

## **National Statement of Commitment on behalf of Denmark to the Transforming Education Summit, September 2022**

The Danish national hearing underlined that education is a basic human right, a fundamental Sustainable Development Goal and an enabler of other human rights. Ensuring inclusive and equitable access to, and completion of, quality education is fundamental to the future lives and opportunities of all learners. And it is fundamental to the creation of democratic, free, safe, stable, and equal societies.

In school, pupils and students must learn not only basic foundational skills, like reading and writing, but also holistic skills. Education must transform the learners – and teach them about their rights, how to participate in society, and in democracy, and how to make use of their agency. Education must equal empowerment.

This is not a given, as COVID-19 demonstrated. Also in Denmark, the social and emotional well-being of young people was challenged by months of school closures. These challenges stressed the need for a collaborative approach between all relevant parties, not least in order to decide on school closures and re-openings.

Globally, and based on our national experiences, we focus on the improvement of public education systems. We see quality public education systems as the best way to fight poverty, inequality and conflict. Education has to be a public sector priority, and the bulk of funded will need to be raised through well-

functioning domestic tax-systems. Only this way, can we make public education systems stronger and more resilient to crisis, whether political-, health related, or due to climate change or conflict.

Denmark is strongly committed to gender equality in education and we have a special focus on girls' education. We remain committed to sexual and reproductive health and rights and to comprehensive sexuality education as further enablers for women and girls' rights and empowerment.

We have a continued focus on Gender Transformative Education. Gender stereotypes and negative social norms all too often limit peoples' career choices. For instance, it is important that the teaching profession attract men as well as women. Teaching has always been the most important profession of the world – it will remain so throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In accordance with the basic tenets of the SDG's we must leave no one behind. Education systems must fully encompass not only women and girls, but also the most marginalized groups whether sexual-, religious- or ethnic minorities, refugees or internally displaced persons, children with disability, or the children of the poorest families.

The current global food crisis underlines that proper nutrition is a prerequisite for children's ability for learning. We also know that school meals is an important incentive to keep girls in school. Denmark is therefore engaged in the international school meals coalition that seeks to prevent undernutrition among vulnerable schoolchildren in developing countries.