

The 2nd Meeting: Planning of the Equitable Education Association

On 18 June 2020

Summary Minutes

Summary of the Meeting

1. On 18 June 2020, the Equitable Education Fund (EEF) and UNESCO Bangkok convened an online meeting to learn about global and emerging trends related to the issue of inequity in education and four country-specific cases as well as explore the possibility of collaborating to establish an equitable education association.
2. Two groups of participants were invited to share their perspectives, knowledge and work on equity-related issues in education at global or national level:
 - a. **International organizations:** the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shared how they had addressed the issue of inequity at the global level, with GPE focusing on its current initiatives and resources and OECD focusing on recent PISA results findings.
 - b. **Country participants:** four countries – Canada (British Columbia Province), Malaysia, the U.K. and Thailand – presented their work on promoting equity in their education systems, including challenges and opportunities moving forward.
3. To accelerate progress towards SDG4, it is critical to develop mechanisms and partnerships. Participants briefly discussed the idea of forming an equitable education association. Initial and immediate responses from the participants were positive, and both GPE and OECD shared their areas of interest. More details and targets need to be worked out, and concrete plans need to be made.
4. The welcome remarks highlighted that each of the participating institutions and agencies shared a common goal. They also stressed that this meeting should serve to make informal but meaningful connections, which can be used as a basis for further discussion on the establishment of the Equitable Education Association, share educational ideas and implement them in the near future. The International Network of Health Promotion Foundations (INHPF) was introduced as a relevant example of how the health sector established a similar network to address health-related issues and support countries in strengthening institutional capacity. Lessons learned from the INHPF can provide members of the Equitable Education Association with fresh insights about the process.
5. These minutes summarize the presentations and suggestions for future collaboration. The meeting agenda and participants' list are annexed to the end of the minutes.

Summary of Presentations

Session 2: Global Perspectives on Equitable Education

Presentation: *The Global Partnership for Education's work on equity and inclusion* by Dr. Stuart Cameron, Equity and Inclusion Thematic Lead, Global Partnership for Education

GPE, currently partnering with 68 low income and lower middle-income countries, is a multi-stakeholder partnership and fund designed to expand inclusive, equitable quality learning, strengthen education systems, and promote government leadership and donor harmonization. GPE's work is delivered through advocacy to consolidate knowledge, promoting international collaboration and mobilizing finance.

GPE has been supporting its partner countries in addressing the issue of inequity and exclusion in education in various ways at both national and global levels. At the country level, some major approaches shared include:

1. implementing a result-based mechanism where GPE agrees with the government to target efficiency and equity
2. increasing financial aid to ensure the continuity of learning during a crisis (e.g., COVID-19)
3. targeting specific groups or issues, such as languages and disability
4. annually monitoring country-level results, which consist of equity indexes focusing on gender and disability issues
5. tracking countries' equity and inclusion in education sector plans

At the global level, GPE works with other international development agencies and organizations to support resources development and knowledge-sharing. This includes methodological guidelines on an education sector analysis of inclusive education, improved data availability on children with disabilities and inclusive facilities, implementation of advocacy and knowledge-sharing innovation programmes, and curating and disseminating various open (educational) resources and references.

The presentation and resources recommended are available at:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1iPvWrNyjDKJct-rla0A9vxCaVCvhGV->

Presentation: PISA: Equity in Education by Dr. Miyako Ikeda, Senior Analyst, OECD

OECD's presentation focused specifically on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and various aspects of socio-economic disparities drawn from available PISA results. PISA started in 2000 and collects data on reading, mathematics, science, global competence every three years. 15-year-old students from 79 countries participate in PISA, which asks participants to answer questionnaires on their attitude towards learning and educational well-being. Below is a summary of some PISA findings shared during the presentation:

Immediate actions needed to support disadvantaged students

On average, 11 percent of disadvantaged students in OECD countries did not reach Level 2 reading proficiency. At this level, readers should be able to identify the main idea in a moderate-length text. In Thailand, 36 percent of advantaged students were below level 2, while 63 percent of disadvantaged students were below level 2. This implies that immediate action is required to implement support for disadvantaged students.

Academic resilience

Some students, despite their socioeconomic backgrounds, maintain high scores in reading performance. These "academically resilient students" tend to have better attitudes and dispositions towards learning than others. They are also likely to enjoy reading, aspire for higher education and complete tertiary education.

Importance of effective resource allocation

According to PISA 2015, socio-economic achievement gaps are larger in countries where teacher qualifications and experience are distributed equitably among advantaged and disadvantaged schools. This result suggests that, to minimize socio-economic performance gaps, disadvantaged schools need equally qualified teachers rather than focusing on quantity per se (e.g., class size).

