

Insight Report

# Global Education Initiative Retrospective on Partnerships for Education Development 2003-2011



**Global Education Initiative  
Retrospective on  
Partnerships for Education  
Development  
2003-2011**



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REF 210212

# Contents

- 3 Foreword
- 4 Introduction
- 12 The Global Education Initiative:  
Genesis and Achievements
- 38 Delivering Educational Partnerships:  
Solutions and Challenges
- 46 Multistakeholder Partnerships for  
Education: Looking to the Future
- 56 Acknowledgements

# Foreword



**Klaus Schwab**  
Founder and  
Executive Chairman  
World Economic  
Forum

The engagement of leaders from business, government, civil society and academia in action-oriented partnerships is one crucial way the Forum shapes the global and regional agendas. It was in this spirit that the Global Education Initiative (GEI) was conceived in 2003.

Launched at a time when the global understanding of how to create and sustain large-scale partnerships was still being developed, the GEI has contributed to this understanding in its many activities: at the national level, such as the GEI country initiatives in Jordan, Rajasthan and Egypt; and at the global level with UNESCO, the World Bank Group, and the many other multilateral institutions with which the GEI has engaged. At the same time, the GEI has also contributed to the improvement of thousands of students in their educational experiences.

The challenges in education and the opportunities education provides as the enabler for economic growth and employment remain a critical global priority. No single stakeholder can solve these challenges on its own, and collaboration and partnership are essential. In capturing the experiences of the GEI, I hope that the findings of this report will serve as the basis for developing essential future education partnerships.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Klaus Schwab'.

# Introduction

In January 2003, high in the Swiss Alps, an idea was born. What if a group of the world's leading companies could help countries transform their national education systems through a new and comprehensive partnership between government, business and civil society?

This report reviews the development of this idea, which became known as the World Economic Forum's Global Education Initiative (GEI). In the ensuing years, the initiative has transformed the lives of thousands of children across the world and redefined the nature of educational partnerships.

## Report Objectives and Approach

- The report tells the story of the GEI and the processes involved in its development. While much has been written about the individual elements of the initiative, none of them fully reflects the complexity of the GEI as a whole, and what it reveals about creating and managing educational partnerships.
- The report summarizes the achievements and the challenges faced by the initiative. GEI's partners have often stressed the importance of learning from failures and mistakes. With this in mind, areas where the initiative could have been improved are addressed so that others involved in shaping educational partnerships can avoid some of the pitfalls experienced during the evolution of the GEI. At the same time, the report highlights the real successes of the initiative over the last eight years.
- The report draws conclusions on how to deliver effective multistakeholder partnerships for education (MSPEs). One of the early lessons was that effective educational partnerships must involve not only the public and private sectors, but also civil society organizations and other international organizations. To be effective, partnerships need to be conceived more holistically than public-private partnerships and should involve the appropriate stakeholders for the intended educational objectives.
- Looking to the future, the report explores what is necessary for educational partnerships to evolve effectively. Drawing on the experiences of the GEI, it suggests future directions to pursue at the global and national levels. It is not the partnerships or the technologies that matter, but how they can be used to enhance the quantity and quality of learning opportunities for people of all ages.

The report combines four different types of material.

First, it frames the wider context of development partnerships in general and educational partnerships in particular. Partnerships have become a key vehicle through which development, reform and transformation are now advocated. Some of the key threads in debates over their efficacy are drawn out, within which analysis of the GEI can be situated.

Second, material published by the GEI and its elements provides perspective on how the initiative developed over the years. Particular attention is paid to the monitoring and evaluation reports concerning individual country initiatives, especially those undertaken by external agencies. This material reviews the strengths and challenges of the initiatives and highlights examples of good practice to draw general conclusions about educational partnerships.

Third, the report draws on interviews with people who have been involved in the GEI over the last decade. These interviews explored the reasons partners engaged in the initiative, their view of the GEI's main achievements and weaknesses, the degree of success of its separate elements, key challenges in delivering partnerships and the main lessons of their involvement.

Finally, the authors draw on their own experiences of the GEI and of wider engagement in and research on development partnerships. These experiences provide a divergent point of view to that of the opinions of those interviewed or other authors.



**Successful change could not be achieved unless it was addressed at a policy level with a country supporting the programme in terms of a national policy for educational advancement.**



Andreas Cox

JEI Program Manager (2003-2006) and Associate Director, GEI (2010-2011)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cox was seconded from Computer Associates (now CA Technologies) to the GEI from 2003 to 2007

# Context

## Global Development Partnerships

The Millennium Declaration<sup>2</sup> was a product of ideas that emerged over the previous decade and focused on how the global community could tackle poverty. It was a key factor in shaping the path that countries and international organizations would follow in the next decade. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that emerged from the Millennium Summit outlined clear aspirations and targets that have shaped subsequent development practices.

While providing a clear means of evaluating progress towards reducing poverty, the MDGs have also acted as a constraint and limited attention paid to other factors that could help transform the lives of poor people.

The MDGs are of importance for this review as they have legitimized a belief that partnerships between the private sector and states could play a central role in reducing poverty. Specifically, MDG 8, which concerns a global partnership for development, includes as one of its targets: “In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications”.<sup>3</sup> This provides the context within which partnerships with the private sector can be advocated to deliver educational solutions (MDGs 2 and 3) or healthcare interventions (MDGs 4, 5 and 6).

The notion of partnerships in development practice is much older and more deeply embedded than its expression in the MDGs might suggest.<sup>4</sup> Claire Mercer recognized in 2003 that notions of “partnerships for development have appeared in the Pearson Report of 1969, the Brandt Report of [the] 1980s and the 1996 Development Assistance Committee of the OECD Report on development cooperation.”<sup>5</sup>

Two factors have shaped the evolution and recent dominance of this partnership rhetoric: the emergence of the neo-liberal agenda in North America and Europe during the 1980s, and the collapse of the Soviet model of communism at the end of that decade.

The rise of neo-liberalism in the 1980s has had a lasting impact on subsequent partnership rhetoric through its emphasis on a low-tax economy and the efficiency of private enterprise. Driven by a belief that a shift from the public sector to the private sector will lead to efficiencies in government and thus greater economic well-being, the ideology emerged primarily in the richer countries of the world.

Such notions were increasingly seen as a solution to economic crises elsewhere, notably Latin America. This was captured by J. Williamson’s account of what he saw as an emerging consensus among development agencies based in the United States’ capital, which became known as the Washington Consensus<sup>6</sup> and focused on macroeconomic policy instruments including fiscal policy, tax reform, trade liberalization and privatization of state enterprises. The Washington Consensus argued for a shift in balance of activity away from the state towards the private sector, drawing into question the very meanings of “public” and “private”.

Traditionally, private goods have been seen as being excludable – implying that a class of consumers can be excluded from them – and rivalrous, in that their consumption prevents other consumers from simultaneously consuming them. In contrast, public goods, such as air or national defence, are seen as being non-rivalrous and non-excludable.<sup>7</sup> The challenge of such a model is where to place services such as education and healthcare. Should these be seen as private, public or both?

<sup>2</sup> “Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly, 55/2 Millennium Declaration”. United Nations, <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>, 2000.

<sup>3</sup> “Millennium Development Goals”. United Nations Development Programme, <http://www.undp.org/mdg/goal8.shtml>, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> This section draws on arguments from Unwin, T., *Partnerships in Development Practice: Evidence from Multi-Stakeholder ICT4D Partnerships in Africa*. Paris: UNESCO for the World Summit on the Information Society, 2005.

<sup>5</sup> Mercer, C., “Performing Partnership: Civil Society and the Illusions of Good Governance in Tanzania”. In *Political Geography*, 2003, 22(7): 741-763.

<sup>6</sup> Williamson, J., *Latin American Adjustment: How Much Has Happened?* Washington DC: Institute for International Economics, 1990.

<sup>7</sup> Samuelson, P.A., “The Pure Theory of Public Expenditure”. In *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 1954, 36(4): 387-389.

In education, people gain an individual benefit in the sense that, the more education they receive, the higher is their earning potential. However, there is also a public benefit, in that a better-educated workforce is usually seen as able to generate higher economic productivity and, therefore, enhanced well-being for all.

Education has wider social, political and cultural public value that far outweighs its importance in economic terms. This has led to the notion that education and healthcare are social or collective goods, typically delivered by governments and paid for by taxation, but they can also be delivered by the private sector.<sup>8</sup> Hence, debate remains rife as to whether education should be delivered by the state or the private sector, or whether some kind of partnership between the two might provide the optimal solution.<sup>9</sup>

A second factor in shaping development partnerships was the collapse of the Soviet Union. Not only did this appear to reaffirm the superiority of the economic model of capitalism,<sup>10</sup> but it also offered an opportunity for a new kind of political economy to emerge that sought to combine the positive aspects of both capitalism and the socialist command economy. Labelled the Third Way, this model was typified in the policies of the Clinton administration in the United States, the New Labour movement in the United Kingdom, the labour government in Australia and the liberal government in Canada.<sup>11</sup>

These governments were keen to represent an alternative approach to their predecessors and sought to initiate a new era of partnerships as a means of combining the welfare principles of socialism with the benefits of free market economics. The low-tax era was here to stay, at least for a generation, regardless of the position of any government in the political spectrum. It was enabled by a new model of partnerships between the public and private sectors.

This combination of a specific economic agenda with the political victory of liberal democracy paved the way for the emergence of a new entity – public-private partnerships – that was intended to encourage private sector involvement in the increasingly impoverished public sector.<sup>12</sup> Among the first was the Private Finance Initiative introduced in the United Kingdom in 1992.<sup>13</sup>

Interestingly, this emergence was also driven from the government perspective by a concern to transfer much of the risk associated with public service provision to the private sector, and, at the outset, focused on the private provision of infrastructure, particularly in the healthcare and transport sectors. The European Investment Bank estimated that some 1,340 public-private partnerships were created between 1990 and 2009 in Europe, although it recognized that the definition of what comprises a public-private partnership varies considerably between countries.<sup>14</sup> The United Kingdom accounted for 67.1% of all public-private partnerships, followed by Spain with 10.1%, France with 5.4% and Germany with 4.9%.

From the late 1990s onwards, three additional factors came into play:<sup>15</sup>

1. Economic growth was increasingly accepted by donor and recipient governments as the key process to reduce, or even eliminate, poverty across the world.<sup>16</sup> The private sector as the engine of such growth had to be encouraged and persuaded to engage in development practice. Such arguments are typified, for example, by the work of the International Finance Corporation.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Winer, S.L., Tridimas, G., Hettich, W., "Social Welfare and Collective Goods Coercion in Public Economics". In *Carleton Economic Papers*, 2007, 07-03. <http://ideas.repec.org/p/car/carecp/07-03.html>

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, James, E., "The public/private division of responsibility for education: An international comparison". In *Economics of Education Review*, 1987, 6(1), 1-14; LaRocque, N. *Public-Private Partnerships in Basic Education: an International Review*. May, 2008. CfBT Education Trust.

<sup>10</sup> And along with it the validity of the recipe provided by the Washington Consensus for the newly independent countries of Eastern Europe.

<sup>11</sup> Intellectually, one of the Third Way's most eloquent spokesmen was Tony Giddens. See, for example, Giddens, A., *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998; Giddens, A., *The Third Way and its Critics*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000.

<sup>12</sup> Allen & Overy, *Global Guide to Public-Private Partnerships*. London: Allen & Overy, 2010.

<sup>13</sup> *The Private Finance Initiative (PFI)*. 2001. London: House of Commons, Research paper 01/117.

<sup>14</sup> Kappeler, A., Nemoz, M., *Public-Private Partnerships in Europe – before and during the recent financial crisis*, *European Investment Bank Economic and Financial Report*. July, 2010. European Investment Bank (EIB).

<sup>15</sup> These arguments are developed further in Geldof, M., Grimshaw, D., Kleine, D., Unwin, T., *What are the key lessons of ICT4D partnerships from poverty reduction? Systematic Review Report*. February, 2011. London: UK Department for International Development.

<sup>16</sup> For an eloquent advocate of the power of economic growth to eliminate poverty, see Sachs, J., *The End of Poverty: How we Can Make it Happen in our Lifetime*. London: Penguin, 2005; For a critique, see Unwin, T., "No end to poverty". In *Journal of Development Studies*, 2007, 45(3), 929-953.

<sup>17</sup> The IFC is the part of the World Bank Group designed to foster economic growth in developing countries by financing private sector development. <http://www.ifc.org/>

2. Bilateral governments and multilateral agencies sought to identify ways through which their financial support could be leveraged or replaced through funding from the private sector. In governments where the ideology of public-private partnerships was ubiquitous, e.g. the United Kingdom at the turn of the new millennium, there was a clear desire to explore ways through which the private sector could be approached to provide additional financial support for development initiatives.

In most instances, it was the additional financial resource that bilateral donors were seeking, rather than the expertise, insight or management practices for implementing effective development initiatives. Indeed, during the early stages of the GEI's Partnerships for Education Initiative with UNESCO, it was remarkable how many people who worked for bilateral donors saw financial inputs as the main contribution that the private sector could offer.<sup>18</sup>

3. The language used by governments giving and receiving official development assistance changed. The Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has been particularly prominent in encouraging donors to shift their focus to a more collaborative partnership-based relationship with the governments of poorer countries,<sup>19</sup> and away from the hierarchically dependent notion of donors and recipients. This transition culminated in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which explicitly seeks to lay out a new framework for partnerships in promoting development and refers throughout to donors and partner countries.<sup>20</sup>

The changing nomenclature was also central to the Commission for Africa Report in 2005, and has been reiterated in its latest report published in 2010, which emphasized, "The Commission put this principle of mutually beneficial partnership at the centre of its report and across its various themes".<sup>21</sup> The very name of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), launched in 2001, emphasizes the importance of partnerships in development.

### Defining Partnerships: Circular and Linear Models

The first decade of the 21st century saw numerous organizations trying to come to grips with what is meant by the term "partnership" and how such initiatives can contribute to development. It was against this ferment that the World Economic Forum's GEI was born. There were few templates available that could be used to shape its contours, and all of those involved in the Jordan Education Initiative, the first country initiative of the GEI, drew on their experiences and energies to craft something that they thought would work.<sup>22</sup>

Various partnership models were indeed emerging. These can be broadly grouped into two types: those that focus primarily on the partnership itself, which are usually circular in nature; and linear models that focus on ensuring the delivery of development outcomes (see Appendix 1). One of the best known of the former is the model developed by the International Business Leaders Forum's (IBLF) Partnering Initiative, building on much of Ros Tennyson's earlier work (see Figure 1).<sup>23</sup> The core focus is on the actual partnership rather than on any specific development outcome. In contrast, linear models focus on the all-important delivery of some specified development intervention. Whether the partnership survives beyond the necessary completion of the task is a secondary focus.

<sup>18</sup> This approach becomes more understandable when the origins of public-private partnerships are considered in the wider context. Governments in Europe and North America from the beginning envisaged such partnerships almost exclusively as a way of reducing risk and generating additional resources to fund services that had previously been seen as their remit through the public purse. Given this background, it is unsurprising that those working for donor ministries in such governments adopted a limited view of the value of partnerships.

<sup>19</sup> "Donor-Developing Country Dialogues on National Strategies for Sustainable Development". Development Assistance Committee of the OECD, <http://www.poptel.org.uk/nssd/otherdocuments/projdoc1.doc>, 2000.

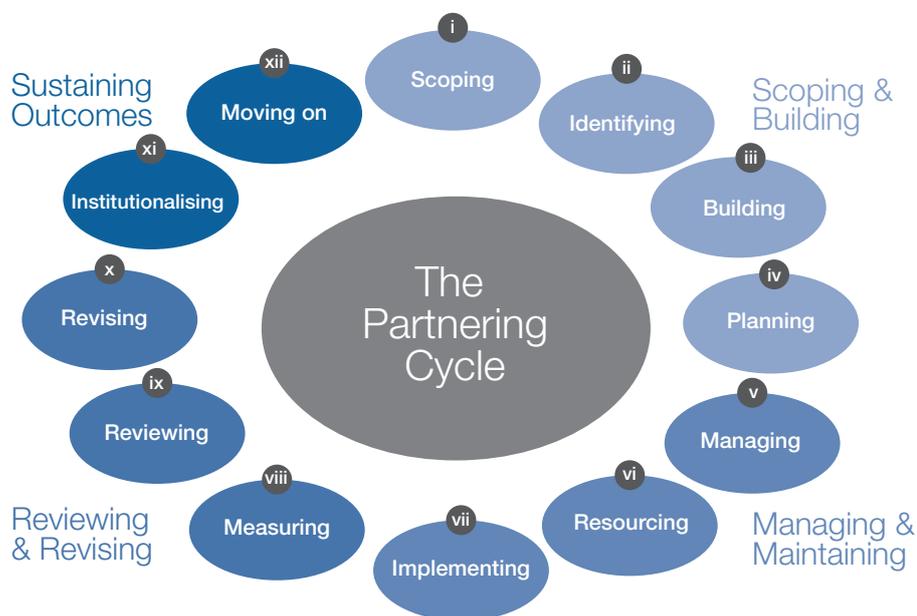
<sup>20</sup> Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. OECD, 2005; "Accra Agenda for Action". OECD, 2008.

