. This year, other key potential allies to increase the reach of the campaign are:

1. Within the United Nations system:
   • UNESCO: UNESCO is a long-standing GAWE partner, and lead convenor of the Education 2030 Framework for Action. In previous years, the UNESCO DG has participated in letter-writing campaigns and filmed messages of support for GAWE; the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) has engaged in GAWE activities; and the UNESCO Regional Offices have run their own GAWE activities over several years.
   • UNESCO Institute of Statistics: Continued collaboration and provision of data has helped to shape the GCE engagement at national, regional and international level. The usage of credible data and information has transformed GCE and civil society advocacy
   • UNGEI: Realising the gender and girls education is an integral component of realising the right to education for all, and specific insights and support regarding gender issues will be valued.
   • The UN rapporteur for the Right to education will be a key reference person to invite in an official capacity to talk about the objective of the campaign
   • ILO on securing rights of teachers and education support personnel, and for the connection between the right to education and eradication of child labour

2. Global Partnership for Education: GPE’s core mandate is to ensure implementation of the Education 2030 agenda. It is simultaneously rolling out a new SDG responsive strategy and planning for a new replenishment campaign. This creates convergence of interests in terms of leveraging adequate focus on implementation and leveraging adequate resources for implementation.

7. Right to Education initiative and Right to Education index: Ensuring the implementation of the full SDG agenda entails strengthening collaboration with groups engaging with these issues from a Human Rights perspective. As the trend towards privatisation is denying the poorest access to quality education, the support and insight of the Privatisation in Education and Human Rights Consortium should be sought in this regard.

8. Issue specific allies:
   • Education Cannot Wait and Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies expertise can be harnessed related to Education in Emergencies and they can be an ally in terms of our engagement on implementation in fragile states and humanitarian contexts.
   • Light for the World, CBM, ICEVI should be priority allies and advisor while developing materials and advocacy positions related to disability inclusive education.
   • Rights-based organisations and MGoS working on women’s rights, indigenous rights, LGTBQI and gender issues, migration and refugee themes.
   • Children's rights and organisations working against child labour.
   • Trade union organisations
   • Student and parents’ associations