More detailed information on PISA data and analysis and recommended resources are available at:
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1E6NR6ISM5ZI9a6ouflsXHuuIR7TU6Ukk>.

Session 3: Country Presentations

Presentation: *The Equitable Education Fund (EEF) Thailand* by Dr. Pumsaran Tongliemnak, Education Economist, EEF Thailand

EEF Thailand was established under the Equitable Education Act 2018 in order to reduce educational inequality by providing financial support to disadvantaged and marginalized children and youth and building building partnerships with key actors in the field and supporting and developing teachers' effectiveness through systematic research. EEF Thailand's current major programmes focus on 1) financial support through conditional cash transfer and scholarships; 2) information management ("I-See and Q-info"); and 3) equitable education policy and research and international cooperation (e.g. "National Education Account", "Adult Skills Assessment").

The presentation is available at:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1oHg6FjxscMdKkmHniVX_4bSzDkeKk2iY

Presentation: *The context of Malaysia* by Dr. Rosli Ismail, Deputy Director, Educational Planning and Research Division, Ministry of Education Malaysia

Equity is one of the priority areas for Malaysia's government. As described in Malaysia's 11th Malaysia Plan (2016-2020), the Plan focuses on the bottom 40 percent of students ("B40"), which make up 2.7 million low-income households, and aims to double mean incomes and narrow educational and skills attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. Within the framework of the plan, Malaysia has increased participation of students in preschool, primary and secondary-level education (91%, 98% and 93%, respectively).

Some challenges in achieving equity were mentioned. In Malaysia, the rise of the reverse gender gap in education has been observed, with more girls attending primary and secondary education. Another challenge is related to COVID-19 school closures. The pandemic has forced students to adapt to online learning. Although it was reported that 90 percent of teachers adjusted well to a new way of teaching, only 59 percent of students actively used available e-learning platforms. To ensure students are not missing out on learning, the government is simultaneously offering learning programmes on TV channels. Other challenges included developing (an) alternative assessment mechanism(s) and designing appropriate teacher training programmes to help teachers effectively evaluate student progress and assist students in their classrooms in times of crisis.

The presentation is available at: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ZVpbCB166d1-siwOkd-MoigyFNfb1h4>

Presentation: *10 years of Pupil Premium funding in England* by Mr. Stephen Fraser, Deputy Chief Executive, The Education Endowment Foundation

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)'s goal is to close the gap in educational achievement for disadvantaged students in England, and support school leaders and teachers in decision-making through evidence synthesis, knowledge generation and interventions. EEF has implemented 190 projects and benefited at least 1.6 million children and young people over the past nine years.

EEF has developed a comprehensive [online toolkit](#) that summarizes educational evidence and provides teachers with relevant information on what has worked most effectively to increase learning achievements of disadvantaged students. In addition, EEF is working with the Research Schools Network to disseminate evidence-based practice among teachers.

The presentation and resources recommended are available at:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qsoNN9NDI_TAvJlXghFPVpNvE6dlbZu

Presentation: *Equity in Action: Improving Educational Outcomes for Indigenous Students* by Mr. Kaleb Child, Musgamdzi, Director, Indigenous Education & Mr. Joe Heslip, Equity in Action Lead, British Columbia's Ministry of Education, Canada

In British Columbia (BC), there are 34 First Nation languages, representing 60 percent of all First Nations languages in Canada. According to the Ministry of Education of BC, most of these languages are critically endangered. In BC, approximately 9.1 percent of students are indigenous students.

Understanding the importance of meeting the educational needs of these students, the Ministry has made strides in building systems to promote equitable education for indigenous students. In 2016, the Ministry piloted the "Equity in Action" project in six school districts. The purpose was to support school districts in developing a project to ensure equitable learning experiences for all Indigenous learners, focusing on 1) policy and governance, 2) learning environments, 3) pedagogical core, and 4) learning profiles. A total of 31 school districts participated in the project during Academic Year 2019/2020. In addition, BC was the first Canadian province to adopt the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

During the COVID 19-situation, the Ministry is working closely with indigenous rights holders and education partners to continue to support equitable outcomes and opportunities for all students.

