



# ENGAGE

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"Yes I can go to school"

Photo by R.J. Charles

**Vision:** Quality Education for Every Child Everywhere

The  
STEVE  
SINNOTT  
FOUNDATION

"Education without a transforming and enabling quality should never be described as education."

*Jerry Glazier, Chair of The Steve Sinnott Foundation*



# Foreword

At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015, world leaders finally adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030. These replace and update the partially achieved Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) MDG2 was frequently discussed in editions of ENGAGE.

SDG 4 is entitled Quality Education and seeks, by 2030, to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. So what is Quality Education? This edition attempts to throw some light on what it should mean from a variety of different perspectives.

There is a big debate to be had. I hope you find this edition thought provoking with frank analysis of some disappointing outcomes of MDG2 in spite of significant sums of money spent. Let us know what you think should constitute quality education by emailing us and look out for our discussion groups on Facebook and twitter. However, surely education without a transforming and enabling quality should never be described as education?



**Jerry Glazier**

Chair, The Steve Sinnott Foundation

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# THE QUALITY IMPERATIVE

**Irina Bokova**, Director General of UNESCO explains why education can be transformative only if it carries meaning and opportunities for all children and young people.

If quality was a missing link when the Millennium Development Goal on universal primary education was adopted in 2000, it has come front and centre in the vision for education that has now been adopted at the United Nations.

Never in history have there been more children in school, but schools may be failing too many, with the most marginalized and disadvantaged paying the highest price.

UNESCO's Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2014) shed light on this quality crisis: 250 million children leave school before the end of primary without mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills. In human terms, the costs are incalculable, leaving a young generation with limited prospects for a better future. In financial terms, this neglect adds up to an estimated \$129 billion annually – many times the gap needed to achieve education for all.

For the right to education to be transformative, it has to carry meaning and opportunity for all children and youth. The Global Education First Initiative, launched in 2012 by the United Nations Secretary Ban Ki-moon and taken forward by UNESCO, included quality as one of its pillars, together with access and global citizenship. This campaign has rallied heads of government, international organizations and bilateral donors around a vision that is more comprehensive, equitable, relevant and fair. It has raised the flag for quality education as a pre-requisite for achieving the future sustainable development agenda.

I believe we have reached a point where education and quality cannot be seen apart. The Incheon Declaration, adopted by 160 countries at the World Education Forum (Republic of Korea) in May 2015, explicitly commits to inclusive and equitable quality education, foreshadowing sustainable development goal 4.

So what does quality encompass?



The starting point is to create the conditions to ensure that all children learn. This can only happen with qualified teachers who are respected, prepared and supported, trained in active learner centred pedagogies. Ongoing professional development plays a key role in helping teachers renew skills, keep pace and adapt to change. The fact is that an additional 1.4 million teachers are needed to make up shortfalls and cope with expanding enrolments – with Africa accounting for 63% of this figure – underscores the urgency of political attention to recruitment and training.

Just as the world is rapidly changing, education systems are under pressure to respond to new realities and big trends – be it in technology, migrations, economic demands or climate change. A quality education is a curriculum in tune with the complexity of our times – one that nurtures creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, team work and learning how to learn. Most fundamentally, it is one that promotes mutual respect for diversity and difference, solidarity, understanding about human rights, and a sense of shared responsibility towards others and the planet.

This is the thrust behind global citizenship education and education for sustainable development – shaping attitudes and values on how to live together on a planet under pressure and to give every student the sense that they are the change they want to see in the world, to borrow the Gandhian adage.

To be transformative, quality education must be a bulwark against all forms of discrimination. Gender equality – a condition for progress on the next universal agenda – should be advanced on the benches of schools, through gender sensitive teacher training and curricula that counter stereotypes, by making schools safe and free from gender based violence and by paying special attention to adolescent girls, the age where poverty and prejudice too often cut short their education.

In short, to be fit for purpose, education must be anchored in a humanist approach that is based on unlocking the potential that lies in every learner – and leaving no one behind.

As the long-time fighter for education rights, Kailash Satyarthi put it in his Nobel peace prize lecture: “Today, it is time for every child to have the right to life, the right to freedom, the right to health, the right to education, the right to safety, the right to dignity, the right to equality, and the right to peace.” It is these rights that add up to making a quality education.

# OUR GOAL MUST BE QUALITY EDUCATION IN CONTEXT

**AA Kamara** is a senior teacher and site coordinator working for EducAid Sierra Leone and he is studying for his Masters in Public Administration and Management at Unimac University in Makeni.

In one sentence, 'it is the holy grail of sustainable development. For sustainable development, I vote for 'Quality Education'. All around me the concept of what constitutes quality education is indeed on the tip of everyone's tongue. But many have not taken time to think what in the real Sierra Leonean context it is all about. What is it all about? Is it about building shinier schools? Or is it about pouring in billions of dollars? Is it just about photocopying what appears to work in other places? Is it about increasing the conditions of service of teachers/ educational actors without many serious mechanisms set aside to give them meaningful training, and holding them all fully accountable to their responsibilities? The questions are too many to list them all.

In the past we have seen that educational policies and goals have only had mediocre successes as they have failed in comprehending the root causes of our educational problems and the holistic nature of meaningful education.

In my opinion, our educational stakeholders and aid agencies are ridiculously seeking prosperity in the wrong corners of the castle, forgetting that 'quality education' is the holy grail of sustainable development and prosperous societies. Think about it. What the government, NGOs, and the private sector need most crucially to achieve their goals is a **SKILLED WORK-FORCE** with the **RIGHT ATTITUDES**. Eradicating poverty, ensuring a fairer and just planet, empowering women and girls, giving a voice to the voiceless, solving the poverty paradox in Africa, building innovative societies, building sustainable instructions all crucially depends on the quality of education our people are having.

