

Tuesday 7, 2022

Dear **Ms. Stefania Giannini**:

Thank you for receiving this letter. We look forward to lively discussion at the Transforming Education Presummit June 28 - 30th in Paris, France. With this letter, we express the need for a more explicit integration of **climate change** across the five action tracks as part of the pre-summit dialogue and programming. We reviewed the Thematic Action Track working documents (see the Appendix) and believe that climate change and climate literacy programs need to be elevated and discussed within the summit as both a barrier to, and opportunity for the transformation of global education. Centering climate change supports and links the action tracks by amplifying the cross-sectoral nature of the key issues and strands.

To better integrate climate change at the presummit, we propose the following actions:

1. The official inclusion of climate change as a key issue across the action tracks (similar to COVID 19) by including a background paper focused on climate and education.
2. Space for dialogue on climate change education and climate literacy programs.
3. Support for side events to bring multi-sectoral engagement around climate change education policy action across the five action tracks.
4. An official event focused on bringing together ministerial actors to reinforce the commitment of national governments to climate change in and through education and their nationally determined contributions.
5. Call for and spaces for dialogue between ministers of education, finance, and the environment to discuss strategies to integrate climate resilience, adaptation, and mitigation in education into government financing.
6. Call for increased global funding to address climate change in and through education with an emphasis on equity, inclusion, and justice.

Sincerely,

Judith Herbertson Head of Girls' Education Department United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office	Jim Knight United Kingdom House of Lords	Lorenzo Fioramonti, PhD Professor of Political Economy and Member of Parliament (Italy)
Christina Kwauk, PhD Head of Climate and Education Education Commission	Matthew Aruch, PhD Director Global Education EARTHDAY.ORG	Jamie Drummond Co-Founder Sharing Strategies & One
Kathleen Rogers President EARTHDAY.ORG	Sharan Burrows General Secretary International Trade Union Confederation	

Student Climate Justice Collective	Fridays for Future Greece	Fridays For Future Moldova
Fridays For Future Kenya	Fridays For Future Czech Republic	Care About Climate United Nations
Sustainable Development Solutions Network Youth Greece	Fridays For Future Climate Education	Fridays for Future Lithuania
Fridays For Future Uruguay	Fridays for Future Estonia	Fridays For Future Poland
Fridays For Chieri, Italy	Fridays for Future Catania, Italy	Fridays For Future Carnia - Italy
Fridays For Future Czech Republic	Association Rassemblement des jeunes Units pour la patrie	Extinction Rebellion Lithuania Team
Youth Climate Action Network Vietnam	Care About Climate, based in US	Community Action Against Plastic Waste (CAPWs) Nigeria
The Climate Fresk Mock COP, UK	Standard foundation. Kenya	Care about Climate, France
Youth for Climate Luxembourg	Awdal Youth Volunteers	AJAP-NIGERIA President
Association For Progressive African Youth	Renovate Switzerland	

Appendix

Thematic Action Track 1: Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools

The action track 1 discussion paper notes climate 15 times, mostly in the context of access to schooling in a future of climate driven disruption. The discussion paper notes the need for inclusive, equitable, and gender-transformative education, acknowledging the role of human-driven climate change. The action track would be strengthened by describing how governments should strengthen education systems' resilience to changing climates, including how to fund these measures.

Similarly, the paper calls for learning environments that “are physically, mentally, and socially safe and conducive for learning” (p. 3). Similarly, the paper calls for learning environments that “are physically, mentally, and socially safe and conducive for learning” (p. 3). Financing should be put in place to support green school facilities, upgrade water, sanitation, and hygiene infrastructure, and remove environmental harms from learning spaces and “put in place education environments that protect and promote learners’ health and wellbeing, promote equity, and enable learning” (p.36). In addition, in the context of a changing local and global climate, schools should be a socio-emotional safe space to learn about and unpack these anxieties. Students and youth are [demanding change](#) and education institutions increasingly must account for the spectrum of the student experience from eco-anxiety to activism.