<sup>21</sup> Wickstead, M.A, Hickson, C., "Still Our Common Interest". Commission for Africa, <http://www.commissionforafrica.info>, September, 2010.

<sup>22</sup> For an early expression of the JEI model, see *Jordan Education Initiative: a Public-Private Partnership Model for Effective and Advanced Learning Development*, 2004. Amman: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; Geneva: World Economic Forum.

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, Tennyson, R., *The Partnering Toolbook*. London: IBLF and GAIN, 2003.

Figure 1: The Partnering Initiative's Partnering Cycle



Source: [http://thepartneringinitiative.org/what\\_is\\_partnering.jsp](http://thepartneringinitiative.org/what_is_partnering.jsp), accessed 6 June 2011

### From Public-Private to Multistakeholder Partnerships

One of the key failings of early public-private partnerships was that they tended to involve only private sector companies and local or national states; they were partnerships between public and private commercial sectors.<sup>24</sup> Their failure to sufficiently engage civil society organizations (such as healthcare workers unions, local NGOs or teachers' organizations), as well as paying too little attention to the roles of other donors and foundations, meant that they were often unable to achieve the necessary buy-in to make them sustainable or appropriate for the needs of the communities where they were implemented. Such recognition led to the increasing use of the terms tri-sector or multistakeholder partnerships, which emphasize the importance of this diversity of partnership types.

Although the idea of multistakeholder partnerships (MSPs) had been articulated in the early 2000s,<sup>25</sup> it was only later that it was accepted as a more appropriate term to describe the sort of partnerships that the GEI was advocating. Indeed, the advocacy of the notion of multistakeholder partnerships for education (MSPEs) by the Partnerships for Education stream of the GEI was among the factors that led to widespread adoption of this terminology, at least in the education field. This shift was not without considerable discussion, in large part because of debate as to whether civil society should be conceived of as lying within the private sector<sup>26</sup> (see Appendix 2).

The diversity represented by the term MSPs is an important advance over the notion of public-private partnerships as it brings civil society and international organizations (UN bodies and multilateral donor agencies), alongside the state and private sector, in delivering effective development outcomes. Moreover, the evolution of the GEI was influenced by such debates and, in turn, helped to shape future practice.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> See Geldof, M., Grimshaw, D., Kleine, D., Unwin, T., *What are the key lessons of ICT4D partnerships from poverty reduction? – Systematic Review Report*. February, 2011. London: UK Department for International Development.

<sup>25</sup> *Multi-stakeholder Partnerships: Issue Paper*, November, 2003. Kuala Lumpur: Global Knowledge Partnership. Warner, M., Sullivan, R., *Putting Partnerships to Work: Strategic Alliances for Development Between Government, the Private Sector and Civil Society*. Sheffield: Greenleaf Publishing, 2004. Unwin, T., *Partnerships in Development Practice: Evidence from Multi-Stakeholder ICT4D Partnerships in Africa*, 2005. Paris: UNESCO for the World Summit on the Information Society.

<sup>26</sup> This view, for example, was advocated strongly in earlier drafts of Draxler, A., *New Partnerships for EFA: Building on Experience*. 2008. Paris: UNESCO IIEP; Geneva: World Economic Forum.

<sup>27</sup> This theme was captured by many of those interviewed for this report, and is well expressed by Haif Bannayan, CEO of the Jordan Education Initiative, in an interview 31 March 2011. "We started as a PPP and then as different groups came about, the concept of PPP was not exactly correct, and hence the new term, which is a more correct term. When I was in government I always heard PPP, but involved in JEI I came to use MSP; in June 2007 at the Forum in Switzerland the concept of MSPs was broached."

## Critiques of Partnership

The private sector has been eager to play an increasing role in shaping international agendas concerning development, and many persist in emphasizing the pre-eminence of public-private partnerships. One result of the increased withdrawal of the state has been the rising power of global corporations in influencing the discourses and practices of development.

J. Martens<sup>28</sup> highlighted eight key risks associated with the way in which the term “partnerships” is becoming the new mantra that shapes UN discourses: the “growing influence of the business sector in the political discourse and agenda-setting; risks to reputation; choosing the wrong partner; distorting competition and the pretence of representativeness; proliferation of partnership initiatives and fragmentation of global governance; unstable financing – a threat to the sufficient provision of public goods; dubious complementarity – governments escape responsibility; sensitivity in partnerships – governance gaps remain; and trends towards elite models of global governance – weakening of representative democracy”.

While he is right to draw attention to the challenges that partnerships pose to traditional forms of governance, this does not necessarily mean that well-designed multistakeholder partnerships cannot bring real and positive development impacts.<sup>29</sup> Much depends on how “development” is defined. Moreover, as was the case of the GEI, a focus on the intended educational outcomes of partnerships is a crucial aspect of the successful implementation of MSPEs.

Another broad critique of partnerships is whether they provide a cheaper solution than can be gained through traditional contractual relationships. Little research has directly compared the impact of a partnership-based project and a contractual-based project with the same intended outcomes. But the time, effort and money spent in crafting effective partnerships undoubtedly adds additional costs to the process.<sup>30</sup> Does the greater cost generate additional benefits that could not otherwise be achieved? An important part of this report is therefore to explore the added value that such partnerships bring.

<sup>28</sup> Martens, J., *Multi-stakeholder Partnerships: Future Models of Multilateralism?* Berlin: Freidrich Evert Stiftung, 2007.

<sup>29</sup> See, Geldof, M., Grimshaw, D., Kleine, D., Unwin, T., *What are the key lessons of ICT4D partnerships from poverty reduction? – Systematic Review Report*, February, 2011. London: UK Department for International Development.

<sup>30</sup> This was one of the conclusions drawn from the work of the Imfundo project based within the UK’s Department for International Development between 2001-2004, which sought to support educational partnerships in Africa using new ICTs.

## Educational Partnerships: Are They Different?

Much of the current literature makes generalized statements about the role of partnerships and how they can be delivered effectively, but less attention has been paid to whether similar principles are applicable across sectors. The IBLF model, for example, as well as the work of Warner, draws general principles on the delivery of partnerships largely regardless of the sector in which they are applied.<sup>31</sup>

This report explores if this is appropriate, and whether there are aspects of delivering educational partnerships that are different and should be borne in mind during implementation. Two factors seem to be pertinent: the length of time it takes to effect educational changes and the paucity of private sector companies working in the field of education.

## The Time It Takes to Achieve Educational Change

Both policy-makers and enlightened leaders in the private sector concur that a long-term perspective is needed in education.

Although education is vitally important to society, it is difficult to measure the impacts of an educational intervention in the short term. In the healthcare sector, by contrast, it is easier to bring together a coalition of partners to deliver an intervention such as a vaccine campaign that can be rolled out at the same time, with immediate effects. There is no equivalent vaccination against ignorance. For educational interventions, partners have to agree to be involved for a prolonged term, and this puts distinctive pressures on the management of the partnership.

## Everyone Cares about Education, but Few Are Directly Involved in It

Another distinguishing feature of the education sector is that there are relatively few large private sector corporations that see education as their core business. Therefore, few major global private sector businesses can be seen as obvious partners for educational partnerships. Across the world, education is widely considered to be the remit of the public sector.

In the United States, for example, where healthcare remains largely privatized, education is still seen as a service the state should deliver. This means not only that there are fewer businesses involved directly in education than in healthcare or agriculture, but also that there is much greater resistance to the involvement of the private sector and civil society in the provision of education.

Gerri Elliot, Executive Vice-President, Strategic Alliances, Juniper Networks, commented, “This thing is too hard to do – whether it is the Forum or the individual businesses, everyone has short-term goals: fiscal years, quarterly measurements. You need to be in the long term. It does not lend itself to a quarterly cadence.”

This helps explain the antagonism that exists towards educational partnerships, particularly among staff in some bilateral donor organizations that remain highly resistant to a belief that the private sector can contribute anything worthwhile to education.

Most private sector companies involved in supporting educational partnerships are not educational specialists. The GEI began in part because ICT companies were eager to see how technology could transform educational systems. The underlying drivers for most companies engaged in education are threefold: selling services and products to an educational market funded by a state; gaining market intelligence and developing key relationships; or recruiting qualified labour trained by public sector schools and universities.

With the rise of academic interest in constructivist education and the corporate interest in selling ICT to educational establishments, a coalition of interests in ICT in education has been at the heart of many MSPEs. The GEI began at just this intersection.

<sup>31</sup> “Programme on Business and Development Performance”, Overseas Development Institute Partnership Update 1; Partnership Brokers Accreditation Scheme: Further Information for Applicants. London: ODI/IBLF, 2003; Endearing Myths, Enduring Truths: Enabling Partnerships between Business, Civil Society and the Public Sector. London: IBLF, 2001. Warner, M. The New Broker, Brokering Partnerships for Development. London: ODI, 2003. Warner, M., Sullivan R., Putting Partnerships to Work: Strategic Alliances for Development between Government, the Private Sector and Civil Society. London: Greenleaf Publishing, 2004.

“

**Education is something you really need a long-term perspective for, and there are no quick fixes.**

”

Olav H. Seim

Director, Education for All International Coordination Division, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Paris



“

**With education, it is a long-term horizon and often it does not appear to be an immediate need. It is a long-term sustainable investment – that is what is so hard about this. If you want to build a road you physically build it, then people figure out how to use it. With education, getting to the first grade, is that really going to show that you had impacted someone’s ability to continue to learn?**

”

Tae Yoo

Senior Vice-President, Corporate Affairs, Cisco Systems

## Private Sector Delivery of Education: Contracts, Not Partnerships

Private education has long existed as a small but important element of educational provision, albeit one that has had much opprobrium heaped upon it because of its supposedly elitist character. However, as N. LaRocque has pointed out, “While private schools are often seen as catering solely to the wealthy, the reality is that many countries – including Pakistan, India, Indonesia and several African countries – have seen the emergence of private schools charging modest fees that cater to students from low-income families”.<sup>32</sup>

Similarly, the number of private universities in the poorer countries of the world has risen dramatically in the last decade due to rising demand for higher education, which is seen as being unsatisfactorily provided by the state.

The authors wish to distinguish the work of the GEI from what they consider to be a problematic use of the terminology of partnership reflected in both LaRocque’s work and that of the World Bank<sup>33</sup>. At the basic education level, LaRocque identifies seven main types of partnership: private sector philanthropy, private management of public schools, purchase of educational services from private schools, voucher programmes, adopt-a-school programmes, capacity-building initiatives, and school infrastructure partnerships.

The World Bank’s recent review of public-private partnerships in education focuses on the private delivery of what was seen for much of the 20th century as a public sector responsibility.<sup>34</sup> Many of these are actually contractual rather than partnership arrangements.

H. Patrinos et al.’s assertion, “PPPs can be defined as a contract that a government makes with a private sector provider to acquire a specified service of a defined quantity and quality at an agreed price for a specific period,”<sup>35</sup> seems to conflate two distinct ideas, those of contractual and partnership relationships. Such conflation is problematic and is another reason why the term “multistakeholder partnerships for education” (MSPEs) should be used for the sorts of partnerships highlighted in this report.

<sup>32</sup> LaRocque, N., *Public-Private Partnerships in Basic Education: an International Review*, May 2008. CfBT Education Trust.

<sup>33</sup> See also *Public Private Partnerships in Education*, September 2009. Education International, EI provides an excellent comparative analysis between “contractual PPPs” and MSPEs [http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/200909\\_publication\\_Public-Private-Partnership-in-Education\\_en.pdf](http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/200909_publication_Public-Private-Partnership-in-Education_en.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> “Although there are many forms of PPPs, including partnerships where private organizations support the education sector through philanthropic activities and high engagement ventures, this study examines PPPs in which the government guides policy and provides financing, while the private sector delivers education services to students. In particular, governments contract out private providers to supply a specified service of a defined quantity and quality at an agreed price for a specific period of time. These contracts contain rewards and sanctions for non-performance and include situations in which the private sector shares the financial risk in the delivery of public services.” Patrinos, H. A., Barrera-Osorio, F., Guáqueta, J., *The Role and Impact of Public-Private Partnerships in Education*, 2000. Washington DC: The World Bank.

<sup>35</sup> Patrinos, H. A., Barrera-Osorio, F., Guáqueta, J., *The Role and Impact of Public-Private Partnerships in Education*, 2009. Washington DC: The World Bank.

# The Global Education Initiative: Genesis and Achievements

The GEI is an example of how multistakeholder partnerships can help educational systems become more relevant, sustainable and scalable. Unique to many World Economic Forum initiatives, when launched in 2003, the GEI moved beyond the convening and insight generation phase immediately into collective action.



**01:** Davos-Klosters, Switzerland. Site of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting

The idea for the GEI was conceived and launched at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2003 during the Governors Meeting for Information Technology and Telecommunications.<sup>36</sup> John Chambers, Chief Executive Officer of Cisco, along with many other CEOs present, proposed creating a collaborative partnership between business and government to transform education. He suggested that the partnership begin with Jordan as a pilot country, complementing the discussions that H.M. King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan had with several CEOs at the Annual Meeting about creating a new education-based initiative in his country.

In March 2003, senior government leaders from Jordan and senior executives from Cisco met in Geneva and developed the concept of what became the Jordan Education Initiative. Three months later at the Forum's Extraordinary Meeting in the Middle East, the World Economic Forum Jordan Education Initiative (JEI) was formally launched by H.M. King Abdullah and several senior business leaders.

<sup>36</sup>The Governors Meeting is the private meeting of CEO/Chairman of the Forum partner companies in a given industry sector.

02



**02:** John T. Chambers,  
Chairman and CEO,  
Cisco

## The Country Initiatives

### The Jordan Education Initiative

Following the launch of the JEI, the Forum and the Government of Jordan embarked on a series of monthly conference calls with interested parties – business and civil society alike – to firm up the initiative's objectives and focus. During this period, the Programme Management Office (PMO) and the JEI Executive Board were also created. The PMO was a full-time staffed office that had responsibility to manage and develop partnerships for the JEI, and oversee and coordinate all JEI activities and workstreams.<sup>37</sup>

The JEI Executive Board was a small senior-level group consisting of key business, government, international organizations (including the Forum), and civil society leaders chaired by H.M. Queen Rania Al Abdullah of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, who provided executive oversight. In the autumn of 2003, the first JEI Update Meeting, hosted in partnership with the Government of Jordan, was held to bring all stakeholders together to discuss areas for collaboration and align on actions and next steps. JEI Executive Board meetings were subsequently timed to coincide with the JEI Update Meetings.

The development of the PMO model allowed the Forum to step back and be a “light touch” facilitator bringing visibility to the initiative through the JEI Update Meetings in Jordan and at the Forum's Annual Meeting. This became the model for all of the GEI country initiatives. As agreed with the Government of Jordan, the role of the Forum was designed to exit fully from the JEI after a three-year period. Following the Sixth Update Meeting of the JEI in the autumn of 2007, the JEI subsequently continued as a non-profit organization under the patronage of H.M. Queen Rania Al Abdullah.<sup>38</sup>

The JEI had four initial objectives:<sup>39</sup>

- Improve the development and delivery of education to Jordan's citizens through public-private partnerships and help the Government of Jordan achieve its vision for education as a catalyst for social and economic development
- Encourage the development of an efficient public-private model for the acceleration of educational reforms in developing countries based on unleashing the innovation of teachers and students through the effective use of ICT
- Build the capacity of the local information technology industry for the development of innovative learning solutions in partnership with world-class firms, creating economic value that will lead to mutually beneficial business opportunities
- Leverage an environment of national government commitment and corporate citizenship to build a model of reform that can be exported to and replicated in other countries

<sup>37</sup> Sanjay Kumar, former CEO of Computer Associates, committed to provide manpower and resources at the Annual Meeting 2003 if the Forum was serious about launching an action-oriented initiative. Kumar delivered on this promise by providing a crucial full-time secondee, Andreas Cox, who served as Programme Manager of the JEI for three years and who would later be hired by the Forum as GEI Associate Director from 2010 to 2011.

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.jei.org.jo/>

<sup>39</sup> Government of Jordan and the World Economic Forum's Jordan Education Initiative: a public-private partnership model for effective and advanced learning deployment, 2004. Amman: Government of Jordan; Geneva: World Economic Forum.



**01:** JEI Update Meeting with Khaled Toukan, then Minister of Education and Higher Education of Jordan, and Fawaz Zu'bi, then Minister of Information and Communications Technology of Jordan

**02:** Visiting a JEI Discovery School

In practice, the JEI developed content in core subject areas of mathematics, science, Arabic, English and ICT, and implemented this through 100 Discovery Schools that were provided with relevant ICT, and where teachers and technicians were trained in how best to deliver the content.