After a perilous quest I finally achieved a chance of education at age 10 and later I went to teacher training.

In the year 2011, I was part of an EducAid team, funded by The Steve Sinnott Foundation, which attended teacher development training in London. This was a very big opportunity as it widened my skills and knowledge about what

meaningful education should be about. And so, the trip empowered me to see what we are missing in terms of our approach in educating the leaders that will take over the future of our country.

Through my experience seeking education in my country, and now serving as a teacher, teacher trainer and school administrator and having had the opportunity to learn about quality education in one of the world's leading educational capitals (London), I think I have a fair understanding of what quality education should look like.

I have come to conclude that the following aspects constitute what 'Quality Education' should look like:

It must be **PROBLEM SOLVING AND OUTCOMES FOCUSED**. This means that quality education policies and programs must be designed based on the real needs and problems of the communities in which they are to be implemented. There must be set standards that every learner must achieve at the end of a particular level of learning.

Quality education is **EMPOWERING**. It must develop skills, attitudes and knowledge that helps individuals and communities to have sustainable means of survival and proactively take part in solving their own problems.

Quality education is **HOLISTIC**. It must give equal weight to all aspects of the full mental, physical and moral growth and development of the learner. It recognises the holistic nature of development.

Quality education is **ACCESSIBLE TO ALL**. As a result of the holistic nature of sustainable development access to quality education must not be hindered by one's economic and social circumstances. Learners with disability must be cared for appropriately.

Quality education must **EXPLOIT 'KEY LEVERAGE POINTS'**. Quality education must put extra effort on the key points in the learning cycle where the input of resources will have the most impact in future learning. A key leverage



point to consider is early childhood education. For the early years, the idea is that at a younger age people are more malleable and thus that is a good time to hone key skills, knowledge and attitudes that will increase motivation and confidence that will impact on future and life-long learning.

Quality education **DE-COLONIZES** the mind and empowers learners with the tools to be the successful captains of their lives and circumstances.

Quality education is **INTENTIONAL**. It is not a matter of sitting on the sidelines, throwing in huge sums of money, and hoping somehow things will work themselves out.

I would like to end with a note on what quality education is definitely not:

It is not about valorizing another man's culture at the detriment of yours.

It is not just a money issue, attitudes are crucial.

It is not about blindly photocopying what seems to work for others.

It is not just about teaching people to read and write.

Working towards the achievement of 'Quality Education' is worth the effort and must be our goal if we are to see sustainable growth and prosperity in societies.

# BROADENING HORIZONS

**Marie Antoinette Corr**, General Secretary of the Gambia Teachers Union issues an invitation and a challenge.

I never woke up one morning and decided to become a teacher, I was nurtured and raised as one. I was influenced by a mentor, role model and teacher all combined; my mother. I was born at the height of her teaching career. The commitment to education for me was a natural phenomenon that enabled me to slip on a shoe that had the perfect fit. A lifetime of watching my mother give selflessly to children, offering herself and her time in the afternoons to tutor children including myself made me realise the importance of quality education.

I wanted to broaden my horizons and scope to reach all children in Gambia and beyond. Due to the communal set up and traditional culture of the global village from a Gambian perspective, I became a counsellor so I was able to continue the traditions inherited from my mother. This allowed me to reach all and sundry in an effort to have an impact on the children and youths.

The old adage 'Educate a girl and you've educated a whole nation' is a dictum that will fulfil my dreams. To see a young girl grow into a positive woman and triumph in society is inspirational. A hug or a wave with a happy smile saying "TEACHER" gives me the satisfaction that I have helped someone to become somebody.

Being one of the pioneers of the Peer Health Education and HIV/AIDS programme in Gambia under the auspices of the NSGA (Nova Scotia Gambia Association), I quickly



developed a passion that enabled me to rise and be counted amongst the top counsellors.

One of the female students I have impacted on is a true inspiration; she walked six kilometres off the main road to go to school. Oumie looked up to me as her mentor and role model; she fetched firewood in the bush, studying under candlelight and she persevered to be the lawyer she is today.

I believe that I have made a difference and that my contribution has had a ripple effect on schools in Gambia. There are a lot of challenges ahead, especially some cultural taboos such as Female Genital Mutilation and early child marriages. These need to be tackled with subtlety. With my acquired skills, I have

found the cultural harpoon, which needs to be harnessed and tamed for the cultural divide and the government has given its blessing, which has helped formulate policies, and guidelines that will greatly enhance and facilitate quality education and guidance counselling in Gambia.

Having already, built a base with a knowledgeable field of expertise, my contribution towards quality education will I hope enhance and facilitate my 'give-back' to a society that I love and show the true spirit of helping the under-privileged to become somebody and achieve their full potential. I invite you to join me in the commitment to Education for All.



# TEACHING AND LEARNING: A SHARED EXPERIENCE

**Dr. Aminul Hoque** shares the Foundation's philosophy that teaching and learning are inseparable, that the acquisition of knowledge and understanding is a sharing process and that respect for these values is essential to ensure quality in the achievement of the sustainable development goals for education.

## A two-way collaborative approach is vital for a 'quality' education

When thinking about the question of what a quality education entails, it is important to first of all define what we mean by 'education'? What is education? Where does education take place – within the four walls of the institution or can it happen anytime and anywhere? Who is the educator? And can the educated also be the educator? These are complex questions but it is imperative we have a go at answering them if we are to unpack the multiple layers of a 'quality' education.