Climate change presents major risks and opportunities for school health and nutrition programs. Climate change will have direct impacts on agricultural production and food availability, but also presents opportunities for locally grown and regionally appropriate cuisines to reduce fossil fuel consumption and provide intergenerational teaching and learning opportunities.

The summit should call for climate resilience, adaptation and mitigation action plans across schools and learning environments to account for infrastructure, emergencies, nutrition, health, and so forth.

Thematic Action Track 2: Learning and Skills for Life, Work, and Sustainable Development

Mentioned 22 times in the discussion paper, action track 2 makes explicit the need to “empower learners with knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to be resilient, adaptable, and prepared for an uncertain, complex future while actively and creatively contributing to human and planetary well-being and sustainable societies” (p. 1). Environmental and climate change education are specifically noted as one of the three key issues in the action track along with foundational learning and entrepreneurship.

Climate Change Education (CCE) overlaps with the foundational learning skills and mindsets required for literacy and numeracy. We argue CCE is an appropriate vehicle for meeting the vision of the Commission on the Future of Education to emphasize ecological, social, and emotional, intercultural, interdisciplinary, and intergenerational learning to foster global citizenship, the rule of law, mutual trust, and global solidarity... [for a] wide range of cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral skills needed in a fast changing and still largely unequal world (p.4). We encourage summit organizers to consider the ways in which climate change and climate literacy cut across the key issue areas of action track 2.

The summit must name climate change as the main issue underpinning the sustainable development action track, highlighting the opportunity for inclusive participation in the green economy of the future.

Thematic Action Track 3: Teachers, Teaching, and the Teaching Profession

The action track 3 discussion paper notes climate once, highlighting “the need to transform teaching and to better train and support education personnel to respond to a variety of situations and challenges, including climate change, displacement and conflict, and to adapt learning to different formats and needs.”

We argue that climate needs to be discussed with respect to other key issues related to teachers. For one, teacher shortages will be amplified by the climate crisis as working conditions deteriorate and schools are increasingly impacted by climate-driven weather events (see action track 1). Furthermore, teachers must be equipped with the skills and training required to teach about climate. A recent [survey from UNESCO and Education International](#) found that teachers want to teach CCE, but do not feel they have knowledge or skills to do so.

The summit should put commitments to teaching and learning about climate on the agenda, along with strategies for credentialing teachers and creating networks for sharing of best practices and provide space for dialogue about education spaces that facilitate teacher and student agency to grapple with issues of climate.

Thematic Action Track 4: Digital Learning and Transformation

Climate is not mentioned within action track 4’s discussion paper. Still, we note a few areas where CCE can make digital learning solutions more “inclusive, equitable, relevant, and sustainable.”

First, we agree that digital tools have transformative potential, but like all technologies are embedded with social (political and economic) systems that enable or modify their design and use. High quality, accessible, open education resources are required to help illustrate the global and local impacts of climate change. The discussion paper also notes the limits of digital

technologies: “current approaches to digital learning often do not do enough to take advantage of the potential of technology. Too much effort is expended trying to replicate models of in-person instruction in digital spaces. Digital transformation of education demands new types of learning content, new pedagogies, and new ways of leveraging technology” (p.8). We argue the same applies to teaching about climate change. Often, we teach about the environmental or technical dimension of climate without discussion of the social issues inherent in the climate crisis.

The summit should propose developing and curating transformative OERs and digital tools across the education landscape that explore social, technical, and environmental dimensions of climate change.

Thematic Action Track 5: Financing of Education

Like action track 4, climate was not mentioned within the discussion paper. However, we know that extreme weather events are increasing in frequency and severity and already pose a large drain on financial resources for education. The realities of climate change therefore enhance the need to increase government and donor funding for education. As action track 5’s paper noted, “finance underpins all other tracks” despite the recognition in action track 4 that public financing remains ‘tepid.’

The summit must recognize climate change as a major challenge for education financing and call for dialogue not only between ministers of education and finance, but also ministers of the environment, building upon [coalition work from COP 26 in Glasgow](#).

Furthermore, CCE should be seen as a vehicle to galvanize both country governments, private sector, and the donor community as they create provisions to meet their nationally determined contributions in compliance with the Paris Accords.