A 2008 review of the JEI's work by a team funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) reported that the initiative had successfully mobilized its partners to provide the resources. The report stated: "The JEI has helped stimulate the establishment of a Jordanian education software and e-content media development capacity, has developed a first generation of e-content in six content areas, has begun the process of training teachers, principal and other school personnel in the use of ICT to support e-learning, and has accelerated the investments in connectivity."<sup>40</sup>

However, it also clearly indicated that the JEI had not yet led to systemic change in the delivery of education, mainly because many teachers had not incorporated the interactive and problem-based learning approaches into their teaching. The report stated that JEI's influence had not spread much beyond the 100 Discovery Schools.



<sup>40</sup> *Overview and Recommendations to the Jordan Education Initiative*, undertaken by the Education Development Center with RTO International, April 2008. USAID/Jordan; See also the reports at <http://www.jei.org.jo/>.

Nevertheless, the JEI was identified as the most successful of the various initiatives undertaken by the GEI. In part, this was because it was the original initiative and therefore attracted most attention. One positive outcome for many of those involved were the numerous lessons learned. Adrian Godfrey, Director Corporate Affairs, Cisco, noted: “There was a real output and there appears to be some outcome – you can see on the ground that it is working, ICT in classroom, growth in the industry, and PISA results show differentiation between our 100 Discovery Schools and others.”

It was significant that much of the initial impetus for the JEI came from the ICT, rather than the educational side. Emile Cubeisy, IV Holdings, and initial JEI Programme Director, stated: “Our big impetus was to grow the competency of our IT sector. We were looking at it as a way that Cisco could contribute to our IT sector. The biggest impetus was the Jordanian IT sector itself – a sub-sector of the Jordanian economy had identified ... how the partnership could work with the global private sector.”

The ICT focus was also reflected in the original composition of the team. As Cubeisy noted: “Computer Associates gave us Andreas Cox, Cisco gave us Hugh Jagger, and then we started. Lubna Rihani was a teacher walking past my office in the Ministry, and she came into my office. She said she was a teacher, and she ended up being employed as the first team member. There was no structure. She went five months without being paid but had the spirit.”

Andreas Cox’s remembers Computer Associates’ motivation for being involved: “Computer Associates wanted to gain goodwill in doing something significant in the region. We do not have expertise in education, but we could bring project management capacity. In a nutshell, that was Computer Associates’ motivation.”

However, he also identified an important problem that resulted from this focus of the JEI on ICT companies: the JEI was dominated initially by ICT companies: “It was always perceived as an IT initiative with IT companies ... there was never sufficient attempt to get it out of the IT camps and make it more attractive for others.”

### The Rajasthan Education Initiative

As the profile of the JEI increased, other government leaders expressed interest in developing similar multistakeholder partnership-based initiatives in their countries. During the GEI Update Meeting at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2005, then Chief Minister Vasundra Raje of Rajasthan expressed interest in launching a similar initiative.

Building on the approach and early lessons learned from the JEI experience, the Government of Rajasthan formally submitted a proposal that reiterated their commitment to leading such an initiative in February 2005. This led to the development of a memorandum of understanding between the World Economic Forum and the Government of Rajasthan, signed in November 2005. It outlined the objectives of the Rajasthan Education Initiative (REI), the responsibilities of the Forum and of the Rajasthan government and the intended completion of the Forum’s active role by November 2008.

The REI was formally launched in spring 2006, driven by the Government of Rajasthan, and supported by the activities of the core partners, namely the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the Global e-Schools and Communities Initiative (GeSCI) and the World Economic Forum. Similar to the JEI, Update Meetings were held on a biannual basis and served as important platforms to realign on the initiative’s overall vision. Partners’ activities and commitments were coordinated by the Ministry of Education REI Program Management Unit (PMU).

Although the REI was structured in a similar way to the JEI, there were many important differences from the JEI model. With the chief minister as overall champion, leadership of the REI fell to the Rajasthan State Ministry of Education principal secretary and the REI programme director. The principal secretary and programme director were senior officials within the Indian Administrative Services, meaning that rotations in these roles occurred every two years. This led to the realization by the REI leadership that the only way to ensure the REI programmes were scalable and sustainable was to integrate all activities into the official education sector plan.

The REI was created with a focus on improving the delivery of educational services, promoting equitable access, enrolment and retention of children in schools, reducing gender disparities, promoting skill development and enhancing learning levels. The overall objective of the REI was to demonstrate robust, sustainable and scalable models, approaches, tools and methodologies that may significantly impact educational outcomes and transform the educational scenario of the state.

The REI sought to bring a new educational paradigm to the state based on the following strategies:

- Evolve innovative and locally appropriate models of PPP with scale-up potential
- Adopt and adapt best practices from both the public and private sector, while ensuring community participation
- Deploy new technologies, particularly ICTs, for modernizing educational service delivery, skills development and quality learning
- Create systems for enabling greater community participation in the state's educational programmes
- Enhance the flow of resources into the educational sector in Rajasthan by structuring suitable projects and creating incentives for increased participation of different stakeholders
- Focus efforts on serving underprivileged communities in urban and rural areas as well as on the female children and children with special needs
- Demonstrate the success of PPP interventions by evaluating their impact on students with reference to the overall objectives of the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* – the Indian government's programme for universal elementary education
- Disseminate the outcomes and lessons from the REI for replication in other parts of the state, other states in India, as well as in other developing countries

A report by the GeSCI on the REI<sup>41</sup> in 2009 provides an overview and analysis of the initiative, noting that, in the three years up to December 2008, the Government of Rajasthan had signed 26 memoranda of understanding with partners under the auspices of the REI that brought a wide variety of initiatives to the state's schools. Interestingly, the report comments, "It is important to note that there is no real precedent to the REI. At some point the REI did derive inspiration from the Jordan Education Initiative, but as the REI started to take shape it soon became clear that the REI was pitted differently and the expectations and outcomes would vary considerably."<sup>42</sup>

## REI Vision and Objectives

The REI will serve as an umbrella under which innovative multistakeholder partnerships are catalysed by engaging the global and local private sector, foundations, charitable organizations and other grass roots-level NGOs in support of Rajasthan's education objectives.

Source: REI Partnership Description Document, November 2005



**01:** REI Launch Meeting in August 2005, chaired by The Hon. Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje, and Minister of Education Ghanshyam Tiwari, Government of Rajasthan

<sup>41</sup> "A Review of the Rajasthan Education Initiative (REI)", September, 2009. Dublin: GeSCI.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

While the JEI remained a focused and largely integrated initiative, the REI was a framework within which there were many separate strands. Several pilot studies continued to run with their own deliverables rather than the ones that the project management unit established, and other projects continued to be added throughout the three-year period of the REI's evolution.

In contrast to the JEI's emphasis on the 100 Discovery Schools, the REI's approach was an umbrella framework to enable partnerships to flourish. As the GeSCI report noted: "The REI was created with a focus on improving the delivery of educational services, and in particular on promoting equitable access, enrolment and retention of children in schools, reducing gender disparities, promoting skills development and enhancing learning levels. The overall objective of the REI was to demonstrate robust and scalable models, approaches, tools and methodologies that may significantly impact educational outcomes and transform the educational scenario of the State."<sup>43</sup>

Given the comprehensive nature of the REI, it is unsurprising that, despite its wide range of stakeholders and support, not all of its objectives were achieved. The report concludes, "The REI has traversed a brief, yet fulfilling journey. The REI's diverse partnership model has brought some innovative and varied ideas, knowledge, expertise, resources and experiences to Rajasthan's education sector."<sup>44</sup>

The GEI partner company executives had a much more hands-off approach to the REI than they did with the JEI and, as a result, many of those not directly involved in particular aspects of the REI had little knowledge of its achievements and tended to rate its success well below that of the JEI.

As Cisco's Tae Yoo commented with respect to the REI's success, "Somewhere below neutral it was not great! It took forever to get it off the ground. To this day, each company feels their piece of it was good – but looked at from the broader view, I am not sure any of the components have added up to a whole. The whole was not bigger than the sum of its parts. For a partnership, the whole must be bigger."

This view was echoed by most of the respondents to the survey. Shelly Esque, Vice-President, Corporate Affairs, Intel Corporation, USA, who joined the GEI Steering Board in 2007, commented in an interview on 24 May 2011: "By the time I began to understand [the REI], everyone was saying that it was not moving, partners were not engaged."



**02:** Lunch meal programme at a school in Rajasthan, one of several such programmes under the REI umbrella

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

However, if the overall REI failed to deliver an integrated approach to transforming education through partnerships, some of the initiatives within it have achieved considerable success, and many of those involved also learned a great deal about the challenges of delivering educational partnerships. One of the most positive comments about the REI came from A. Lawrence Chickering, Founder and President, Educate Girls Globally, USA, whose initiative piloted a scheme in 50 schools to engage with Muslim communities in supporting girls' education under the umbrella of the REI.<sup>45</sup>

In 2008, the organization won government approval to start a new project in some 500 schools in the Pali District of Rajasthan and, in 2010, they signed a memorandum of understanding to roll out the scheme in 2,342 schools across the entire district. Educate Girls Globally was initially a very small non-governmental organization working in Arunachal Pradesh in Northern India, and for Chickering, the key value of the Forum's involvement in the REI was that it gave credibility and legitimacy to his work, enabling the NGO to develop a constructive relationship with the government.

"We worked hard at the relationship with the government. [Because] our programme is specifically about education for girls and reform of government schools, we need the support and formal sanction of the government to do this. One of the things I felt strongly about was that if we could really do what was until then a thought experiment, then governments would start paying for the programme, which would be the ultimate validation." Lawrence Chickering, Founder and President, Educate Girls Globally, USA, Interview 4 May 2011. For him, the most important thing was the initial invitation to be involved in the REI, and the opportunity that it provided for his organization to develop a long-term relationship built on trust with the Government of Rajasthan.

A similarly positive attitude towards the REI was also reflected by Ashish Garg of GeSCI, who was one of the few principals involved in the REI from its inception until its end. However, her positive opinions of the REI are tempered with some critical observations. She highlights the importance of gaining high-level political support for such interventions, but notes that this needs to be institutionalized. As in any institutional framework, she said, there is sometimes resistance to change.

"I think we managed to get political will interested, which was very unique – the initiative also drew a lot of interest from other state governments. However, without an institutional framework in place, the Government of Rajasthan found its leadership position compromised. It had to move the responsibility to GeSCI and the Forum. The government did not invest in the institutionalization of the initiative, did not have an office, a funded resource for itself. It was a highlight of the then-chief minister's achievements."

She also highlighted the importance that continuity of personnel and the creation of a programme management unit should play: "I think frequently changing key government personnel led to a certain discontinuity, which could have been minimized by institutionalizing the initiative. That would have ensured sustainability to the initiative and provided it with the tools to take on the challenging task ahead, that of stabilizing it. A well-structured PMU at the inception would have been very helpful."

Chickering reiterated these frustrations with respect to the departure of a senior official. "One of the weaknesses of developing countries became clear when I was preparing to go to the second annual meeting of REI in 2007. A few days before the meeting, he was removed from his position as secretary and replaced by someone who knew nothing about [the initiative] ... It was devastating to have this happen," Chickering said. "Administrative continuity is something really important," he added.

The REI experience highlights the importance of integrating MSPE interventions into the national education sector plan. This helps assure sustainability and scaling by embedding these interventions into the day-to-day bureaucracy of the Ministry of Education, and removes dependence on an individual person or leader. Additionally, working within the context of the national education sector plan engages many other key stakeholders critical to long-term success, such as the education bilateral aid and international organization communities. These lessons were applied to the development of the GEI's experience in the Palestinian Territories.

<sup>45</sup> <http://educategirls.in/index.php/who-we-are/history>

## The Egyptian Education Initiative

In 2006, the Government of Egypt approached the GEI with a proposal to launch a multistakeholder partnership initiative on education. As in the JEI and REI, the terms and conditions of the Forum and the Government of Egypt's role, as well as the Forum's transition out of an active role in three years' time, were finalized.



01: School in Egypt

Championed by the then First Lady of Egypt and with the leadership of the ministers from the Ministry of Communications and Technology, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the Egyptian Education Initiative (EEI) was formally launched at the World Economic Forum on the Middle East in May 2006.

Similar to the other initiatives, the EEI was structured into tracks and had biannual Update Meetings and Executive Board meetings. The EEI had a particularly strong programme management office led Hoda Baraka, First Deputy to the Minister of Communications and Information Technology of Egypt and Program Director, Egyptian Education Initiative. The office included a full-time monitoring and evaluation specialist. The EEI was recognized in 2008 with the UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for its use of information and communication technologies in education.

The EEI represented another type of partnership engagement between the Forum, national governments and the private sector. For Egypt, the GEI's involvement brought coherence to the activities in which the government was already involved. Baraka commented on the integration of partners: "We had some initiatives going on, but we did not have the umbrella, which is important. We had partnerships with the partners, but we did not have a single umbrella. What the EEI brought to Egypt was how to integrate the efforts of all the partners under one initiative. This was something extremely important."

Baraka continued: "The contribution matrix is the mechanism for the integration of the partners. Before the EEI, I was working with the Ministry of Education – we had the broadband initiative and the smart school initiative. We were working with each of these partners separately. The concept of partnership that the Forum brought gave us a unifying mechanism. This foundation also helped us in formulation of the initiative. At the beginning, when I was drafting the process documents, they helped us to set up the objective and outcomes. Part of their support was in designing and formulating."

The EEI evolved to influence other formal and informal educational sectors. By 2011, the EEI had joined forces with nearly 185,000 stakeholders across Egypt's education community; 70,000 PCs have been deployed; more than 185,000 people have received training; and the EEI has an impact on more than 2,000 schools, 17 universities and 1,000 IT clubs.

One of the ironies of this massive investment by the government and its partners is that the resulting technical proficiency of Egypt's citizens in the use of ICT contributed to the downfall of the regime itself in early 2011.

The EEI represents yet another variation of the GEI country model – in this case, working with an implementation-focused ministry of information and communication technologies with a countrywide scope. Although those most closely involved in the EEI were readily able to identify its successes, those further away did not fully understand the complexity of the interactions between the Egyptian government and those involved in the initiative.

In an interview in April 2011, Greg Butler, Senior Director, Worldwide Education Leaders Strategy, Microsoft, USA, commented: “There were good aspects to the deployment – it was all driven internally by the country – at a bigger scale which was good, but in places it could have been improved.” Cisco's Adrian Godfrey was likewise balanced in his comments: “The result was around the building of competency in the Ministry of ICT – overall it's probably neutral – I'm not sure of the outcomes.”

Cisco's Tae Yoo highlighted the key importance of Egyptian ownership for the initiative: “It was part of a much broader initiative. The good news is that it was wholly run and driven locally, which was the point. We would not get involved in every single pilot. Ultimately, it would be owned locally.”

### The Palestinian Education Initiative

The Government of the Palestinian Territories also expressed interest in the GEI. Under the invitation of President Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian Education Initiative (PEI) was launched in summer 2005.<sup>46</sup> Political volatility in the region limited the Forum's support for the PEI until spring 2008, when a private meeting convened by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad at the World Economic Forum on the Middle East re-engaged the Forum with the PEI.

During this time, the PEI continued to establish its focus and structure. As of 2011, the PEI continues as a Ministry of Education-driven initiative that encapsulates and builds on many of the best features and lessons of the GEI country initiatives: strong government ownership, in this case by the minister of education; full alignment of the PEI activities with the national education sector plan; and full support with the bilateral and multilateral donor community Local Education Group as mandated by the minister.<sup>47</sup>

The PEI has four key objectives, designed to harmonize with the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan 2008-2010 and the Education Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012:

1. Improving the quality of learning environments at schools
2. Upgrading the competence skills of teachers and school principals
3. Raising the bottom line in ICTs for education literacy and ICT infrastructure
4. Upgrading technical and vocational education as a significant pillar of the educational system



**02:** Lamis Al Alami, Minister of Education and Higher Education of the Palestinian Authority, speaking at the GEI Meeting at the 2009 World Economic Forum on the Middle East

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.pei.gov.ps/english/introduction.html>

<sup>47</sup> The importance of leadership by the minister of education is highlighted in a simple story that occurred in a meeting in fall 2008 between Alex Wong and Lamis Al Alami, Minister of Education and Higher Education. Lamis Al Alami agreed on the importance of including bilateral donors in the PEI, and ever since a subsequent meeting on the PEI, all key bilateral donors have been involved.

The visibility and success of the GEI's work in neighbouring Jordan was a key catalyst in the initiation of the PEI. "We are closely linked to the education system in Jordan and we saw evidence of some progress measured by the performance of students who were able to develop applications and link to the international community ... We have used the same approach, and we have learned from the GEI example. The model for what we call the PEI is ... a strategic plan for nationwide operation, for involving local and international partners. As an example, we had identified five pillars of the strategy – and they are synchronized with the structure and concept of the GEI – which enabled us to be compatible with the other efforts.