For me, a quality education revolves around three interrelated factors. Firstly, education is not limited solely within traditional educational spaces such as the school, college, training centre or university. If we believe that education is about sharing knowledge, teaching, inspiring, listening, observing, learning and reflecting, then this takes place everywhere and anywhere – within the home, on the streets, within work environments and also within cultural spaces. We learn from each other and we are learning all of the time. Education never stops.

To this end, education for me is a **two-way** dialogical process. If an educator has a PGCE or a PhD, does that give them the right to be an educator? Does their experience and qualifications position them as an educator? On the contrary. I believe that the educated can also be the educator – a father can learn from his son, a manager from his employee and a school teacher from her pupils. I, for certain, am always continuously learning and being inspired by my students at university, my colleagues, my peers, my children, my family, my culture, my community and so on. My six year old daughter recently told me that the reason why she shouts is because "daddy, you sometimes shout at me". Such perception and insight (and cheekiness) from someone so young, but point noted!

I try and approach everything with an inquisitive and open mind, and am always willing to learn, experience and face challenges that may contradict existing held beliefs. Just because I hold qualifications and stand at the front of the lecture hall, it does not make me anymore knowledgeable or correct than my students in the same room. The day I think that I know everything or that my views are more important than others is the day I need a career change.

Secondly, my own ethnographic research *British-Islamic Identity* demonstrates the importance of educators recognizing and valuing the 'identities' of their pupils within the educational curriculum and pedagogy. Do we really know who our students are? Are we aware of the key sociocultural issues that they are grappling with? Should this be our concern as educators?



Educational researcher Michael Fullan asserts that teaching is a "moral" and ethical activity as we are essentially working with humans. We know that students perform better academically if value and importance are attributed to issues that matter in their lives – their culture, language, gender, ethnic and religious identities. The idea of an **inclusive** education is hardly revolutionary. Governed by a pedagogy of collaboration, democracy, dialogue and humanity, this approach to quality education has been historically championed by many prominent educationalists such as Paulo Freire and John Dewey. At the heart of it lies the realization that young people do not leave their sociocultural worlds behind once they enter the school gates – and nor should they, as the Bullock Report asserted back in 1975.

Finally, for me a quality education should be underpinned by a **liberatory** ethos. I often wonder what learning outcome do I want most from my students at university? The actual degree, secured employment or some form of post university plan (even if that involves just having no plan and taking some time-out to explore themselves), happiness, nirvana? Yes, all of this. But perhaps the skill that I want my students to leave with most is to develop the confidence to question – what Bernard Crick called 'political literacy' – and become engaged in the political process. This involves speaking out against social injustice, advocating on behalf of the disengaged and disadvantaged, challenging the status quo, questioning those in power to be held accountable for their actions and campaigning for humanitarian causes. It warms my heart knowing that many of my ex-students have become community volunteers working on behalf of the dispossessed and hard-to-reach. Importantly, this ability to question must be sophisticated and be based upon evidence and examples. This is where a quality 'education' becomes meaningful and resourceful.

**Dr Aminul Hoque**, MBE, is a lecturer in Educational Studies at Goldsmiths College, University of London and visiting lecturer at London Metropolitan University. His book *British-Islamic Identity: Third Generation Bangladeshis from East London* is published by Trentham Books at IOE Press, 2015. Follow him on Twitter @BrIslam2015

# TO TEST OR NOT TO TEST

As sights in developing countries are set on quality education, how should they decide to measure achievement. Award winning children's author, **Alan Gibbons** has no doubts.

Education is a human right. It is also a passport, one of the essential preconditions of a decent life. You don't know what you've got till it's gone, whether it is because, as I have seen for myself in countries like Malawi there are insufficient resources to offer the same start in life as in richer states, whether, as in Greece, the onset of economic crisis worsens pupils' opportunities or whether, as Malala Yousafzai has demonstrated, oppression denies girls the right to learn.

There is another global threat to quality education, however, and that is the self-limiting tyranny of testing to distraction, the adoption of vision-restricting pedagogical blinkers that confine the imagination and reduce education to the repetition of predetermined goals.

Economic constraints can clearly play a major role in determining a child's life chances and international development is the key issue here. Political and ideological constraints can, I would argue, have a similarly negative impact. Let's start with some evidence, drawn from the PISA international rankings, an admittedly blunt instrument as all such surveys are. Two sets of countries do well.

One is east Asia: the Shanghai region of China, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea. We can identify some factors: rapidly developing economies, high family and social expectations, high levels of after-school tutoring. We can also point to worrying impacts on students' wellbeing with high levels of stress and rates of adolescent suicide.

The other area is northern Europe, Finland, Estonia, Switzerland, Liechtenstein with high levels of social development, relative economic stability and often less of an accent on high

stakes testing, especially in the example of Finland.

One set of countries that seems to be doing poorly is the US, UK model. Here we see constant siren calls for more testing, more tracking, more attention paid to the example of Asia. There are also calls for more privatisation, more copying of the Free School methods pioneered in Sweden, though Sweden's recent international performance has been problematic to say the least and its education-business model has faced major problems.

So what provisional conclusions could we draw from this evidence? Firstly, I would counsel caution. Before people leap to copy the Shanghai basin or Korea, it is notoriously risky to transfer any educational model from one society to a rather different one, from a rapidly developing country to the social and economic context where development is a long-established fact. On my travels in Asia, I met many parents who wanted to move their children out of 'hothouse' testing regimes to a more liberal, questioning and explorative environment. This leads me to believe that we can learn from more than one educational model.

My own career in education leads me to conclude that there are several principles that should guide us.

