

Nepal's National Statement of Commitment for transforming education

On behalf of the Government of Nepal and the stakeholders that are engaged in the Nepal school education sector as part of the Nepal Education Group, including development partners, civil society organizations, teachers' professional organizations, United Nations agencies, academia duty bearers and children and youth, as well as their parents and teachers, I pledge our commitment to the future generations of Nepal, our children as follows:

Nepal reaffirms that education remains a fundamental human right, enabling the realization of other rights essential for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development, a culture of peace, global citizenship, health and wellbeing, and indispensable for economic recovery and growth. In this regard, Nepal remains committed towards the long-term goal of providing inclusive access to quality education for all children and youth in Nepal, as enshrined in our constitution.

Nepal aspires economic and social transformation of the country by preparing capable, creative, and value-oriented citizens. To achieve this, Nepal is committed to develop a capable, well-governed, accountable, and competitive public school education system that can ensure citizens' right to acquire relevant and quality education comparable to international standards.

Nepal has taken stock of bottlenecks and institutional challenges and constraints that would need to be overcome and addressed to allow the transformations required for its school education sector to not just recover from COVID-19 pandemic but re-emerge as a resilient, equity-based and quality-focused sector that enables both the children that were unable to continue their learning over the last two years. Furthermore, Nepal reiterated its commitment to support those children that were not learning at the start of the pandemic, especially girls that are faced with multi-dimension disparity to get on track.

Nepal recognizes in this regard that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the ability to converse the gains made in access and participation into meaningful learning outcomes, causing progress to stagnate and in cases even reverse in over the last two years. As the country is starting to emerge from these disruptions, we are yet to understand the medium- and long-term effects and impact that the pandemic had on livelihoods and education outcomes of children across the country.

However, Nepal also recognizes that the pandemic has in several ways been a catalyst for establishment of mechanisms to facilitate coordination across the different tiers of government in the education sector. Nepal also observed many good practices and innovations applied to mitigate the impacts of the disruptions and continue education, both home-grown within local governments and civil society organizations and international good practices that were observed and adapted and introduced in the country. These practices should be further institutionalized to strengthen student-centered learning methods and are a proof that education is not confined to classrooms but takes place in communities and households as well.

Based on this, Nepal commits to the following:

1. We commit to undertake a comprehensive analysis on learning loss and allocate and leverage adequate additional resources to allow children to catch up reach or return to an age-appropriate learning level. As part of this recovery roadmap, Nepal commits to make additional financing and programming available to reach children in under-served areas of the country that have been disproportionately affected in their learning by the COVID-19 disruptions. This will be achieved using the consolidated equity strategy for ensuring disparity-based targeting. Nepal further commits to strengthen the education sector and schools to emerge from the pandemic better by scaling up remedial teaching and accelerated learning programs, train teachers to enable them to continue education when schools have to close due to natural disasters or pandemics and establish alternative pathways and equivalency to ensure that children that have dropped out of formal education can be supported to re-enter the school at the right level or obtain skills they require to progress in their life at a school completion age.

2. We commit to ensure teachers are at the forefront for transforming the Nepal education system. For this, Nepal commits to invest in its professional development and human resource system in the education sector to produce and maintain competent and motivated teachers are the second pillar of the Theory of Change to ensure these students are then able to develop foundational learning skills. Recognizing that teachers are the most important determinant of learning outcomes, Nepal commits to undertake the needed reforms to attract new teaching entrants, provide quality pre-service training, developing a continuous teacher professional development system, and institutionalizing mechanisms for support and mentoring of teachers.

3. We commit to support the adaptation of national education targets and benchmarks into local level education sector plans. For this, Nepal will develop a comprehensive framework to support its local government as per their need for establishing resilient education systems in place that enable them to provide inclusive and quality education and cater to the needs of the children in their communities and context. A sector plan is as credible as the capacity of the system to implement its strategies and activities. In this regard, the real performance indicators of the SESP will be the extent to which the targets in the 753 local government result frameworks jointly reflect the national targets and the local governments have the capacity to plan, manage and monitor the implementation of their respective implementation plans.

4. Finally, we commit to increase public financing to education to meet the commitments and global benchmark of 20% by 2030. In order to meet these commitments, it is clear that increased resources are a must. Nepal commits to continue increasing share of education budget in its national and subnational budget to reach and maintain the global benchmark of 20% before 2030.

To ensure that these priorities and commitments remain firmly rooted in Nepal's diverse reality on the ground, national consultations have been initiated and will continue for the months to come to further specify, contextualize and validate these commitments for them to be presented at the global Summit in September.