"The only difference is that we have decided not to establish an institute with a manager office and director-general, but it has to be in front of everyone and to make the direction clear for the other sectors – and other ministers – we need only to do reporting and monitoring and evaluation," said Basri Ahmad Abdelwahab Salmoodi, Deputy Minister of Education in the Palestinian Territories, in an interview in May 2011.



**02:** A PEI school in the Palestinian Territories

Yet, the PEI has been a fully Palestinian initiative. Although the political volatility of the region meant that international engagement has varied over time, some of the GEI's core partners have continued to engage independently with the Government of the Palestinian Territories to help implement elements of the initiative. Central to the ongoing progress of the initiative has been the core role of the Ministry of Education.

As Deputy Minister, Salmoodi concluded: "We have learned from our experience in Palestine, with regards to the ownerships of the system, the ministry is a very important thing. It is not wise to keep things away from the ministry and do things in parallel structures. I did not see involvement of the Ministry of Education in Jordan and Egypt. In Palestine, we stressed that it had to happen through the Ministry of Education. We had a discussion at the beginning when the private sector was not confident in the government system and public institutions. We have now created a model in Palestine where the ministry is the hub of all operations. It is appreciated by the GEI that the ministry is in charge and not parallel institutions."

The importance of strong leadership, based primarily in the Ministry of Education, has been a central lesson learned by the Palestinians from the GEI's earlier experiences elsewhere.

## The Global Education Initiative's Emergent Principles

Each of the GEI's country initiatives is very different in character. Using the Jordan Education Initiative (JEI) as an example, a set of four core principles to catalysing action-oriented, issue-based multistakeholder partnerships emerged.

1. **Senior-level political ownership is critical in providing the long-term stability and vision that stakeholders require in any multistakeholder partnership initiative.** In the JEI, the public commitment by H.M. King Abdullah and H.M. Queen Rania was evident from the outset and for the duration of the initiative. A biannual executive board meeting chaired by H.M. Queen Rania was established to provide oversight and steering, and included the Ministers of Education & Higher Education, Planning, and Information and Communication Technologies. The key ministries further demonstrated their ownership by assigning senior staff to work on the JEI, and anchoring the JEI within the offices of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies.
2. **Alignment with national education sector plans ensures that an initiative aligns with the day-to-day activities and bureaucracy of the government, and the activities of the bilateral and multilateral donor community.** Every country has national education sector plans, but they are often not well understood or referenced in education partnership interventions. Alignment with national plans helps ensure long-term commitment and scaling of any MSPE intervention. In the JEI, alignment with Jordan's national education sector strategy ERfKE (Education Reform for a Knowledge Economy, supported by the World Bank and several bilateral donors) and with NBN (Jordan's National Broadband Learning and Research Network initiative) were key early success factors.
3. **Maintaining overall programme management and keeping stakeholders aligned and informed are crucial tasks that cannot be underestimated, both in terms of resources and technical skills required.** Compounding this challenge is that governments in developing countries often lack the resources and skills to do this well. The support that partners can provide in this context is often overlooked, but is absolutely essential for success. In the JEI, recognition of the importance of these functions was manifested by the creation of the Programme Management Office (PMO), which at one point had 12 full-time staff members.

Multi-year pro bono secondments to the PMO from the Forum Partner companies, Computer Associates and Cisco, provided crucial professional programme management and technical skills. Also, the organization of the JEI objectives into clearly defined workstream tracks – classroom technology, e-curricula, teacher/administrator training, life-long development and ICT industry development, each managed by a PMO track manager – provided structure and management accountability.

4. **A neutral partnership broker that creates a platform of transparency and trust allows stakeholders to meet on a consistent basis at the senior levels to discuss progress, remove barriers and reaffirm commitments.** In the JEI, the World Economic Forum committed to actively supporting the JEI through its platform by convening biannual JEI Update Meetings in partnership with the Government of Jordan. These Meetings included senior-level executives from all stakeholders involved in the JEI. Biannual JEI Executive Board Meetings were held, and there was profiling of the progress and achievements at the Forum's Annual Meeting and annual World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa.



**01:** H.M. Queen Rania Al Abdullah of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

A summary of the four GEI country initiatives is outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The GEI country initiative achievements

Achievement	JEI	REI	EEI
<b>Core Partners</b>	Government of Jordan	Government of Rajasthan, GeSCI, Confederation of Indian Industries	Government of Egypt
<b>Duration</b>	2003-2007	2005-2008	2006-2009
<b>Number of Partners Engaged</b>	45	26	37
<b>Number of Schools Impacted</b>	102	45,000	2,000 (plus 20 universities and 700 e-learning academies)
<b>Number of Teachers/ Administrators Impacted</b>	3,000	62,000	85,000
<b>Number of Students Impacted</b>	80,000	1,250,000	619,000 (plus 13,000 parents)
<b>Key Focus Areas(as defined by Program Tracks)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Discovery Schools</li> <li>– Lifelong Learning</li> <li>– ICT Industry Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ICT Track</li> <li>– Non-ICT Track</li> <li>– Cross Cutting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Pre-University Education</li> <li>– Higher Education</li> <li>– Lifelong Learning</li> <li>– E-Learning ICT Industry Development</li> </ul>
<b>Investments Catalyzed</b>	25M usd	Not available	90M usd
<b>Website</b>	www.jei.org.jo	www.rei.org.in	www.eei.gov.eg

## The GEI Goes Global

By 2006, the Forum's engagement in multiple country-level initiatives and continued demand from public and private sector communities to understand and develop new partnership approaches to education sector development led to the evolution of the Forum's work in education into a broader concept of what became the mission of the GEI.

The enhanced mission of the GEI led to a new set of activities focused on socializing the MSPE models on a global basis. As the 2006 GEI Annual Report states: "To address these gaps, a bold new development paradigm is needed based on multistakeholder partnerships that use key strengths of a variety of stakeholders – ranging from the donor community, the multinational private sector, regional and national governments to international and local NGOs, teachers' unions and the local private sector"<sup>49</sup>

At the same time, the governance structure of the GEI continued to evolve with the development of the GEI Steering Board with formal biannual Steering Board meetings. Check-ins had always occurred through conference calls and meetings at the World Economic Forum Annual Meetings; however, the development of a formal Steering Board with its first gathering occurred in 2007 and brought together senior executives from the partner companies driving and supporting the GEI work to date<sup>50</sup>. These meetings provided overall guidance on the GEI's overall direction and strategy. The final GEI Steering Board meeting was held in May 2011, with the affirmation to sunset the GEI as an active Forum initiative in July 2011.

## GEI Mission and Purpose

"The GEI's primary objective is to raise awareness and support the implementation of relevant, sustainable and scalable national education sector plans on a global level through catalysing multistakeholder partnerships, in particular through the increased engagement of the private sector. To achieve this objective, the GEI adopts a three-phase approach that builds models and frameworks through primary research and by catalysing on-the-ground, hands-on country partnership initiatives; socializes these models at the regional and international level; and scales them for implementation on a global basis."<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> from The Global Education Initiative (GEI) Review and Outlook, 2008. Geneva: World Economic Forum

<sup>49</sup> *GEI Annual Report*. 2006. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

<sup>50</sup> The GEI Steering Board was restricted to World Economic Forum Industry and Strategic partner companies, and was therefore exclusively composed of private sector companies. Over the course of the GEI, 20 companies served on the GEI Steering Board. See Appendix 3 for additional details.

## Partnerships for Education

One of the new activities initiated in 2006 under the GEI's expanded mission was the development of Partnerships for Education (PfE) in partnership with UNESCO. For UNESCO, PfE represented an opportunity to better understand and develop new models of collaboration with the private sector in its mission to achieve education for all. For the Forum, the opportunity to work with UNESCO provided a chance to socialize its emergent model of MSPEs and disseminate its experiences more widely in the international community.

The original objective of PfE was to foster private sector participation in MSPEs, with four focus areas:

1. Identify, test and apply principles and models for successful educational partnerships involving the private sector, civil society, international organizations, donors and governments
2. Promote the value of multistakeholder partnerships and the benefits of private sector involvement in these partnerships
3. Enhance the capacities of key stakeholders to establish and implement their own effective MSPE models
4. Contribute to a greater global understanding and coordination of MSPE initiatives<sup>51</sup>

A programme secretariat consisting of GEI and UNESCO personnel was established to oversee the day-to-day activities of PfE. Similar to the GEI country initiative model, PfE relied on its convening power and relationship brokering to engage organizations and drive the work of the PfE.

### Origins and Aims

Partnerships for Education was derived from experiences gained in delivering the GEI country initiatives. It was built on a desire among all those involved in the GEI Steering Board to share the good practices learned through these initiatives, disseminate them more widely, and determine whether they could be rolled out for implementation in other countries.

In July 2004, the Forum participated in a session, *Partnerships with the Private Sector in Education for All*, at UNESCO's fifth Working Group Meeting on Education for All (EFA) in Paris.<sup>51a</sup> The Forum subsequently participated in a side event on PPPs for education at UNESCO's fourth High-Level Group Meeting on EFA in Brasilia in November 2004. One of the outcomes was a suggestion that UNESCO could contribute to the Forum's work in disseminating information about successful PPPs in education.

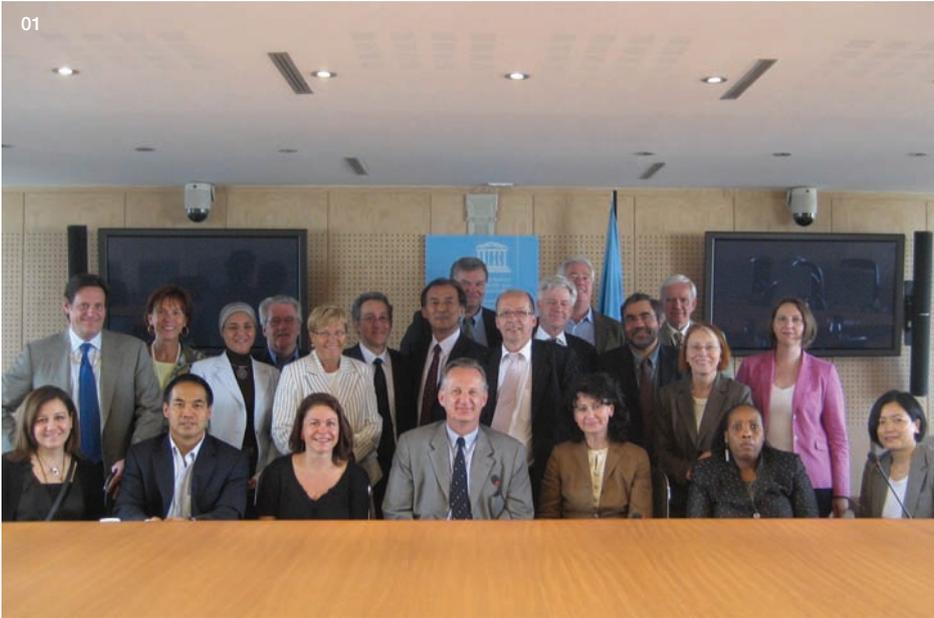
Peter Smith had just been appointed as UNESCO's new Assistant Director-General for Education and was very interested in working more closely with the private sector and the Forum. In a follow-up meeting in late summer 2006 with Peter Smith, the concept for launching what became Partnerships for Education was born. A memorandum of understanding between the Forum and UNESCO was signed in January 2007.

One of the lessons learned from this partnership between the GEI and UNESCO is the critical importance of creating shared understandings at the beginning of any partnership initiative. "Our partnership with the World Economic Forum was about the Partnership for Education. We were not operationally involved in GEI. It was a direct continuation of the EFA movement, which was about partnership and broadening this partnership by involving the private sector – we had not been particularly successful at this," commented Svein Osttveit, Chief, Strategic Planning and Monitoring, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Paris, in an interview in April 2011. "Working with the Forum was a way to involve the private sector more," he added.

<sup>51</sup> Partnerships for Education Memorandum of Understanding between the World Economic Forum and UNESCO, January 2007.

<sup>51a</sup> Partnerships with the Private Sector in Education for All

01



**01:** PfE Task Force Meeting at UNESCO headquarters, July 2009

Nevertheless, the distinction between PfE, the GEI and the Forum was not clear to everyone at UNESCO. Ostveit noted, “In the distinction between PfE and GEI, our main concern was PfE. I understood this, and so it was not a tension for me. I know that from some other key members... there was a tension.”

Some of those involved within UNESCO had hoped that the partnership would help UNESCO gain access to further potential partners for the organization. As the main person within UNESCO working on PfE on a day-to-day basis, Dominique Morisse suggested that the main reason UNESCO agreed to become a partner of the Forum was the expected “increased contribution from the private sector to education challenges through UNESCO education programmes,” a core objective that she suggests was not fully achieved.

Morisse also confirmed that, while this expectation was not met, there were many other positive advantages that came from working with the Forum, particularly in helping people at UNESCO to better understand how the private sector approaches education and partnerships. Moreover, it was beneficial for UNESCO that the new Director-General, Irina Gueorguieva Bokova, was able to participate in the World Economic Forum Annual Meetings in 2010 and 2011, and to meet and engage with other leaders interested in educational agendas.

02



**02:** Irina Gueorguieva Bokova, Director-General, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Paris, at the Annual Meeting 2010

## Approach and Methodology

Until 2007, little had been published or disseminated about the GEI's educational partnership model. In 2007, the GEI engaged Tom Cassidy, at the time with Harvard's Graduate School of Education, to undertake a review of the GEI's country education initiatives and summarize the findings in a model that could be widely shared. This document became central to the emerging identity and practice of PFE (for further information, see the section entitled Delivering Educational Partnerships: Solutions and Challenges).

Given the importance of ensuring collaborative buy-in for the PFE work programme by all of its partners, especially in terms of combining UNESCO and Forum interests, a series of meetings was held in 2007 to craft a framework that would guide the programme, its monitoring and evaluation.<sup>52</sup> The main purpose of PFE was defined as follows, "to foster private sector participation in multistakeholder partnerships for education (MSPEs)", with the intention that this would contribute to achieving UNESCO's six EFA goals. These goals would be delivered through six main outputs:

1. Creating a sustainable framework for the PFE initiative
2. Identifying core principles and models of successful educational partnerships
3. Awareness-raising of the value of private sector contributions to MSPEs
4. Having an effective communication and outreach strategy
5. Contributing to the enhancement of the capacities of key stakeholders to establish their own effective MSPE models, and facilitating the implementation of such models
6. Contributing to greater global understanding and coordination of MSPE initiatives<sup>53</sup>

Each of these outputs provided a distinct workstream for the initiative. Partners became involved through the creation of technical advisory groups (TAGs) for each output, with the secretariat identifying the organizations that needed to be involved in each and then inviting them to participate. To do this, a set of ethical principles and practices for the partnership was created that emphasized the importance of inclusivity, complementarity, transparency, accountability and sustainability.<sup>54</sup>

Some 40 partners drawn from governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations, and representing Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and Latin America engaged in PFE.

<sup>52</sup> This framework was based on the Logical Framework (Logframe) Approach that identifies clear goals, purposes, outputs and activities for the initiative, as well as verifiable indicators, means of verification and risks and assumptions for each. A logframe is a management tool used mainly in the design, monitoring and evaluation of international development projects.

<sup>53</sup> As summarized in the PFE Project Logframe, February 2007; the actual outputs in that document are simplified here for clarity.

<sup>54</sup> Five principles underlie the creation of our partnerships:

Inclusivity – no partner gains exclusive rights from belonging to the partnership.

Complementarity – we should work collaboratively with existing educational partnership programme; we must identify our core niches; we need to do what others do not do, or do it better.

## A Framework Based on the Logframe Approach

A clear organizational structure for the initiative was developed that continued until the end of the GEI in 2011. In hindsight, however, uncertainties in the governance structure at the beginning, particularly in terms of the wider relationships between UNESCO and the Forum, should have been worked through more carefully. The urgency with which partners wanted to deliver something concrete meant that certain critical issues were insufficiently addressed, which contributed to some of the later misunderstandings.

Interestingly, this reflects a fundamental difference in approach between the private sector and international organizations. The former are keen to focus on quick and innovative delivery, even though this may not always succeed; the latter tend to insist on consultative processes that take longer, but eventually produce a sustained output.

## Concepts and Models

The GEI completed the Cassidy review of its own partnerships alongside, but distinct from, the PfE workstream. Nevertheless, the findings of that report had a strong influence on the ways in which PfE began to conceptualize educational partnership models. A significant output of PfE were three pieces of research: a report<sup>55</sup> on models of educational partnerships, a report<sup>56</sup> on monitoring and evaluation, and a resource guide or toolkit<sup>57</sup> for delivering partnerships for education. Key findings from each of these are summarized below.