The first is that turning children into products on an educational conveyor belt, stuttering towards a predetermined goal, a raft of A\* examination results does not lay the basis for the kind of questioning, flexible citizenry and workforce demanded by a rapidly changing, technologically fluid world in which many jobs (blog editor, You Tube film-maker, web-designer) simply did not exist a decade or so ago. Education should be an odyssey in which



the destination should not be known at the time of embarkation. The process of education then becomes one of exploration, discovery, hypothesis, fair testing and the conclusions are always provisional and dependent on the intrusion of a changing reality. That is what I was hearing from those Chinese and Korean parents.

The second is that teaching is a collegiate profession. Increasingly, privatisation, competition and intrusive testing leads many teachers to see themselves as being in competition with colleagues. Locally, nationally and internationally, the teaching profession should be a team trying to advance the interests of the world's children.

The final principle is that, along with curiosity and investigation, reading is a cornerstone of learning. In the words of the OECD report, *Reading for Change*, 2002, 2009: "Enjoyment of reading has a greater impact on a child's educational achievement than their parents' socio-economic status." There should be a substantial expansion of libraries and reading for pleasure programmes.

The word quality in Quality Education is about the nature of the child's experience or it is nothing. If the child's experience of school is a trudge towards a preconceived destination, it will be far less fruitful than a magical mystery tour of infinite possibilities.



# WHAT MAKES YOU GET UP IN THE MORNING?

**Lord Knight** (Jim Knight) is a former UK government Schools Minister and now Managing Director of online learning at TES Global. He is also a Visiting Professor at the London Knowledge Lab of the Institute of Education in London. Here Jim describes what quality education means to him.

Children are natural learners. Adults naturally teach children.

From the day we are born we are hard wired for learning – to speak, walk, love, hurt and so on. Most of that will be done at home – which is why the nature of parenting is critical and why being born to educated advantaged homes is so beneficial.

These natural learners then go to school.

School should be a partnership with home. Home normally best understands the individual child. School offers professionals who can stretch, stimulate and challenge those individuals.

Right now too many pupils lose the self direction and efficacy they enjoy through experiential learning at home. Their teachers have to fill them with dry content which they are trained to regurgitate in too many tests. The content quickly becomes obsolete, and the learner is left wanting to know how to pass the next test, not wanting to know how the world works.

It is as if schools have been designed to put them off learning. This is not a quality education.

Employers want confident collaborative communicators, as well as concentration and character. This needs an education that balances knowledge acquisition, with knowledge creation and skills training.

Our outdated industrial model of schooling is failing both learners, and their future employers.

The labour market is one where jobs are disappearing as work is reinvented. More and more of us are engaged in the freelance “gig” economy. The career for life is over. We need an ongoing relationship with education to succeed as we work well into our seventies.

High quality education nurtures a love of learning for life, and in doing so equips those learners for a rapidly changing world of work.

Teachers should be freed to coach learning, not just channel content. Textbooks and curricula cannot keep up with the real world. Learning must be relevant. Thanks to digital technology we now have the opportunity to replace textbooks with dynamic teacher generated content. Balanced with making, debating and presenting, this technology empowers learners as researchers. Teachers can now coach them to create new knowledge.

These digital tools are important at home and at school. Too often they extend the advantage between the haves and have-nots. The digital divide is crucial and needs addressing if we want to take advantage of the neglected talent born into poor homes.

A quality education must be a universal right.

In turn, we can only take advantage of the opportunities to amplify good teaching through technology if we are willing to change teaching. Technology that enhances a content based education merely de-humanises education by gamifying testing. Technology that assists coaching and collaboration enriches learning.



Learners should be given more responsibility for their learning.

Assessment should not be taken by age but by readiness, agreed by home and school and by teacher and learner. Accountability should be based on progress. The internet should be allowed into the exam hall so we can test thinking not recall. Assessors should have the skills to observe and grade participants in team work – as they do in sport and the performing arts.

A quality education is simply what you would want for your own children. It would engage them and discover their learning passions; it would uncover hidden talents and make them want to get up in the morning; it would set them up for a happy and fulfilled life.

Education is a shared endeavour between parent, teacher and learner. We must invest in each of them and be ambitious for their success.



# REALLY MAKING A DIFFERENCE

**Sam Makinde**, Hertfordshire teacher and officer in the Hertfordshire Division of the National Union of Teachers in the UK explains how something that is needed can be achieved.

After several email, texts, phone calls and visits, there are now 165 desktop and 17 large box computers and 10 laptops that have been wiped, ready for shipping to three learning communities in Nigeria. This project started after some discussion with my alma mater in Jos Nigeria that will celebrate her 50th



anniversary this year. The discussion went along the lines of how links could be developed between them and schools in Britain. One of the things raised during the discussion was that 'they are interested in young people forging links with one another, forming an extended community of learners, with opportunities for these schools to share knowledge, expertise and curriculum ideas'. We discussed the best way to do this with minimal costs and travelling across the world. It was agreed that the Internet has brought our world closer and having computer systems will help towards achieving this.

I told them to leave it to me and I would try and see what I could do. The road to this has not been easy. I started by contacting friends

and colleagues from various local schools. These initial contacts only yielded one or two computers, mostly 'white boxed computers, with ATX motherboards and TRC (heavy) monitors. As these were really bulky items, I began to think about the cost for shipping them to Nigeria and became weary, thinking to myself 'what am I getting myself into. Also, I wondered how to raise the fund for the shipping. Then the thought came to me to use the members correspondent column of my Union magazine. Through this, I was able to link with members and colleagues in these schools – Aurora Academies, Down Road Bexhill on Sea provided 10 personal computers and 7 laptops, Ravenstone Primary School, Balham became involved and gave 32 pcs, flat screen monitors and keyboards.

As at the 31st of October 2015, I now have 160 computer systems and 7 laptops, the bulk of which were from my Union headquarters. The IT department of the National Union of Teachers donated 115 pcs. Thank you to this department for wiping the hard drive before delivery. This act assisted in reducing the cost of wiping the drives, which had to be done professionally as all the other computer hard drives had password security on them.