The presentation and resources recommended are available at:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1q_16kG4lluX6u_xlY8CdhrCKIOFRpXpc

Suggestions for future collaboration – Equitable Education Association

- **Dr. Staurt** suggests setting up a formal network specifically where we can exchange information and knowledge about equity, particularly in developing countries. Tools and guidance are available for promoting viewpoints of developing countries' governments, which would allow policy- and school-level implementation. However, each countries' context, such as how the provided resource will be used, should be considered.
- **Ms. Caitlyn** said we are interested in working with Southeast Asian Countries to develop educational data and evidence. We would love to collaborate. However, the kind of network you are looking for from OECD needs to be clear.
- **Dr. Rosli** feels that, in the future, having a specific team which focuses on improving one specific topic, such as teacher quality or learning assessments, would provide more insight.
- **Mr. Stephan** emphasizes that we should always look for what works best, not just what works. The impact of the intervention can always be improved. It can work more cheaply and efficiently. We must not stop questioning, and we must test new evidence for improved outcomes.
- **Mr. Kaleb and Mr. Joe** would like to maintain this partnership, expand the network and build capacity and expertise.

Annex

Meeting Agenda

Time	Agenda Item	Discussion Points	Facilitator
8pm (5 min)	<i>Welcome Remarks</i>	<i>Dr. Krissanapong Kirtikara, Advisor to Equitable Education Fund (EEF)'s Governing Board</i>	EEF
8:05pm (15 min)	<i>Brief meeting overview</i>	Project Background and Purpose by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dr. Supakorn Buasai, Managing Director, EEF</i> • <i>Mr. Ichiro Miyazawa, Programme Specialist, UNESCO</i> 	EEF
8:20pm (20 min)	<i>Global Perspectives on Equitable Education (10 min each)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Global Partnership for Education's work on equity and inclusion by <i>Dr. Stuart Cameron, Equity and Inclusion Thematic Lead, Global Partnership for Education</i> • PISA: Equity in Education by <i>Dr. Miyako Ikeda, Senior Analyst, OECD</i> 	UNESCO
8:40pm (40 min)	<i>Country Presentations (10 min each)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable Education Fund by <i>Dr. Pumsaran Tongliemnak, Education Economist, EEF</i> • The Context of Malaysia by <i>Dr. Rosli Ismail, Deputy Director, Educational Planning and Research Division, Ministry of Education Malaysia</i> • 10 years of Pupil Premium funding in England by <i>Mr. Stephen Fraser, Deputy Chief Executive, The Educational Endowment Foundation, U.K.</i> • Equity in Action: Improving Educational Outcomes for Indigenous Students by <i>Mr. Kaleb Child, Musgamdzi, Director, Indigenous Education & Mr. Joe Heslip, Equity in Action Lead, British Columbia's Ministry of Education, Canada</i> 	UNESCO
9:20pm (30 min)	<i>Discussion</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Follow-up questions</i> • <i>Suggestions and feedback on a draft concept note of the Equitable Education Association</i> 	UNESCO
	<i>Closing Remarks</i>	<i>Dr. Krissanapong Kirtikara, EEF</i>	EEF

List of participants

COUNTRY PARTICIPANTS

Name	Title	Division/Department	Organization
Canada (British Columbia)			
Mr. Kaleb Child, Musgamdzi	Director	Indigenous Education, Learning Division	Ministry of Education
Mr. Joe Heslip	Equity in Action Lead		

Malaysia			
Dr. Rosli Ismail	Deputy Director	Educational Planning and Research Division	Ministry of Education
The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland			
Mr. Stephen Fraser	Deputy Chief Executive		The Educational Endowment Foundation
Thailand			
Dr. Krissanapong Kirtikara	Advisor to Equitable Education Fund (EEF)'s Governing Board		The Equitable Education Fund Thailand (EEF Thailand)
Dr. Supakorn Buasai	Managing Director		
Dr. Kraiyos Patrawart	Deputy Managing Director		
Dr. Tinsiri Siribodhi	Advisor		
Ms. Thantida Wongprasong	Director		
Dr. Pumsaran Tongliemnak	Education Economist		
Ms. Rinrada Taengtung	International Affairs Officer		

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Name	Title	Division/Department	
Global Partnership for Education (GPE)			
Dr. Stuart Cameron	Equity and Inclusion Thematic Lead		
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)			
Dr. Miyako Ikeda	Senior Analyst	PISA	
Ms. Caitlyn Guthrie	Analyst	Directorate for Education and Skills	
UNICEF Thailand Country Office			
Mr. Rangsun Wiboonupattum	Education Officer	Education	
UNESCO Bangkok			
Mr. Ichiro Miyazawa	Programme Specialist	Lifelong Learning and Literacy	
Ms. Hyunjeong Lee	Project Officer		
Ms. Wasinee Noppakunthong			