*New Partnerships for EFA: Building on Experience* sought to provide an easy-to-read analysis of existing work that had been undertaken on educational partnerships. It was intended to be the basic building block on which further work by PfE could progress. Drawing on a selection of previous studies, the report suggested MSPEs have comparative advantages in the following five areas:

1. Making education relevant for the economy
2. Innovation
3. Programmes targeted at specific groups
4. Technology, financial and management techniques
5. Improving the learning environment<sup>58</sup>

The report also argued that six broad themes are essential for MSPEs: a definition of needs; ownership by stakeholders; conscious focus on impact; strong regulation and accountability; sustainability; and monitoring and evaluation. The report argued that, despite these points being made regularly, there was still insufficient attention paid to them in practice. In conclusion, the report made the following recommendations: there needs to be early agreement about partnership principles, and whether or not partnerships are the best way to deliver the intended outcomes; regulatory environments must be supportive; and there needs to be a clear understanding of opportunities, costs and benefits of engaging in partnerships.

A key feature of the report was that it included 11 case studies of MSPEs selected by the TAGs and made available online. This was the initiative's first attempt to provide systematic information on MSPEs available as examples of good practice. In seeking to identify such case studies, it became evident that there were insufficient monitoring and evaluation studies of MSPEs, and it was difficult to draw out their critical success factors.

Transparency – we need to have a clear framework through which partners are chosen, and through which their contributions and expectations are published.

Accountability – we are accountable not only to UNESCO and the World Economic Forum, but also to our end users and stakeholders.

Sustainability – we need to ensure that any initiatives that we put in place are designed to be sustainable or completed within a specified time period.

<sup>55</sup> Draxler, A. *New Partnerships for EFA: Building on Experience*, 2008. Paris and Geneva: UNESCO IIEP and World Economic Forum.

<sup>56</sup> Marriott, N., Goyder, H., *Manual for Monitoring and Evaluating Educational Partnerships*, 2009. Paris and Geneva: UNESCO IIEP and World Economic Forum.

<sup>57</sup> Cassidy, T., Caldwell, M., *Partnerships for Education: a Resource Guide (draft)*, April, 2011, Paris and Geneva: UNESCO IIEP and World Economic Forum.

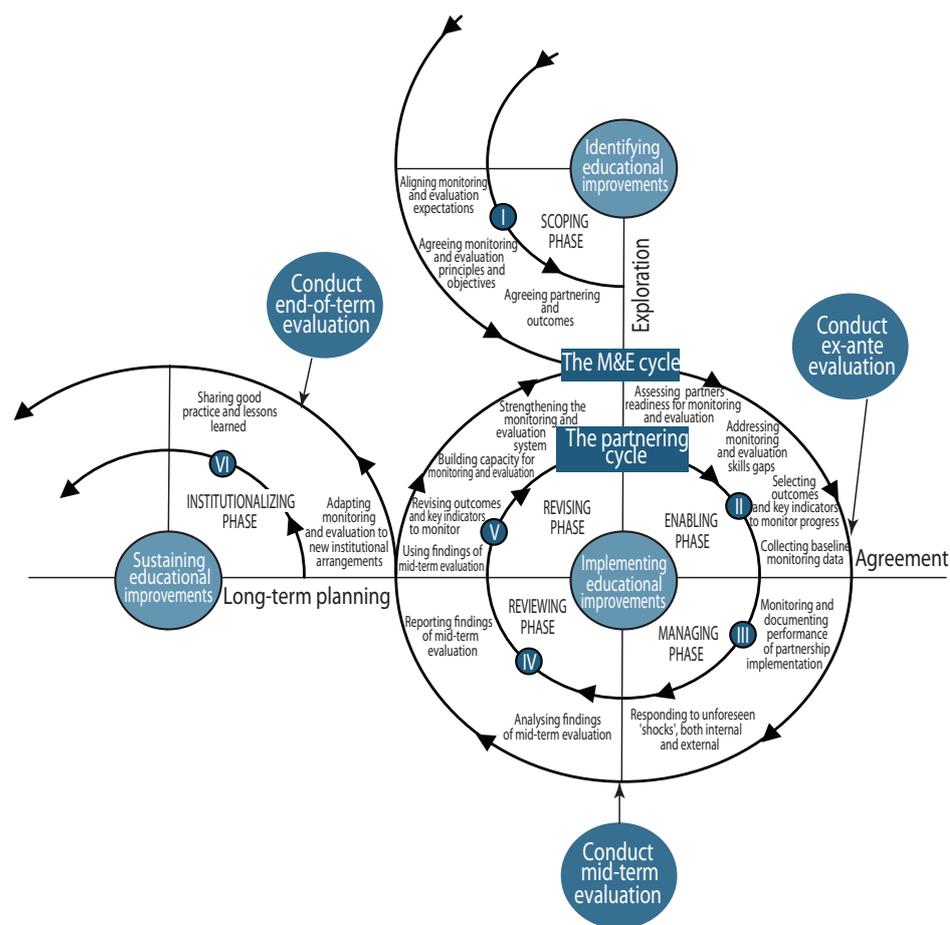
<sup>58</sup> Draxler, A., *New Partnerships for EFA: Building on Experience*, 2008. Paris: UNESCO IIEP; Geneva: World Economic Forum.

Partnerships for Education commissioned the *Manual for Monitoring and Evaluating Education Partnerships*.<sup>59</sup> As well as providing a review of existing literature on the subject, the manual was intended to be highly practical and include six tools for use by those involved in educational partnerships:

1. Prompts for assessing monitoring and evaluation attitudes and perceptions among prospective partners
2. A template for a monitoring and evaluation statement as part of a partnership agreement
3. A template logic frame for selecting multistakeholder partnership for education outcome indicators and performance targets for monitoring
4. A checklist for preparing a partnership-monitoring data collection and analysis plan
5. A checklist for evaluating a partnership's strengths and weaknesses
6. Guidelines for communicating monitoring and “evaluation as part of moving on”.<sup>60</sup>

The manual included a complex model (see Figure 3) showing where monitoring and evaluation fit in the partnering cycle, drawing primarily on the IBLF model (see Figure 2).

Figure 3: Where monitoring and evaluation fits the partnering cycle



Source: Marriott, N. and Goyder, H. (2009) *Manual for Monitoring and Evaluating Educational Partnerships*, Paris and Geneva: UNESCO IIEP and World Economic Forum, p.38.

<sup>59</sup> Marriott, N, Goyder, H., *Manual for Monitoring and Evaluating Educational Partnerships*, 2009. Paris: UNESCO IIEP; Geneva: World Economic Forum.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

The manual was intended to be a tool to encourage others to implement more effective partnerships, drawing on the expertise of all those on the TAG who were contributing to this element of PfE.

A further step in this direction was taken by the third publication, *Partnerships for Education: a Resource Guide*. From the earliest stages of PfE, a strong case had been made that the initiative should build on the existing work of the GEI to create a toolkit for anyone interested in MSPEs to help them draw from previous experience. The guide draws on excerpts from some 120 documents relating to MSPEs and provides a wealth of useful materials for those involved in such partnerships.

### Awareness Raising and Communications

In the early days of PfE, the need to undertake practical advocacy activities was clearly recognized, as was the need to have both an internal and external communication policy associated with the initiative within UNESCO and the Forum. Over time, these distinct elements blended together, and the clarity of the original framework was blurred. Insufficient attention was paid to developing comprehensive communication programmes within the leading organizations to ensure that other staff members recognized the importance of the work being done in education. This was commented on by many of those interviewed and may have detracted from the initiative's ability to advocate such partnerships at the highest level.

Challenges in delivering the external communications strategy typified some of the difficulties of working in partnership to create effective communities of practice. It was agreed early on that there needed to be a high-quality interactive website or portal for the initiative (<http://www.pfore.org>).

Although the relevant TAG spent considerable time designing the site to meet the needs of users, ultimately the solution was not as satisfactory as had been hoped. This reflected difficulties in hosting the portal within UNESCO's web environment, but also resulted from complexities in managing the partner contributions necessary for its development. The resultant site made available all of the outputs of PfE, as well as useful examples of case studies, relevant partnership documents and practices. It also provided a means for members to engage in discussions.

Between 2008 and 2009, the GEI was eager to engage new partners to broaden its base beyond its foundations in technology and education. This had been identified as a need by all of the existing partners, and was important in building a coalition for education. As part of the process, new partners were invited to engage in PfE, particularly in taking forward the TAG responsible for communication. However, there were two challenges with such a process.

First, it was time-consuming for the secretariat to explain to new partners the history of the initiative and why certain decisions had been made. This was exacerbated when new personnel from existing partners came to TAG meetings insufficiently briefed. They needed inculcating into the institutional culture that had emerged over the years. The turnover of personnel is a critical feature of partnerships that needs to be planned for effectively.

Second, insufficient time and attention was paid to working closely with the partners and stakeholders, particularly with the development of the initiative's communication strategy. This ultimately meant that PfE did not create as effective a communication strategy as had been originally intended.

The prime lesson to be learned from PfE's internal experiences is that all educational partnerships need to place considerable emphasis on communication, both internally and externally, and on developing clear and comprehensive strategies for advocating the value of what they are doing to ensure senior leadership buy-in. This requires considerable resourcing in terms of finance and staff time allocated to these tasks. The core PfE team was very small with an insufficient number of staff involved full-time in delivering its ambitious aims.

## Capacity Building and Implementation

Initially, when PfE was conceived, there was an aspiration to identify and work with those providing capacity development in partnership delivery to help stakeholders implement MSPEs. For this reason, partners such as the IBLF and InWEnt were seen as an integral part of the initiative. The intention was to use the knowledge of the partners and capture key concepts in PfE publications and the PfE portal through which communities of practice could emerge. However, delays in delivering on the earlier outputs and lack of staff resources meant that little progress was made on this front.

It was not until another of the GEI's workstreams, the Global Education Alliance (GEA), began that this aspect of PfE's original vision began to be delivered. The creation of this new initiative caused some confusion, especially between staff at UNESCO and the Forum, because UNESCO colleagues felt that it should have been part of PfE, whereas senior managers at the Forum envisaged it as being a distinct strand of the GEI and a response to the delays in advancing the work of PfE.

## Main Partnership Challenges in Implementing Partnerships for Education

The majority of those interviewed did not have a good grasp of what the PfE initiative was and, consequently, scored it as neutral in terms of its achievement. This reflected confusion with the Global Education Alliance, but also the lack of an effective communication strategy for PfE.

From UNESCO's perspective, Svein Osttveit summarized: "I honestly thought it was excellent. To me, building up operational partnerships that go beyond the declaration is very, very difficult, and we have lots of experience of this in UNESCO. I think we had a work plan and worked through it and managed to achieve most of the results. That deserves very high praise. Meeting people in the TAGs was a very good way of meeting new people. UNESCO is often stuck with its traditional partners, and so work with new private sector people in an established partnership network is something that UNESCO has not had much opportunity to do. For advocacy and development purposes, it was good to have this."

Olav Seim, UNESCO, was more reserved: "We did not manage to turn it into the platform for dialogue. It became too mechanical, focusing on products instead of making it a more real true partnership for dialogue and knowledge exchange. That is what we are hoping to do now in the next phase. The next phase depends on commitment from the companies, if they want to commit. It is clear that the Forum will not take a strong role. We do not want to drive this. It has to be based on a real wish from companies. I will be quite clear about this. We see lots of interest from some companies to maintain this."

From the private sector there were also mixed views. Julie N. Clugage, Strategic Alliances Manager, Emerging Markets Platforms Group, Intel Corporation, USA, who had been involved since the beginning, commented: "I feel it was helpful in certain ways, creating a framework for what we wanted to do. There was no established process for the private sector to collaborate with UNESCO, and it created a way of working with them. It created a new mindset. But, because of lack of follow up, it really did not achieve its stated objectives."

Based on the interviews conducted for this report, five conclusions were gleaned from the practice of the PfE about the wider challenges facing educational partnerships that bring together international organizations, donors, the private sector and civil society.

**It is important to see a project through to fruition and, when changes occur, update the strategy and recommunicate it clearly.** PfE had a clear plan and strategy when it began, but external factors, lack of clarity about senior leadership buy-in and the lack of resources to fully implement the initiative meant that energy was diverted to other activities, and the modified strategy was not sufficiently communicated to key stakeholders.

**An effective external and internal communication strategy is needed.** Although the original concept of PfE emphasized the need for a good communications strategy, it was given insufficient priority in practice. Communication is crucial, not only in sharing information about how to deliver partnerships more widely, but also within the parent organizations to ensure continuity of support from senior management. Of particular importance is the need for all partnerships to inculcate new partners, as well as new representatives from existing partners, into the collective history and modus operandi of the initiative, so they can contribute effectively to its delivery.

**One should not engage partners that do not have the core competencies required.** In all partnerships, there is a natural tendency to work with existing partners. However, these partners might not always be the best choice, and their failure to deliver can seriously damage the viability of an initiative. To overcome this, one must ensure that the best possible partners are chosen and resist external pressure to select organizations for reasons other than their ability to deliver appropriately and effectively.

**Firm governance principles should be established from the outset, and a proper understanding of the principles by all involved parties must be ensured.** The complexities encountered when seeking agreement on the initial governance principles were another challenge in implementing the PfE. This reflects the different speeds at which the private sector and international organizations operate, but the lack of clarity and understanding among those associated with governance of the initiative gave rise to numerous subsequent criticisms.

**Sufficient resources need to be identified and costs estimated in advance so partners can commit to their desired level of participation.** Over time, it became clear that PfE was insufficiently resourced and, as new ideas emerged, companies had to dig deeper into their pockets to try to respond. While PfE was in many ways exploratory, the costs of its workstreams should have been more carefully estimated in advance so those involved could evaluate and decide on the level of participation they wanted.

## The Global Education Alliance and the Education for All Fast Track Initiative

As an outcome of a high-level private meeting at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2007, the GEI was invited to take part in a major donor conference in Brussels that spring to support the EFA Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI).<sup>61</sup> The GEI's subsequent participation and follow-up discussions with Desmond Birmingham, then-head of FTI, led to the creation of the Global Education Alliance (GEA). Building on the lessons learned from the GEI country initiatives, the objective of the GEA was to complement the existing work with PfE with a new partnership involving the private sector, the donor community and government to accelerate achieving the EFA objectives.

Critical to this model would be the leadership and engagement of the country local education group (LEG), the coalition of bilateral donors working on education development in the partner country.<sup>62</sup> A key driver of the GEA was to provide the opportunity for the models developed in the GEI country initiatives to be replicated elsewhere without the need for the Forum's involvement, with the LEGs acting as the in-country facilitator role.

A key success of the GEA was that it broke down many of the misunderstandings between bilateral donors and senior executives in the private sector. By discussing issues concerning how to deliver a development-focused intervention, each side gained a greater understanding of the other's perspectives and potential contributions. In a GEA meeting between donors and private sector representatives on September 2007, participants provided a substantial breakthrough in that the representatives of bilateral donors began to see the private sector as a potential contributor of technical, management and project delivery services.

<sup>61</sup> Renamed the Global Partnership for Education in autumn 2011.

<sup>62</sup> The **Local Education Group** (LEG) is the foundation for the Partnership governance at the country level. It comprises the government of the developing country partner, donors, multilateral agencies, CSOs, etc. These partners work together to develop, appraise, endorse, implement, monitor and evaluate education plans. From <http://www.globalpartnership.org/about-us/partnership-structure>

Following extensive discussions between donor representatives and the GEI's private sector partners, Rwanda was selected as the pilot GEA country. With the support of the Rwandan government and the UK's Department for International Development, which was serving as the lead donor of the Rwanda LEG, the initiative was launched in spring 2008.

By design, the Forum's role in GEA Rwanda was limited and relied on the leadership of the LEG to coordinate activities with the partners and government. However, the reliance on the LEG to provide local leadership and on-the-ground coordination proved difficult due to the lack of resources and the constant changing of Ministry of Education personnel. Eventually, it was UNESCO's education partnership capacity-building programme, CapEFA, that took forward some of the agenda of the GEA by holding successful workshops in Rwanda with the Ministry of Education in December 2010 and April 2011.

Some of the challenges in the engagement with Rwanda are captured in Svein Osttveit's recollections: "Perhaps we had not sufficiently prepared ourselves into entering real operational work at a country level, which is very difficult. We were perhaps a bit naive thinking otherwise. With all the positive enthusiasm in PfE and GEI we thought it would be easier than it was. We underestimated the complexities," he said.

"The common situation in countries most in need is weak government and weak capacity. This means that it will be very difficult. The enormously difficult challenge in countries that need it most [is that] you need more time than most partners are interested in; and put this down in a normal project document. The field is characterized by rapid change of ministers and political instability. If you want to be in it, you have to be extremely well-prepared," he added.

Although the Rwanda GEA did not develop into a full-scale country initiative as originally envisaged, a major accomplishment was the support that GEA provided in the development of a national ICT strategy for Rwanda's education sector plan that has been recently ratified by the Rwandan government.