Three Nigerian schools – St John's College, Jos, Millennium School, Offa and Health Resources International in Calabar are now going to benefit from the generosity of the willing people. Willing to link with people from other parts of the world on an equal basis.

I would like to use this opportunity to publicly thank my Association, the Hertfordshire Association Division of the National Union of Teachers for sponsoring the shipment and the purchase of additional items, including security systems that will help in the monitoring of the premises that are going to be used in Nigeria.



In addition, I would like to say a big thank you to The Steve Sinnott Foundation for their help in coordinating all the transactions involved with the transporting of the systems and forging the links between all those concerned. All the computer systems are now loaded into six pallets, which are now with the shipping agents bound for Nigeria.



# THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

**Professor Tim Unwin** is UNESCO Chair in ICT4D, Director of the ICT4D Collective and Professor of Geography at Royal Holloway, University of London. He has ten lessons for the effective use of technology in teaching and learning.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have transformed the lives of everyone who has access to them. This is particularly true in the education sector. Across the world, many governments have been convinced by the rhetoric that technology is essential for the provision of quality education, and are now eagerly rolling out programmes to give school children digital tablets in the expectation that this will automatically lead to structural improvements in the quality of education.

There is no doubt that access to the Internet through digital technologies can have a transformative effect on learning. It is also essential for young people to learn how to use such technologies appropriately in their future lives. However, the evidence that technology by itself necessarily leads to improved learning, is increasingly being challenged. A seminal paper by Biagi and Loi (2012)<sup>1</sup> has thus showed that the use of ICTs in learning does not necessarily increase the PISA scores of learners, and a recent paper by Corder *et al.* (2015)<sup>2</sup> likewise shows that excessive use of screen devices leads to a lowering of grades achieved in examinations.

Used appropriately and effectively, though, there is much evidence that digital technologies, be they laptops, mobile 'phones, tablets, robots or computers, particularly when linked to the Internet, can encourage entirely new forms of knowledge and skills acquisition, and can help promote a shift from didactic to constructivist models of learning. The critical point, though, is that success is only encountered when the technology is integrated as one element in holistic educational change.

Digital technologies, when used appropriately, can enable many groups of people who have traditionally not been able to access or afford quality education. This is especially so for people with disabilities, and those living in isolated and remote places with only difficult access to traditional educational establishments. If those in remote areas can be given affordable access to the Internet, they can learn from online curricula materials and can communicate with teachers or educational facilitators living and working far away from their communities.

Far too often, though, costly technology is introduced in the expectation that it will somehow magically transform the educational sector. Furthermore, those introducing such programmes often seem to ignore important lessons from both successful and failed initiatives. Ten such lessons are particularly important:

1. **It is the learning that matters and not the technology.** Effective initiatives begin with identifying clear learning objectives, and then identifying the technologies that are best suited to delivering them.
2. **Teachers must be closely involved** in the implementation of ICT for education initiatives, and they need to be given effective training.
3. **Sustainability issues must be considered at the very beginning.** Careful thought must be given to the budget costs of maintaining and renewing costly equipment.
4. **The supporting infrastructure must be in place.** There must be sufficient and

reliable electricity and affordable Internet connectivity.

5. **Appropriate locally relevant content must be available** to help deliver the curriculum and learning needs.
6. **Ensure equality of access to all learners.** It is essential to ensure that all learners are able to access the benefits of technology, including people living in rural areas and those with disabilities.
7. **Appropriate monitoring and evaluation must be undertaken from the very beginning** to ensure that learning objectives are being delivered, that good practices can be shared, and that the initiative can be tweaked accordingly.
8. **Appropriate maintenance contracts for equipment and networks need to be established.** Training local people in the maintenance of learning technologies ensures that the equipment is used effectively.
9. **Use equipment and networks in schools for as long as possible each day.** Maximum use of expensive equipment must be achieved, and this can also provide a source of income generation for schools.
10. **Think creatively in your own context.** There are no best practices, only a range of good practices from which to choose.

Adherence to such simple guidance should help to ensure that those seeking to introduce technology into schools to achieve quality education will have a better chance of success.







# ABSOLUTE ESSENTIALS

UK business leader and non-aligned peer, **Lord Digby Jones** talks to Ann Beatty with his views about the essentials for education in the coming robot age.

**Ann: What importance you attach to new forms of learning in schools as young people grow up into the robot age?**

**DJ:** I believe that the most important tools are learning to read, write, count and use a computer. Literacy and numeracy are absolutely essential.

The great challenge for the future is that there are western democracies who want to pay less for more. Globalisation has made the private sector focus purely on productivity and price and this is also having an effect on the service industry as the use of technology and the internet, in particular, has widened peoples' expectations. The Public sector will have to rise to this challenge too as technology has an effect on service and jobs. Young people will need an education that prepares them for these challenges and produces a population that is "fit for purpose" in order to succeed in the future.

**Ann: In developing countries we have to cater for children who have never been in school before although they are open to new ideas. In many cases children in rural areas will be learning remotely from traditional schools and classrooms. They often do not have access to learning resources and technology. What advice would you give?**

**DJ:** Technology is an absolute given. You wouldn't see a school in the western world without books so why would you expect schools at this time anywhere in the world to be without access to computers and other technology? I believe that within the next 5

years at least every school across the world should have a computer or other form of accessing the internet, sharing ideas and knowledge, through interacting with other teachers and students around the globe.

The continued quest of the public wanting more for less has also had an effect on education provision. There are centres which provide education but there are also many pupils learning remotely; they might be accessing lectures remotely, participating in online discussion forums, submitting coursework or completing courses in totality. Lecturers in the past may have had an audience of 30 students but they can now reach 30,000.