“

**One area where not much linkage has been made is seeing at a country level some of the private sector as partners in supporting and investing in education.**

”

Carol Bellamy  
Chair, Education for All - Fast-Track Initiative  
(EFA FTI), USA



01: Global Education Alliance meeting in Rwanda

Another outcome of the GEA's activities was a closer involvement of the private sector in the EFA-FTI's governance structure. In 2008, building on the engagement with the FTI, the Forum through the GEI was nominated and accepted as a member of the FTI Board. From 2009 to 2010, FTI underwent an internal reform process and a concrete outcome of the Forum's involvement was to help in the creation of a new permanent seat on the Board that would be shared by the private sector and private foundation community. As of 2011, some 20 companies and foundations are formal members of the constituency, and are represented on the Board by the Hewlett Foundation, Intel and Microsoft. This has laid the groundwork for ensuring the use of a multistakeholder approach to education development.

Given that the private sector is actively engaged in many developing countries, it is evident that there are still ways to be found through which multistakeholder partnerships can be delivered more effectively through the EFA-FTI process.

## Entrepreneurship Education

### The GEI's Entrepreneurship Education Initiative

With 2007 marking the midway point of a 15-year global effort to achieve EFA and the Millennium Development Goals for education, it was clear that significant challenges remained in the areas of education inclusion, quality, literacy, capacity, skills development and financing. While education alone is one of the most important foundations for economic development, entrepreneurship is a major driver of innovation, employment and economic growth.

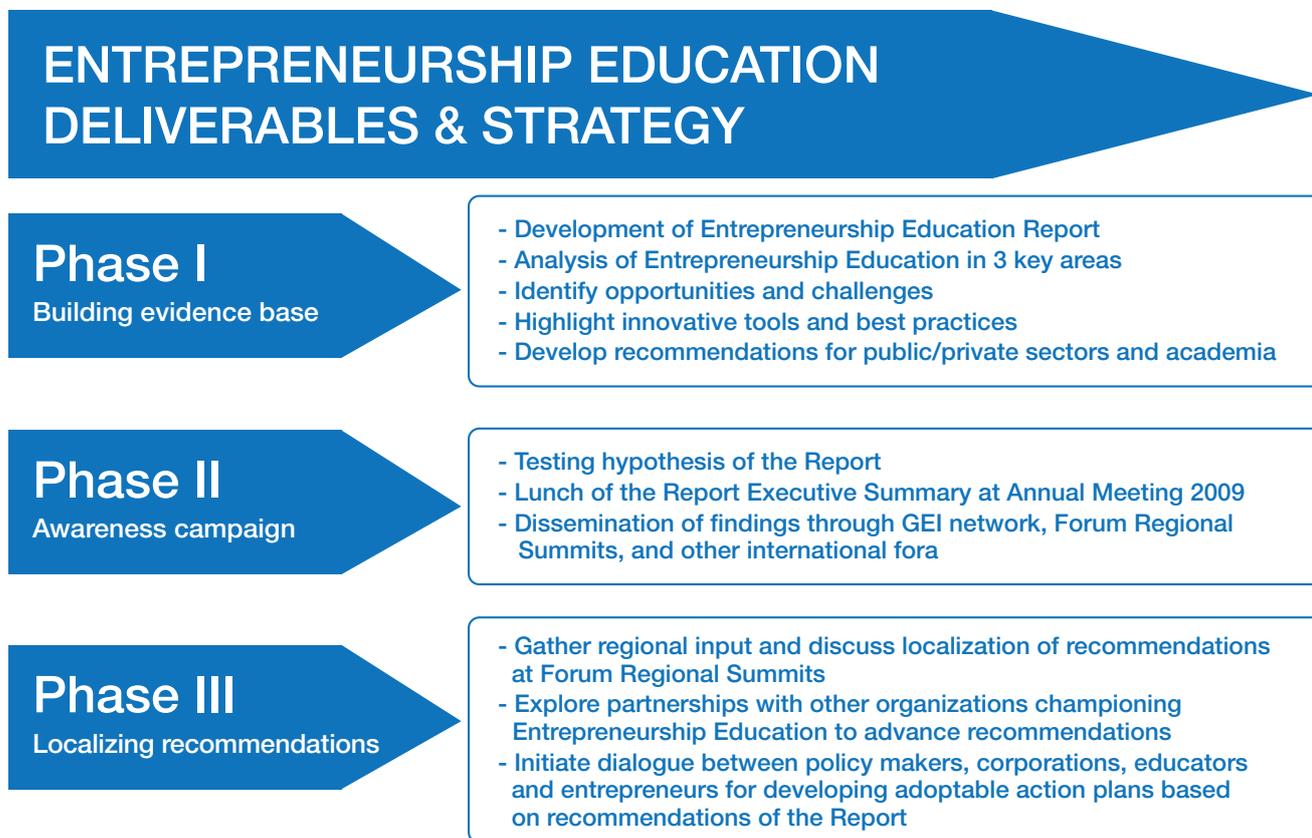
Entrepreneurship education plays an essential role in shaping attitudes, skills and culture – from the primary level up. It can be the catalyst to develop the new, innovative models necessary to achieve EFA and the Millennium Development Goals for education, while creating the engine for economic growth and employment.

In early 2008, the GEI Steering Board mandated that the GEI embark on a new workstream to highlight entrepreneurship education as one of the issues requiring greater global awareness and collaborative action. While entrepreneurship education is rapidly growing and drawing the attention of policy-makers, universities and companies, there was little research and documentation on models that work effectively and how they can be scaled. The Entrepreneurship Education workstream had four objectives:

1. Highlight and raise awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship education in spurring economic growth and achieving the Millennium Development Goals
2. Consolidate existing knowledge and good practices in entrepreneurship education around the world to enable the development of innovative new tools, approaches and delivery methods
3. Provide recommendations to governments, academia and the private sector on the development and delivery of effective education programmes for entrepreneurship
4. Launch a process in which the recommendations can be discussed on the global, regional, national and local levels and implemented with the involvement of key stakeholders

The workstream was composed of three phases (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: The three phases of the Entrepreneurship Education workstream



The resulting report, *Educating the Next Wave of Entrepreneurs: Unlocking Entrepreneurial Capabilities to Meet the Global Challenges of the 21st Century*,<sup>63</sup> examined the challenges and opportunities related to entrepreneurship education in the K-12, higher and non-formal education systems. The report's outlined four calls to action, detailed below.

<sup>63</sup> See *Educating the Next Wave of Entrepreneurs: Unlocking Entrepreneurial Capabilities to Meet the Global Challenges of the 21st Century*, World Economic Forum. [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/IP/AM11/EE\\_Full\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/IP/AM11/EE_Full_Report_Final.pdf), 2001.

# Key Calls to Action

from *Educating the Next Wave of Entrepreneurs: Unlocking Entrepreneurial Capabilities to Meet the Global Challenges of the 21st Century*

## 1. Transform the Educational System

It is not enough to add entrepreneurship on the perimeter – it needs to be at the core of the way education operates. Educational institutions at all levels (primary, secondary and higher education) need to adopt new methods and tools to develop the appropriate learning environment for encouraging creativity, innovation and the ability to think creatively to solve problems. Embedding entrepreneurship and innovation, cross-disciplinary approaches and interactive teaching methods will require new models and frameworks. It is time to rethink the old systems and “reboot” the educational process.

## 2. Build the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Entrepreneurship thrives in ecosystems where multiple stakeholders play key roles. Academic institutions are central to providing entrepreneurship education. However, actors outside of education systems are playing an increasingly important role in working with formal and informal educational programmes, as well as reaching out to target groups that have been underserved and/or socially excluded. A thriving entrepreneurship ecosystem requires collaboration and multistakeholder partnerships, particularly between academia and business.

## 3. Strive for Effective Outcomes and Impact

Greater clarity is needed on the purpose and goals of entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education concerns the development of attitudes, behaviours and capacities at the individual level. Inherently, it is about leadership and the application of skills and attitudes, which can take many forms during an individual’s career, creating a range of long-term benefits to society and the economy. Developing and implementing a broader framework for assessing entrepreneurship education is necessary to capture a richer and more nuanced set of outcomes.

## 4. Leverage Technology as an Enabler

The parallel development of ICTs and media has changed the landscape, providing an opportunity to create greater access and scalability for entrepreneurship education. The ICT industry has been proactive in working with users, content developers, educational institutions, policy-makers and others to frame a set of opportunities that can be disseminated to those who would benefit most from it. The full range of implications for enterprise and entrepreneurship education needs to be further investigated, particularly in developing economies where scaling is critical.

The launch of the report in April 2009 marked the beginning of a global awareness process leveraging the Forum’s convening power, including its regional meetings in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and India, as well as through other events organized by key constituents and Partners of the Forum. These included: the Global Business School Network (GBSN) Conference in Cape Town; Operation Hope Global Financial Literacy Summit in Washington DC; UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education in Paris; and Stanford University Technology Ventures Programme (STVP) Roundtable on Entrepreneurship Education in Palo Alto, California.

At Forum meetings in 2010-2011, three one-day roundtables were held in Brussels (May 2010), Marrakech (October 2010), and Rio de Janeiro (April 2011). The roundtables explored the role and impact of entrepreneurship in each region (Europe, MENA and Latin America, respectively), and developed a plan for concrete actions and next steps. The design and implementation of the roundtables were based on ensuring local expertise and ownership from the onset.

- Planning for each roundtable began with the identification of a core group of GEI Steering Board partners who would commit to anchoring the roundtable design
- Non-business organizations based in the region, with the mandate and interest to coordinate the outcomes of the roundtables, were identified to chair the roundtable planning process

- Together with the chair and GEI Steering Board partners, an advisory group of 20-25 leaders from academia, government, business and civil society specific to each region was created to help in the roundtable design process; this process began two to three months before the roundtable
- The outcomes of each roundtable were captured in a *Manifesto for Entrepreneurship Education and 21st Century Skill Development*<sup>64</sup>, which called for specific actions to advance entrepreneurship education in each region
- Advisory group members and participants in each roundtable were invited to form an action group for the region, with the chair of the advisory group becoming the chair of the action group; the chair of the action group had the responsibility to reconvene the action group for post-roundtable discussion and action; by design, the action groups would operate with relative independence and minimal Forum support



**01:** Entrepreneurship Education roundtable in the Middle East, Marrakech, October 2010

**02:** Entrepreneurship Education roundtable in Latin America, Rio de Janeiro, April 2011



<sup>64</sup>See the GEI final report on the Entrepreneurship Education workstream, [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GEI\\_UnlockingEntrepreneurialCapabilities\\_Report\\_2011.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GEI_UnlockingEntrepreneurialCapabilities_Report_2011.pdf)

The action group approach has proved an effective model to catalyse local ownership and post-roundtable action, with Microsoft and Deloitte chairing the Europe Action Group, Injaz Al-Arab chairing the MENA Action Group, and Endeavour/UNESCO chairing the Latin America Action Group. This new methodology, focusing on local ownership within a regional consortium approach, is a model worth further exploration in future partnerships.

Hoda Baraka, First Deputy to the Minister of Communications and Information Technology of Egypt and Director, Egyptian Education Initiative (PMO), encapsulated the entrepreneurship initiative and its initial success: “The report ... offers practical recommendations and approaches to specific target audiences: policy-makers, academia and the private sector, as well as many case studies and examples. Phase II has focused on bringing together stakeholders ... to identify concrete actions to be taken in selected regions around the world through a series of high-level roundtables. The goals of the roundtables are to build-up on the report’s recommendations to develop a set of locally relevant action plans for different regions around the world and to create a set of stakeholders committed to driving those actions in the region.”

#### Reflections on Entrepreneurship Education

Members of the GEI involved in its entrepreneurship initiative were positive about its contribution, especially as it had originated as a direct response to the GEI Steering Board’s mandate. However, some had concerns about how the generated momentum would be maintained.

Stasha Fyfe, Community Investment Program Manager, Deloitte, commented: “It’s most important to consider what will happen next and what impact it will have in regions and countries. There seems to be strong momentum, particularly in Latin America. The roundtables were very successful in bringing people together. How they carry that energy forward will be the most important outcome.”

The new way in which the Forum sought to embed the findings through regionally-based activities acted as a catalyst and possible model for future work. Andreas Cox, JEI Program Manager (2003-2006) and Associate Director, GEI (2010-2011), said in an interview in 2011: “It will remain to be seen what the regional groups will achieve – they could reach for the skies and make it proactive or it could just be something that promotes ideas on a local basis. [The] MENA and LA model with regional anchoring is good.”

For the Forum, the Entrepreneurship Education work marked a logical continuation of the GEI evolution in its mission to transform education systems. With the country initiatives creating the framework for a multistakeholder partnership intervention in education, and the PfE and GEA initiatives providing a platform for scaling, the Entrepreneurship Education workstream moved the GEI’s focus for the first time from the “how” to the “what”.

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**As a result of these roundtables, manifestos have been created for each region and Action Groups of key stakeholders are continuing to work together to pursue specific recommendations on the regional level. The Forum continues to provide an important global platform which enables multi-sector stakeholders to work together to address the changes needed in education systems and to contribute towards building the entrepreneurial ecosystem.**

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Karen E. Wilson

Founder of GV Partners, Adviser and Board Member, EFER; Senior Fellow, Kauffman Foundation, Switzerland; Co-Author, *Educating the Next Wave of Entrepreneurs*, 2009; Facilitator, Entrepreneurship Education Roundtables, 2010-2011

# Delivering Educational Partnerships: Solutions and Challenges

This section focuses on the solutions and challenges involved in implementing the Global Education Initiative, and on educational partnerships in general. It draws on Tom Cassidy's review of the GEI country model to provide recommendations about delivering educational partnerships that emerged from the GEI's country initiatives in Jordan, Egypt and Rajasthan, and subsequent developments in each of these countries.

Drawing extensively on comments from our interviews of the many partners involved with the GEI, it explores three elements that were important for the successful delivery of aspects of the GEI: a clear and effective project management structure; the importance of charismatic and committed individuals; and the need to establish clear communication strategies that support the building of trust.

The section tackles the many challenges that need to be overcome for these partnerships to be effective. Among the most important of these are difficulties in ensuring mutuality of interests, long-term sustainability, managing the relationships between different types of stakeholders, and ensuring effective resource flows. It also draws together the comments of respondents about the role of the GEI and the Forum in delivering educational partnerships.

Figure 5: The main elements within the Global Education Initiative

Elements within the World Economic Forum's Global Education Initiative	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Jordan Education Initiative (JEI) <sup>1</sup> ( <a href="http://www.jei.org.jo/">http://www.jei.org.jo/</a> )	■	■	■	■	■				
Rajasthan Education Initiative (REI) ( <a href="http://www.rei.org.in">http://www.rei.org.in</a> )			■	■	■	■			
Egypt Education Initiative (EEI) ( <a href="http://www.eei.gov.eg/">http://www.eei.gov.eg/</a> )				■	■	■	■		
Palestine Education Initiative (PEI) <sup>2</sup> ( <a href="http://www.pei.gov.ps">http://www.pei.gov.ps</a> )				■			■	■	■
Partnerships for Education (with UNESCO) ( <a href="http://www.pfore.org">http://www.pfore.org</a> )					■	■	■	■	■
Global Education Alliance/Education for All Fast Track Initiative						■	■	■	
Entrepreneurship Entrepreneurship Initiative							■	■	■

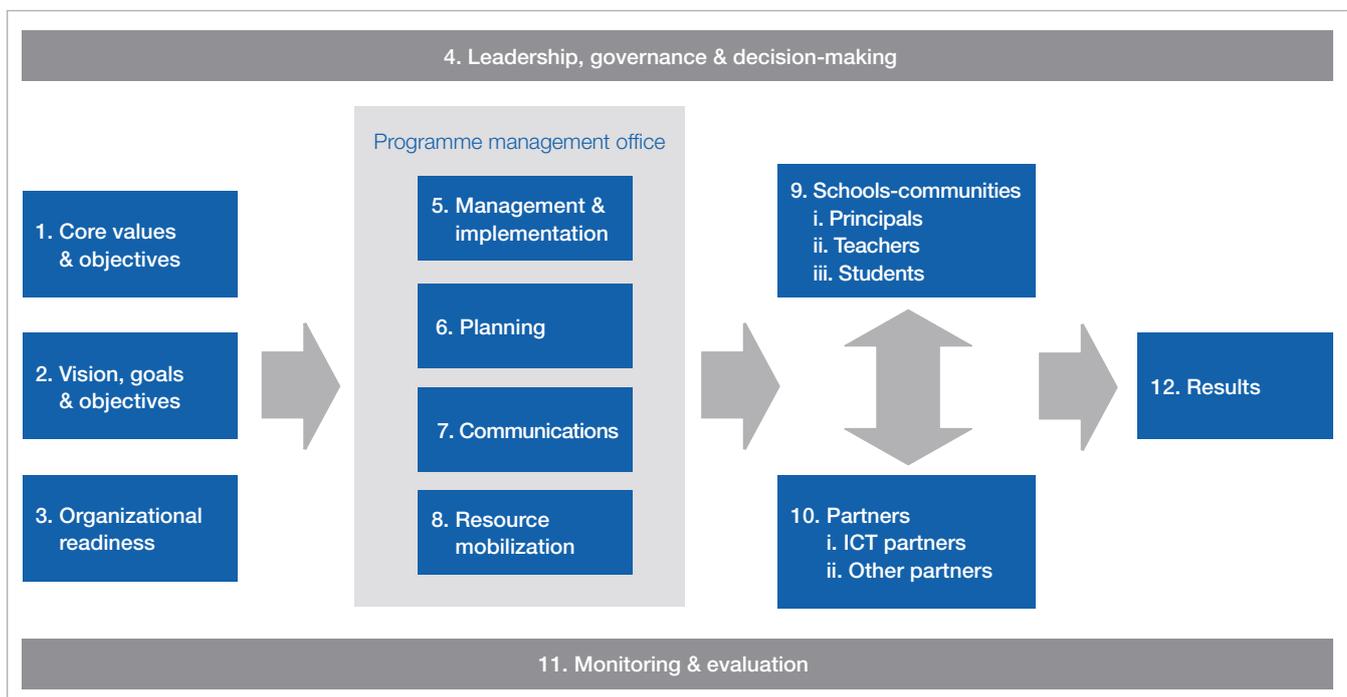
<sup>1</sup> The JEI ceased to be an active Forum supported initiative in 2006 but continues to this day as a standalone independent entity

<sup>2</sup> The PEI was halted as an active Forum supported initiative in 2006 due to the Middle East political situation. However it continues to this day as an initiative driven by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education

## The Cassidy Model of the GEI's Country Initiatives

In 2007, Tom Cassidy undertook detailed field research and conducted interviews to develop a model of the GEI that would bring together the experiences of the initiatives that had been undertaken in Jordan, Rajasthan and Egypt.<sup>65</sup> It is the first synthesis of the GEI's work, and provides an invaluable source of material about the way these initiatives were developed.<sup>66</sup>

Figure 6: Tom Cassidy's model of the Global Education Initiative's country initiatives



Source: Cassidy, T. (2007) *The Global Education Initiative (GEI) Model of Effective Partnership Initiatives for Education*, Geneva: World Economic Forum.

Cassidy's model is summarized in Figure 6, which indicates the 12 main components that were common to all of the initiatives, grouped into five main clusters:

1. The core of the model consists of the interactions between the schools/communities (component 9) and the partners in the initiative (component 10). This emphasizes that, to be successful, educational partnerships must concentrate overtly on the ways partners can contribute to educational outcomes.
2. The representation of the results (component 12) at the right side of the model highlights that the focus must be on the ultimate goals of the initiative. This emphasis is a key difference from the IBLF circular model presented in Figure 1.
3. The foundational components of the model are shown on the left (components 1-3): the need for core shared values and agreed objectives; the importance of vision, goals and objectives; and the need for all of the organizations involved to be ready for the initiative. These are the preconditions for success.

<sup>65</sup> Cassidy, T., *The Global Education Initiative (GEI) Model of Effective Partnership Initiatives for Education*, 2007. Geneva: The World Economic Forum.

<sup>66</sup> Subsequent external reviews funded by USAID and GeSCI have explored specific aspects of the delivery and implementation of the Jordan and Rajasthan initiatives respectively in detail, but these did not attempt to draw wider conclusions about the lessons learned from the GEI as a whole. See Light, D., Method, F., Rockman, C., Cressman, G.M., Daly, J., *Evaluation of the Jordan Education Initiative Synthesis Report: Overview and Recommendations to the Jordan Education Initiative*, April, 2008. Jordan: Education Development Centre, with RTI International for USAID; *A Review of the Rajasthan Education Initiative (REI) by the Global e-Schools and Communities Initiative*, September 2009. GeSCI.

4. Components 4 and 11 sit above and below the initiative and, according to Cassidy, are the glue that holds it together and keeps it on track. Appropriate leadership, governance arrangements and decision-making must be present, and there is an important need for effective monitoring and evaluation so the initiative can be redirected according to lessons learned along the way.
5. There are the practical activities that are essential for managing the initiative's implementation on a day-to-day basis: management and implementation; planning; communications; and resource mobilization. The model emphasizes that these need to be coordinated in a cohesive project management office (PMO), where effective decisions can be made swiftly.

Cassidy drew seven conclusions about the lessons learned and promising practices encountered in the Jordan, Rajasthan and Egypt Education Initiatives. It is worth citing these in full, because they provide the context against which ensuing discussion can delve into further detail:

1. Multistakeholder partnerships can be effective in supporting ongoing education reform efforts and adding value to the activities and public images of partners
2. Strong, systemic management is essential for a successful initiative
3. Broad and balanced partnership involvement on initiative leadership and management teams is important
4. Changing teaching practices in schools and classrooms is more complex and challenging than is typically understood or planned for
5. Teachers and principals are at the heart of the change process and their active participation is critical to the initiative's success
6. Sustained partnership involvement is critical to the long-term success of initiatives; it must be carefully managed and should not be taken for granted
7. Monitoring and evaluation and considerations of scale-up and sustainability are essential to the long-term success of initiatives and have yet to be given the attention required<sup>68</sup>

Three themes can be identified from these conclusions. First, **educational partnerships must focus on education above all else if they are to achieve the outcomes intended.** Partnerships are often created for the sake of the partnership, rather than for the intended educational benefits. One of the remarkable things about the GEI was that the core original partners – Cisco, Intel and Microsoft – were heavily committed to using their technical expertise to enhance educational delivery. This convening of like-minded interests was critical to the success of the initiatives.

Second, **delivering multistakeholder educational partnerships is difficult and time consuming.** Because education itself is highly complex and cannot be transformed overnight, having partners that are willing to be involved in a sustained way over the long term is crucial for success.

Third, **the importance of high-quality monitoring and evaluation cannot be over-emphasized.** Despite many pleas for more effective monitoring and evaluation of development interventions, especially the use of technology in education partnerships,<sup>69</sup> it is remarkable that this lesson has not yet been learned. In this context, the toolkit on monitoring and evaluation published by the Partnerships for Education Initiative is worthy of much wider distribution.<sup>70</sup>

Finally, Cassidy drew five important conclusions about the ways in which the GEI differed from previous initiatives that had set about delivering partnerships. First, he suggested that it involved a diversity of partners in shared and coordinated programmes that addressed educational reform. Second, he noted that the GEI's definition of partner was much broader than had been the case. Third, he emphasized that the GEI explicitly involved partners in defining what education reform should be about, and in determining how it might be implemented. Fourth,

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Wagner, D. A., Day, B., James, T., Kozma, R. B., Miller, J., Unwin, T. *The Impact of ICTs in Education for Development: a Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook*, 2005. Washington DC: Information for Development Programme/World Bank. Geldof, M., Grimshaw, D., Kleine, D., Unwin, T., *What are the key lessons of ICT4D partnerships from poverty reduction? – Systematic Review Report for DFID*, February, 2011. London: UK Department for International Development.

<sup>70</sup> Marriott, N., Goyder, H., *Manual for Monitoring and Evaluating Educational Partnerships*, 2009. Paris: UNESCO IIEP; Geneva: World Economic Forum.

## Role of the Project Management Office

“The model schematic also includes the designation of a project management office or unit (PMO or PMU). This is to acknowledge the critical importance of a highly capable management capacity and a clearly designated full-time project management office/unit cited by most partners in all three current initiatives as being critical for the success of the initiative. The complexity of these initiatives, the number of partners involved, the multiple lines of activity and the new approach to organizational change and educational development that they reflect requires highly competent proactive and ongoing management.

“Inclusion of the PMO in the model is not, however, to suggest or endorse the creation of management units independent of existing government structures. On the contrary, the building of the capacity of the government to mount, manage and maintain such initiatives is an explicit objective of the GEI. Project management offices/units are found in all three current initiatives; each is addressing this issue differently, but in all cases current project management offices/units are linked in one way or another with existing government operations and include government staff on their teams and/or oversight committees.<sup>67</sup>

## Attributes of a Good Partner

- Deliver on their commitments
- Actively participate in initiative planning and implementation activities
- Stay involved when things are not going well
- Commit to involvement for the long haul
- Trust the other partners
- Respect the work of other partners
- Work not only independently, but also cooperatively with other partners to achieve shared results
- Be upfront about motivations for participation<sup>71</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Cassidy, T., *The Global Education Initiative (GEI) Model of Effective Partnership Initiatives for Education*, 2007. Geneva: The World Economic Forum.

<sup>71</sup> Cassidy, T., *The Global Education Initiative (GEI) Model of Effective Partnership Initiatives for Education*, 2007. Geneva: The World Economic Forum.

the GEI initiatives were also characterized by the high degree of trust involved in delivering them with minimal government interface. Finally, there was a strong commitment to the notion that all partners can and should gain value from being involved in the partnership.

## Key Lessons about Delivering Successful Educational Partnerships

The interviews conducted for this review asked a range of questions concerning why partners chose to work with the GEI, and what were its achievements and weaknesses. This section summarizes main lessons learned by those involved in implementing the GEI's educational partnerships.

Three important contextual points need to be made at the beginning. First, the GEI began primarily as an initiative based on the use of partnerships to incorporate ICT in educational transformation. It was therefore quite similar to other initiatives at the time, particularly the UK government's *Imfundo* initiative, launched in 2001, which sought to create partnerships to deliver ICT-based activities for education in Africa. Interestingly, *Imfundo* also arose in part from conversations between John Chambers and then-UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. The GEI can thus be seen as part of a wider strategic effort by ICT companies to transform education. Only later, particularly from 2007 onwards, did a wider diversity of partners become involved – a source of added complexity and tension.

Second, in its early stages, the GEI was seen as a public-private partnership. The notion of multistakeholder partnerships only emerged later. It was fascinating to see how the vocabulary changed as the conversation developed. According to Cisco's Adrian Godfrey: "We started off with a concept of multistakeholder partnerships and pushed it through as an agenda. We felt that the [civil society sector] played a crucial role. It was documented as a PPP initially, and PfE changed the vocabulary."

Third, the extent of knowledge about the GEI varied widely among respondents. Only those who had been actively involved on the Steering Board had a sense of the initiative as a whole; even some of those did not have a sense of all the different dimensions of the GEI. A key challenge, observed by many respondents, was that the range of initiatives in which the GEI was involved became so diverse that it was difficult for most partners to comprehend all of its manifestations.

This was particularly the case with respect to the GEA and PFE. Despite regularly publishing reports and hosting update meetings, the message about the GEI's activities was not broadcast to a sufficiently wide audience. This was partly due to the lack of a clear, formal communications strategy. In addition, demonstrating GEI's action and impact within the rhythm of the Forum's Annual Meeting cycle was a challenge, as multiple years are often required before impact can be measured.

Moreover, it is striking that experts in educational partnerships without a close working relationship to the initiative knew little about the GEI. Fernando Reimers, Ford Foundation Professor of International Education and Director, International Education Policy Program, Harvard Graduate School of Education, USA, who served as the Chair of the Forum's Global Agenda Council on Education Systems in 2010-2011, commented: "I am unable to answer any of those questions. I just do not have enough knowledge of the GEA – what the initiatives are, or what their impact or lack thereof has been – to be able to have an informed conversation on the subject."

**Careful Project Management Is Essential for the Success of an Educational Partnership.** This was one of the most important and consistent elements taken from discussions on delivering the GEI's initiatives. It is as true for the country initiatives as it was for PFE or the GEI. Ana Sepulveda, Project Manager for the GEI (2008-2010), commented: "Governments must have dedicated, smart and fully-engaged teams to ensure continuity and goal attainment."

Deloitte's Stasha Fyfe emphasized: "Dedicated project management support is crucial and should never be underestimated. Having resources to drive action is really important, even at a local level." Cassidy's report emphasizes the crucial importance of the GEI's central project management office, which ensured that the various elements of the partnership were delivered according to plan.

**Individuals Play a Critical Role.** It is essential to have charismatic leaders who inspire people to develop educational partnerships and help them through difficult times. This was typified by the role of people such as John Chambers, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Cisco, USA, and H.M. King Abdullah of Jordan in launching the JEI.

Microsoft's Greg Butler also emphasized the importance of high-level support. "Educational change is hard work and you need the top and the bottom supporting it. If Queen Rania had not supported, it would not have been so successful – and the teachers were also very excited about it," he said. Another clear statement came from Emile Cubeisy, IV Holdings, and initial JEI Program Director: "Find a committed, passionate champion like Tae and Cisco. None of this would have happened without their support. I remember the first time I met Tae in London. What fuelled me was the fire in her eyes and that she was responding to what I was saying. That is the type of spark that makes all of the difference to social innovators. That breath of fresh air [creates] the confidence."

Continuity of participation is also needed, especially in terms of project management and Steering Board or Technical Advisory Group meetings. For example, the frequent changes of government personnel in the Rajasthan Education Initiative meant it was often difficult to maintain continuity of approach in the initiative; likewise, the changing membership of the Technical Advisory Groups meant that valuable time was spent updating new members and providing them with explanations of why previous decisions had been made, resulting in less progress achieved at meetings. "You need permanent partners – lots came in and out, [one firm] one day, this firm another day – it seemed like every meeting there was a new face and a face gone," noted Gerri Elliot, Executive Vice-President, Strategic Alliances, Juniper Networks.

It is crucial that teams delivering partnerships consist of individuals with the right skill sets. In several of the GEI initiatives, the right mix came about mainly by chance. However, it should be observed that there is no right mix of individuals for an educational partnership, and the team chosen for any particular initiative must be tailor-made to reflect the particular project objectives.

**Visibility through External and Internal Communication Strategies is Important.** Despite the successes of the GEI, little is known about the initiative's achievements in the wider educational or development communities beyond the countries where it operated.<sup>72</sup> One of the main reasons the GEI established PFE was to more widely disseminate information about the GEI's model and provide increased visibility.

Communication is important not just for promotion of a model, but also because by sharing information it is possible to reduce the amount of duplication that so often happens when implementing educational partnerships. The failure of the PFE's website<sup>73</sup> to take off as a vehicle for disseminating information about MSPEs reinforces the point that communication is vital.

## Other Lessons Learned

Respondents raised many other issues. For example, Because MSPEs are very complex, delivering through partnerships is a lengthy and time-consuming business. "The big thing is that multistakeholder partnerships are not easy – they require a lot of work, but if done properly can show a lot of benefit," noted Rane Johnson-Stempson, Director, Worldwide Education Audience Marketing, Microsoft Corporation, USA.

<sup>72</sup> Although it is a very crude measure, Google Scholar only lists 185 mentions of the Global Education Initiative and many of these are for other initiatives or are written by people closely involved in the GEI.

<sup>73</sup> <http://www.pfore.org>

It is important to have a clear strategy from the start. Nadia Boulifa, Project Manager for the GEI (2007-2008) commented: “Before you start implementing, you should know exactly what you are doing and where – especially when talking about education, which is such a sensitive issue. You really have to do it carefully and with the right people.” Haif Bannayan, Chief Executive Officer of the Jordan Education Initiative, noted, “A clear strategy from the start to end is very much needed. Collectively, we can give good guidance as to what this would look like.”

This was reiterated by Greg Butler, Senior Director, Worldwide Education Leaders Strategy, Microsoft, USA: “One of the key things that came out of it all – to make sure you put in support for the change it is important to embed the right people within the system and for them to make these changes.”

High-level government or public sector leadership and accountability is another necessary ingredient. As Cisco’s Tae Yoo pointed out: “You need the public sector leadership – whoever is going to be responsible and accountable – you need to ensure that they are truly committed and that they are dedicated to the partnership/project, because, often, it is someone’s part-time job. You need to have a team, not just a person.”

Shelly Esque, Vice-President, Corporate Affairs, Intel Corporation, USA, reinforced the importance of government buy-in: “You cannot mandate this type of partnership on a country – they have to want to be involved. People in Rajasthan felt they had to do this; in Jordan, they said they wanted help. Where it was good it was because the true owner of the public sector was deeply engaged”.

The need for a trusted third party was frequently cited as crucial for opening doors to partners from other sectors. Julie N. Clugage, Strategic Alliances Manager, Emerging Markets Platforms Group, Intel Corporation, USA, explained: “It is helpful to have a well-known credible third party to convene investors in education. I learned that it is easier to enter discussions with development agencies if you are part of such a group.”

Finally, respondents underlined that partnerships must be properly resourced. In terms of delivering partnerships, if the true costs of managing the partnership are included, they may not always be the cheapest option available. Their value lies in the benefits they provide for the partners over and above the delivered project or initiative.