It is paramount that children everywhere must have access to quality, fit for purpose education to enable them participate and to succeed in this globalised world.

**Ann: You've said that in the 21st Century enterprise will cluster around centres of knowledge. What do you mean by that?**

**DJ:** In the 19th century people set up businesses and created jobs around transport links to get their goods to market, canals, ports and roads. In the 20th century business clustered around production steelworks and car factories for example.

In the 21st century we have globalisation and a business can be based in the UK, Vietnam, India, Africa or anywhere, as it is knowledge that is the key transferable in business.

Businesses will now set up where there are schools, colleges and universities that produce skilled people able to share knowledge and

ideas and fit for the challenges of the ever changing global economy.

**Ann: You have been quoted as saying that it's a disgrace that about a fifth of the adult population of even the developed world is illiterate. What do you believe is the solution?**

**DJ:** Illiteracy is a generational issue and it is something I believe should be tackled by parents as well as teachers. Parents have expectations of the state and of the education system but this should be a two-way process and the governments need to get tougher with parents. If parents don't think it's an important benefit that their child learns to read then there should be sanctions. Learning to read equals doing well in this globalised economy and parents as well as teachers should have this as their ultimate goal for their children. It is, with the exception of a medical condition an absolute disgrace for any parent or teacher to accept that a child in their care leaves primary school unable to read.

In 1880, William Gladstone said, "You don't set the poor free by giving them money, you set them free by giving them an education!" This is as true today as it was then.

**Lord Digby Jones** is a non-party member of the UK House of Lords and former government minister, the only UK Minister not to belonging to the party of government. Of himself he says "Business is my constituency; the businesswomen and businessmen of our nation creating wealth on a socially-inclusive basis, to the benefit of everyone."

# YOUNG AMBASSADORS REPORT BACK FROM GHANA

**Emily Pemberton** and **George Watts** won the Steve Sinnott Award to be the 2015 Young Ambassadors for the *Send My Friend to School* campaign. In February they travelled to Ghana with the Global Campaign for Education UK and the charity ActionAid, to investigate progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by the end of 2015.

Ghana now has 87% of children enrolled in primary school compared with just 60% in 2004. George and Emily met children, teachers, politicians and charity workers and looked behind the statistics, here are some of their stories ...



## Meeting children in the village of Bansi

In the remote Upper East region, Emily and George both 15, from Ysgol Gyfun Plasmawr in Cardiff, spent time with children who are out of school.

**George:** "Although basic education is 'free and compulsory' there are still 440,000 children in Ghana missing out on their right to an education.

One of these is Ayabil who doesn't go to school because he is needed to work on his father's farm. It is simply a catastrophe, yet these stories are common. We helped Ayabil water his onion garden, which involved crossing the White Volta River. "



**Emily:** "I also spent time with Lariba, an 11-year-old girl whose single, widowed mother of four struggles to feed the family and the costs of school uniform and shoes are out of her reach. Lariba accompanies her mother every morning to collect cow dung to be sold as fertilizer. Her mother realizes the importance of education as a vital way out of poverty, but she just can't afford to send her children to school."

## Visiting Ninkogo Primary School

At this primary school there are 888 pupils with just 5 teachers.

**Emily:** "Sitting in class alongside 124 pupils I was shocked to see the complete lack of resources; tatty text books shared by at least three pupils and no posters or other learning materials.

"I was particularly impressed to meet with the Girls Club – a project set up by ActionAid. There were an inspiring group of 75 girls who meet to discuss issues affecting their education and actively go and persuade parents to let their daughters go to school."

## Meetings with Officials

The Young Ambassadors also met with officials at the Ministry of Education, to get an insight into the challenges and policies working towards a day when every child will access their right to quality education.

**Emily:** "Ghana has some good government policies, such as the free school shoes and grants which did fill me with confidence, but in a lot of cases, these policies aren't yet being implemented."

## Young Ambassadors return to the UK

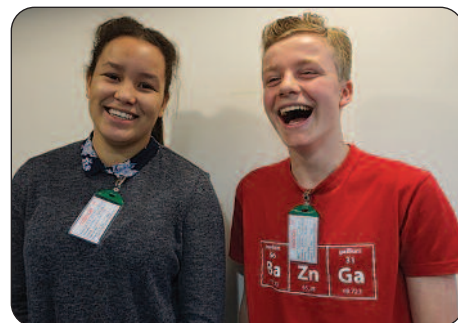
**Emily:** "I will forever remember the children at Ninkogo primary school and it's because of them that I'm determined to work at my role as Young Ambassador and for every other child who hopes for a better education and a better future."



**George:** "Ghana won't reach the target of universal primary school by the end of the year but I feel passionately about putting my experiences into use. We must make sure world leaders know that despite this being the deadline year, it doesn't mean that we should stop. This year is so important, not because it is an end – but because it is another beginning."

**The 2016 *Send My Friend to School* Campaign will be focusing on the vital need of education for children affected by war and conflict, natural disasters and terrorism. Sign up now for your FREE schools pack and to receive campaign news and details on future competitions. [www.sendmyfriend.org](http://www.sendmyfriend.org)**

**Steve Sinnott** was a passionate advocate of the Global Campaign for Education UK and the award was set up in his memory. It is now funded by the NUT and GCE UK.



Photos by Nana Koi Acquah/GCE UK



# THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE STEVE SINNOTT FOUNDATION

It's been an exciting and inspiring 6 months at the Foundation. We have been talking to teachers and students in the UK and around the world to find out what they believe will achieve quality Education for All. At the Foundation we believe that there is no education without "quality".

## Supporting Access to Learning Worldwide

Although great progress has been made in the provision of primary education around the world, the goal has not been achieved. In 2000 there were 108 million children without access to primary education. In 2015 there are 57 million children still without that access and conflict is only making the situation worse but access to quality education could help to resolve conflict and be a route to peace. There are many more children and young people without access to secondary and tertiary education or vocational and life-long learning.

There are still too few trained and qualified teachers; resources in developing countries are scarce or still non-existent; and even amongst the children who do access education there is no guarantee of quality. Often the education provided in developing countries is not culturally appropriate or fit for purpose.

By the contribution we make to support access to learning worldwide, we aim for progress.

### Our Values

- We are committed to universal access to education and life-long learning.
- We believe in quality, holistic and appropriate education that encourages independent thought.
- We value education that strengthens and empowers communities.
- We work to ensure local ownership of programmes and learning.
- We promote the importance of education as a route out of poverty working always in partnership with teacher organisations to support the enhancement and accessibility of public education, and to promote that aim with governments.

The key words for us are: "community", "capacity building" and "sustainability".

Following the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) the future of education has a new roadmap after political leaders from around the world adopted the

Framework for Action in the Paris this month; with hopes placed on its bold take on financing and inclusion.

The road to 2030 is taking shape in Paris as we go to press, as the General Conference of UNESCO unfolds from November 3 through to the 18. World leaders have adopted unanimously the new Framework for Action (FFA) on Education, "a cornerstone within the sustainable development agenda", in the words of UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova.

It was interesting to note that Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary of Education International, addressed the conference stressing that, "if national governments are serious about achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 on education and its 10 targets, that they need to start listening to teachers. In too many countries a meaningful dialogue with the education authorities... does not exist." We at the Foundation have been doing just that: finding out what the challenges for teachers are and supporting them to find their own solutions.

Without your ongoing support millions of children around the world would still be denied access to education. Our deepest thanks go out to the many individuals who have taken part in activities to raise money or simply to have given us the gift of their time. Also to all our donors and partners and many others who have shown their continued support to help increase our reach and improve access to education around the world.

Steve Sinnott was passionate about improving access to education to the millions of children around the world. As General Secretary of the NUT his passion was to improve access to education and our goal at the Steve Sinnott Foundation is built on this vision. We would like to say a special thank you to the many teachers and teacher unions for your support this past year, together we have already had many successes.

Gambia Teachers Union event and speaking at the NUT event in London to celebrate the day.

## Haiti

We are proud to be developing a project in Haiti with all the teacher unions there, which will have a huge impact on accessible and quality education in Haiti through capacity building and mentoring of teachers and resource provision. A money collection at the NUT 2015 conference initially funded the scoping of this project in Haiti and we have now met with teachers in Haiti and the Minister of Education to plan the development of a Learning Resource Centre in Port au Prince. We are pleased to have the support of the Caribbean Union of Teachers (CUT), Education International (EI) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), to partner with us to engage the teacher unions to support us to work with teachers across Haiti and develop this exciting project.

## Learning Resource Centres

Our learning and evaluation of our work in Haiti on the pilot project has enabled us to replicate the concept with our other partners. We are currently working with teachers in Uganda, Sierra Leone, Nepal, Cambodia and The Gambia to develop relevant projects for capacity building of teachers and resource provision through Learning Resource Centres. We are looking for like minded partners and volunteers so if you would like to get involved please contact Ann Beatty on 01923 431 653.

## Education International 7th World Congress in Ottawa

We were delighted to be invited to attend the Education World Congress in Ottawa. Education International (EI) is a global federation of teachers' trade unions and they meet every four years to discuss issues facing education worldwide. Over a thousand teachers attended the Congress, gathering under the theme: Unite for Quality Education and we were able to find out first-hand from some of the teachers what they believe will achieve quality Education for All with the Sustainable Development Goals being set to 2030.

## World Teachers Day 5th October 2015

The Foundation supported and raised awareness for World Teachers Day on the 5th October this year by supporting the

# GETTING INVOLVED

## As it Stands

As it stands, millions of children across the globe do not have access to free education. Education gives everyone the tools to earn a living, to contribute to communities and get more out of opportunities. It promotes equality and challenges discrimination. But most importantly, it unlocks the potential of every child and transforms lives.

Getting all children access to education requires focused efforts to eliminate the barriers that keep them away from education. Many are walking for hours each day to get to school, and that is why the one hundred and eighty two miles between Stockport and London will be covered, to represent the daily toll that many face. Children all across the globe are striving to attend their local school and I want to raise funds for a not for profit

## Singing for Sierra Leone

The Denham Divas are a group of women who love to sing. They have a variety of songs and have grown into a substantial choir with around thirty members. They sing for fun, health and well-being, aiming to work towards and achieve the highest possible standard within their capabilities. The Divas share their love of singing and songs with members of the wider community by singing to them and with them.

These appreciative audiences like to pay for their services. All contributions are sent to the Steve Sinnott Foundation – currently to support the Sierra Leone project. Many of the choir members are ex-teachers who feel



organisation which strengthens and empowers communities and ensure local ownership of programmes and learning, which is why I will be walking to raise funds for the Steve Sinnott Foundation.

**Dawn Taylor** Division Secretary for Stockport NUT

passionately about the cause. When the next cohort of teachers comes to the UK from Sierra Leone for training with the Foundation's Education Team, there are plans to set up a Skype session so that the two groups can share the universal joy of singing.



## Volunteer Soirée save the date – Saturday 23rd January 2016

**The Foundation is hosting a Volunteer Day to kickstart our Community Volunteering Scheme NUT Hamilton House in London. Details will be announced on our website.**

## Dragons' Apprentice Challenge 2015

The Foundation is taking part in the Dragons' Apprentice Challenge Watford, an inspirational annual programme connecting students with business mentors to raise money for local charities. Schools identify their interest in participating and encourage year 12 students to put themselves forward and form teams of 6. Each team is matched with a local business mentor (their dragon) and a local charity or community group. Teams are given £100 and challenged to "turn £100 into

## Teachers and friends – everyone is welcome



## Isle of Wight Joint Fundraising Challenge Friday 13th to Sunday 15th May 2016

There are hundreds of miles of interesting walking routes across the Isle of Wight which immerse you in some of the most beautiful landscapes; rugged coastal walks and enchanting forest trails take you to discover the Isle of Wight's many hidden treasures; striking chalk geology and great views out to sea. We are organising a range of easy and more difficult walks so that everyone can join in the fun.

**If you would be interested in taking part please email  
ann.beatty@  
stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk**

**Or call 01923 431653  
to register your interest**

**To find out more about  
our work visit  
[www.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk](http://www.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk)**

£1,000 or more". Dragons provide support in the form of advice, and access to resources, to help their team achieve their business goal and funding target. All profits made by the teams go directly to their allocated charity/community organisation.

We are excited to be partnered with West Herts College and Jury's Inn Watford. Please support us to raise as much awareness as possible. Watch this space for updates and follow us on twitter and please, please do promote us as widely as you can ...

**#DragonApp @ssfoundation.**



# EDUCATION FOR ALL

The Foundation has continued to promote Education for All in UK schools and has been looking at examples of good practice in schools in Uganda and The Gambia too.

Following our Education for All Awareness day in June this year the Foundation hosted an event in London in September working with our partner schools to develop ideas for resources and to really embed Education for All across an issues based curriculum. It was an inspirational day, which generated lots of exciting ideas. Thank you to all who took part and a special thank you to The Weald School, Orchard Primary School, King James School

## News from Nepal

Our partners on the ground Manisha UK have continued to be very busy with additional fundraising activities, following the devastating earthquakes.

Manisha UK are currently assessing the damage caused by the 'quakes, in conjunction with a structural engineer. This has proved impossible until now, pending conclusion of the monsoon season. Batase school in Gorkha, has been totally destroyed/condemned, as it was only c20 miles from the epicentre and Mahachap and Dumre schools have also been badly affected, necessitating

and Classrooms for Kenya. Watch this space for future developments and you can find more information about Education for All at [www.educationforall.org.uk](http://www.educationforall.org.uk)



partial rebuilding and/or major repairs.

They are still targeting £50k, to help with rebuilding and repairs, in order to facilitate getting learning back to normal and have run a number of fundraising activities. The Everest Challenge, being held locally on November 14th. This involved teams of static rowers, rowing 8848m, the height of Everest. It also included a team of trustees Steve with Andy and a colleague, bravely rowing a full marathon!

If you would like to sponsor their rowing up Everest quest (!), this can still be actioned at <https://www.charitycheckout.co.uk/1137569/Donate-1>

## News from Sierra Leone



It is with great relief that we received the news that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared Sierra Leone Ebola free. We are hoping to welcome teachers from Sierra Leone to London in February 2016 to attend training with our Education team and to meet and share ideas with UK teachers.

EducAid were in the news again recently as Miriam Mason-Sesay received an award from World of Children. The Education Award recognizes individuals making extraordinary

## Education for All Outside the Classroom

We have been working on promoting Education for All outside of the classroom through Sport and working with Community Groups.

In August we worked in partnership with The Dojo and delivered workshops at their European Cultural Exchange Programme at Phasels Wood.

The Foundation is promoting Education for All through a local football league in Hertfordshire and they persuaded us to support one of the teams, The Colney Colts Under 10's, and we agreed.

Come on the Colney Colts, they won their last game 10 -1.

## UK UNESCO ASPnet

The Steve Sinnott Foundation has responsibility for co-ordinating the UK National Commission for UNESCO's Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet). The ASPnet programme is a global network of schools, which educate for sustainable development allowing every human being to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to shape a sustainable future. This global network of over 10,000 educational institutions from 181 countries is coordinated internationally in Paris. Over the past nine months the Foundation's ASPnet National Coordinator has been working with the National Commission to update the database of member schools and establish regular contact with them. We'll be looking to continue the development of this aspect of work in close partnership with UNESCO in the UK

For more about ASPnet worldwide visit [www.unesco.org/new/en/education/networks/global-networks/aspnet/](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/networks/global-networks/aspnet/) or take a look at UNESCO's UK site and subscribe to the UK newsletter at [www.unesco.org.uk/designation/unesco-schools](http://www.unesco.org.uk/designation/unesco-schools).

To find out more about becoming an ASPnet school, email the Steve Sinnott Foundation at [admin@stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk](mailto:admin@stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk) and we'll refer you on to our UK National Co-ordinator for the latest guidance on completing an application.

contributions to the education of children thus providing them the platform from which to become fully productive members of society. The Foundation also attended an informative and inspiring evening showcasing the work of EducAid in October with guest speaker Ezekiel Nonie.





Thomas is 5 years old, he wasn't even born when the earthquake struck in 2010 but it could still prevent him getting the education his parents want for him. The Steve Sinnott Foundation aims to help. Please share our aim by becoming a Friend of the Foundation to support our Learning Resource Centre project in Haiti – and be his friend too.

## Be our friend – Let's work together

Be a friend to 57 million primary aged children and to the many millions of older children who have been denied the opportunity and access to education.

By becoming a friend and giving as little as £3 a month you can and will make a difference.

Please visit [www.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk/become-a-friend](http://www.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk/become-a-friend) to find out more and sign-up.



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