## Challenges in Implementing Educational Partnerships

In asking those involved in the GEI to reflect on the initiative’s main challenges, a set of subtle factors emerged. They indicate some of the most critical issues that those involved in crafting educational partnerships need to be aware of. Six factors were particularly highlighted.

**Ensuring long-term sustainability was the most often cited challenge for an initiative.** Even when sustainability issues were clearly addressed in the early stages of a project, nearly all of those interviewed raised the question of sustainability in one form or another. In part, this is due to the fact that implementing educational change cannot be achieved quickly, and partners often lose interest as time progresses. Given the turnover of staff in most organizations, it has to be expected that a champion in one organization will not stay for the duration of an entire partnership intervention. This needs to be factored into the planning process for any educational partnership.

Related to long-term sustainability is maintaining the excitement and interest. Nadia Boulifa, Project Manager for the GEI (2007-2008), observed: “The main challenge educational partnerships face is to manage the excitement you have in the first phase and the passivity you always get in the second phase. People say that education is a priority, but you do not see actions. I do not know where this comes from, but it always struck me that when you start they all agree it is a priority, but when we try to get them to act you always face challenges. I don’t think this is the same for other global issues”. This was emphasized by other partners including Shelly Esque of Intel, who suggested that a key challenge revealed through the GEI’s work was the “ability to sustain beyond the first flush of excitement.”

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**Partnership requires clear definitions of expectations from all partners that should be presented and discussed in an open and transparent way; and describe a concrete plan.**

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Svein Osttveit

Chief, Strategic Planning and Monitoring,  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Paris

Most of GEI's direct interventions lasted for only three years, a relatively short time to achieve success in education. A real challenge for those involved in the GEI was that it intended to act as a catalyst for the country initiatives. Some commented that the length of the Forum's brokering role should have been considerably longer. Moreover, it is unclear whether those involved fully appreciated what the departure of the Forum would mean to the everyday running of the initiative, and the high-profile publicity that the Forum could attract. Microsoft's Greg Butler commented: "One of the biggest challenges is taking a long-term view. I believe that even within the GEI, which did have a long-term approach, it ended up as being a short-term view."

The underestimated difficulty of reaching common agreement on the goals and activities to be undertaken in an initiative was identified by respondents as another challenge. This is exacerbated when new partners come on board some time after the start and seek to renegotiate the initial agreements. As Microsoft's Johnson-Stempson asserted, the main challenge was "coming together with a common vision, individual and shared goals, and success factors. What is it that we are really trying to accomplish? We were often not clear on that, which is why things did not happen." Olav Seim, UNESCO, commented similarly when asked about the biggest challenges facing educational partnerships: "I think it is a more honest and frank discussion when some joint objectives are identified."

Closely linked to the need for shared vision is the importance of balancing the different interests of the stakeholders, and determining what levels of contribution are expected from particular partners. Emile Cubeisy, IV Holdings, and initial JEI Program Director, commented that the main challenge was balancing the varying agenda of multiple stakeholders and changing the culture of stakeholder organization. "The biggest challenge we had was trying to stop [some partner companies] giving you a solution in a box," he said.

This echoes findings in previous research on partnerships that it is crucial to have a clear and transparent acknowledgement of the different interests underlying stakeholder engagement in partnerships.<sup>74</sup> In practice, this is easier said than done, and representatives at meetings may not be in a position to articulate the exact interests of their organization.

Identifying resources and focus is another key challenge. Many educational initiatives rush to start implementing activities without sufficiently thinking through the overall resource implications, and precisely who will deliver what through the partnership. Intel's Julie Clugage identified: "The follow-through, the need for resources and focus. The GEI was never resourced to implement programmes ... we never had a clear mandate of what it was going to achieve. The Forum's charter is to keep partners engaged – if you are always chasing after the next thing, you are never following through on what you said you would do."

Cooperation between private sector partners and relevant national bodies is needed if partnerships are to be effective. It is crucial to involve the right national entities, yet engaging these government departments and organizations could be frustrating for the private sector. From the government perspective, it was equally evident that the private sector did not always appreciate the political and social contexts within which they were operating.

Harry Patrinos, Lead Education Economist, World Bank, Washington DC, commented that one of the biggest challenges is getting the national apparatus to cooperate. "Education systems are so entrenched and inward looking that it is difficult to get something new – especially if support comes from outside the country. It helps to have the head of state and ministers involved a help but it does not necessarily ensure delivery," he said.

As Cisco's Adrian Godfrey suggested, "A natural conflict exists between the private and the public sectors in terms of competition, ownership, funding and, in many cases, a skills and knowledge element." Multistakeholder partnerships should be able to break down these conflicts, but it remains a real challenge.

Future organizations working in this field should pay more attention to getting the different partners to understand each other's interests and constraints early on. This requires rapid building of trust and, as Olav Seim of UNESCO commented, there is often "a lot of mistrust that should not be there. The private sector must respect the role of the public sector to be act as the quality and standards assurance".

<sup>74</sup> See, for example, Unwin, T., *Partnerships in Development Practice: Evidence from Multi-Stakeholder ICT4D Partnerships in Africa*. 2005. Paris: UNESCO for the World Summit on the Information Society.

Many of those involved in implementing partnerships for education tend to leave the monitoring and evaluation until the end, when there is often little money left. As Ana Sepulveda, Project Manager of the GEI (2008-2010), summarized: “Monitoring and evaluation ... are very important, but everyone leaves it to the end. As time and resources are typically scarce, the activity cannot be done as it should be.”

Without effective baseline surveys, it is impossible to tell what impact an initiative has had; without effective monitoring, there is no in-built system for ensuring effective learning and improvement.

Ashish Garg drew attention to the need for such initiatives to be aware of ongoing changes taking place in the wider educational, political and technological system: “It is almost impossible to stop a state in mid-track – and start afresh. Things continue to happen around you and you have to be cognizant of this movement in the ecosystem. ICTs will continue to be integrated with or without an initiative like this or a national policy.”

“The fact is, however, that ad hoc integration of ICTs often tends to be grossly counterproductive to the overall growth and development of the society. The REI was an incredibly powerful initiative, but it was also ahead of its time. It questioned the status quo and wanted some deeper changes in the system. To the credit of the REI, despite the change in political environment and lack of systems, several projects started by the REI continue to function and progress. Educate Girls Globally is one such initiative that works in Pali and Jalore, saving thousands of little girls from child marriage by sending them to schools.”

## The Contribution of the World Economic Forum and its Global Education Initiative

Respondents identified five aspects of the Forum’s role that were crucial to the GEI’s success: its ability to convene, its perceived neutrality, its ability to focus on key issues, its influence in highlighting the importance of a topic, and the visibility it can provide.

The Forum’s convening power brought together people whose interests went beyond local markets and regional sales teams. Although many organizations espouse the value of education, it is not always easy to attract them to delivering practical solutions. The Forum’s perceived neutrality ensured that the GEI sought to craft multistakeholder partnerships designed to create solutions that would be of benefit to all involved. The Forum’s commitment to addressing key issues meant that it was able to keep people focused and committed to the central agenda.

The GEI sought to emphasize the importance of education in shaping social, political and economic change. While there were some who felt that the Forum could have done more in this direction, other respondents expressed the opinion that the GEI had raised the profile of partnerships in education. The Forum not only helped to ensure that partnerships in education were raised on the global agenda, but also brought stakeholders together to ensure that change did happen.

Related to (but distinct from) the GEI is the Forum’s Global Agenda Council on Education Systems. Because of the Forum’s focus on education, resources from the GEI team could be allocated to manage the Council. The work of the Council – in particular, a paper on global education reform in 2009 – has allowed the Forum to continue engaging many of the world’s thought leaders on education.

In 2010, Members of the Global Agenda Council on Education Systems issued a global call for action that proposed a two-pronged approach for the redesign of educational systems to enhance quality education: a redesign of the international architecture for education; and a redesign of four educational building blocks, including the financing system, assessment, the sharing of educational resources for free, and a library of pedagogical and professional development resources.<sup>75</sup>

By implementing projects and sharing information about their successes and failures, the Forum was able to make people from different backgrounds more aware of the potential impact of partnerships for education. This is different from merely raising the importance of educational transformation in the political arena. This in itself brought added value because, by making this potential visible, other partners were encouraged to come on board.

<sup>75</sup> *Global Agenda Council on Education Systems: Global Redesign Proposals*, 2010. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

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**Evaluation is important because, otherwise, we do not know if it has an effect, and so we cannot make the argument that it should be replicated.**

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Harry Patrinos  
Lead Education Economist, World Bank,  
Washington DC

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**The fact that [the Forum] brought a series of partners together, mainly from the private sector, and worked as a team around some very strategic and well-defined issues – that’s a major, major achievement. Development is often characterized by separate piecemeal interventions by partners that are only accountable to themselves – this does not add up to a broader impact.**

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Svein Ostveit  
Chief, Strategic Planning and Monitoring,  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Paris

# Multistakeholder Partnerships for Education: Looking to the Future

This report aimed to place the experiences of those involved in delivering the GEI into a wider context of the use of such partnerships in development practice. It has done so by concentrating on the successes of the GEI and drawing attention to challenges and frustrations that were encountered along the way. The ultimate benefit of the GEI may not be in the delivery of the initiatives under its umbrella, but in the experiences of partnership-building that those involved gained, and how they can be promulgated in the future. This section makes recommendations about the use of multistakeholder partnerships in a variety of scales.

At the beginning of this report, we drew attention to some of the factors considered essential for the effective implementation of multistakeholder partnerships. Seven factors that are widely seen as being important are trust; clear output-based focus for the partnership; enthusiastic, able and committed leaders; clear emphasis on sustainability from the outset; balance between the demand for and supply of resources; investment of time in partnership building and networking; and a transparent and ethical basis for the partnership.

Focusing on education, Draxler's review<sup>76</sup> of multistakeholder partnerships for education prepared as part of the PFE highlighted the importance of defining needs; ownership by stakeholders; conscious focus on impact; strong regulation and accountability; sustainability; and monitoring and evaluation. These factors are widely accepted as being significant for effective delivery of educational partnerships and were addressed by most of those interviewed during the compilation of this report.

It is worth reiterating the key emerging conclusions developed during the implementation of the country initiatives. The four key factors are government ownership at the highest level; ensuring alignment to the national sector plans; the crucial role of partnership and programme management; and the role of the partnership broker. The experiences of those involved in delivering the GEI reflect the importance of these factors, but suggest that a more nuanced approach to the implementation of multistakeholder partnerships for education might be warranted in the future. The most pertinent features of such an approach are detailed below.

## The Need for High-level Leadership

Leadership by heads of state, CEOs of major corporations, leaders of global civil society organizations and the heads of international organizations is crucial if education is to receive the attention it requires and multistakeholder partnerships are to be used to implement effective change.

As the Forum's Global Agenda Council on Education Systems argued: "There is ... widespread consensus that the Millennium Development Goals for Education will not be achieved without conspicuous leadership and heightened commitment – coupled with bold actions executed in the next five years. There is a pressing case for urgent action to strengthen international cooperation and for new designs for multistakeholder initiatives to advance education".<sup>77</sup>

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**Jordan, led by His Majesty King Abdullah, has embraced these opportunities.**

**Education, innovation and information technology are the watchwords of our reforms. We may be a small country, but we have big ambitions for our young population. That is why, in 2003 we proposed a bold educational experiment to the Forum – combining public sector commitment with private sector creativity ... and using new technology to inspire new ways of teaching.**

**Almost three years later, we can all be proud of the Jordan Education Initiative's achievements: 100 Discovery Schools, new e-curricula in subjects like Math, Arabic, Science, IT, English and Civic; more than 2,000 teachers trained; and more than 50,000 students taught.**

”

H.M. Queen Rania Al Abdullah of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
2006

<http://www.queenrania.jo/media/speeches/global-education-initiative-wef-world-economic-forum-davos-switzerland>

<sup>76</sup> Draxler, A., *New Partnerships for EFA: Building on Experience*, 2008. Paris and Geneva: UNESCO IIEP and The World Economic Forum.

<sup>77</sup> *Global Agenda Council on Education Systems: Global Redesign Proposals*. 2010. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

In its call for the creation of a new learning society, the Council advocates that: “Guided by an understanding of local traditions and circumstances, the development of a Learning Society will require leadership from a new multistakeholder coalition who together bring the legitimacy, innovation and resources that can make it a reality”.<sup>78</sup> The Council suggests that governments, educational institutions, social innovators, the private sector, social investors, informal learning providers, cultural institutions and learners must all be involved.



**01:** The Global Agenda Council on Education Systems, 2009-2010

#### A Partnership Broker that Is Knowledgeable about the Education Sector

The Forum served as a key broker to bring together the right people at the right time to implement the many initiatives included under the GEI umbrella. However, few experienced partnership brokers are able to support and implement such educational initiatives. One of the original purposes of PfE was to develop such a capacity, but lack of resources meant that no such brokers were trained.

Given the popularity of partnerships in development practice, partnership training courses are available, such as those provided by the IBLF's Partnership Brokers Accreditation Scheme. However, there are important differences between partnerships for education and those implemented in other areas of development, such as healthcare or the environment.

Experience in brokering educational partnerships is therefore essential if they are to be successful. All too often, enthusiastic people start implementing educational partnerships without sufficient knowledge of what was done before and, consequently, they repeat the same mistakes. For these new partnerships to be successful, sufficiently trained brokers are required to support them. A real challenge is the high cost of training brokers, especially as there are often insufficient resources to cover such costs.

#### A Trusted and Neutral Broker

Simply having a broker who can help bring together a group of organizations able to deliver an educational initiative is not enough. The GEI was trusted and perceived by many to be neutral. As a result, a key achievement was its ability to change the mindsets of many of those involved. Governments, international organizations, bilateral donors and civil society organizations began to appreciate that the key role of the private sector was not just to provide financial resources, but also to bring expertise and new methods of delivering projects.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

Those in the private sector also learned about the complexities faced by governments in poor and middle-income countries in effecting educational change. This would have been much harder to achieve if the Forum had not generated an atmosphere of trust where participants could come together to help craft the initiatives in which they were involved.<sup>79</sup> An essential aspect of its advocacy of multistakeholder partnerships for education is that, for these to be successful, they must involve civil society organizations in their implementation.

Future brokers need to continue this focus on building greater trust and understanding between all stakeholders. Given that their interests can often be diametrically opposed, this will not be an easy task.

### Starting with the Intended Educational Outcomes in Mind

Multistakeholder partnerships for education (MSPEs) should put educational objectives and outputs at their core. This may seem obvious, but it is remarkable how many such partnerships do not do this – a key reason they so often fail. Simply putting computers into schools will not necessarily lead to an improvement in the ability of learners to increase their understanding of a subject, unless the use of computers is embedded into appropriate learning strategies.

If such partnerships begin with identifying the desired learning outcomes, then a good broker can begin to bring together the most appropriate partners needed to implement such change. Instead, educational partnerships are often created the opposite way round because an otherwise disconnected group of organizations wishes to contribute something to education and is not exactly sure how to do it.

### The Central Role of Ministries of Education

In most countries, education is largely deemed to be within the purview of the state. From the above point about educational outcomes being at the heart of MSPEs, it logically follows that ministries of education must be centrally involved in such partnerships. This has been the central element of the GEI's approach to educational partnerships.

Private sector companies sometimes view such ministries in developing countries as slow and inefficient, and seek to bypass them by working with those responsible for the IT sector, or even the head of state's office. However, without the support of educational officials, head teachers, teaching unions, local communities, parents' groups and a host of other educational organizations, they will have little chance of sustained success.

There is an increasing move towards the privatizing education; in the long term, the private benefits of education may be seen as the most important. However, as long as education remains vested in the public sphere, it will be critical for ministries of education to be at the heart of educational transformations promoted by multistakeholder partnerships. It remains an enormous task to bring together in partnership the most appropriate organizations with an interest in education and help them craft initiatives that will truly improve the quality of the learning experience.

### Effective Project Management

One of the most powerful lessons from the GEI is that there has to be an experienced, committed and knowledgeable team in place to manage the partnership and ensure that its educational outcomes are achieved. In some instances, this team can be coincident with, or related to, the partnership brokers, but this need not always be the case.

With the GEI's country initiatives, Forum staff members facilitated the engagement of partners and monitored overall progress, but they never managed the day-to-day delivery of the projects. As with the brokerage of partnerships in education, the project management teams with responsibility for their delivery need to be experienced in the challenges of delivering them.

<sup>79</sup> A key feature of most of the GEI's meetings was to provide opportunities for informal discussions, and all of the Technical Advisory Group meetings were preceded by ice-breaking activities that encouraged the building of trust between participants.

## Adequate Resourcing

Respondents reiterated the need for all involved to be clear from the beginning about the real resourcing implications of the partnership. This requires not only a clear framework with accurate estimates of the eventual costs of each activity, but also a set of commitments by the different partners to provide the required resources at the appropriate juncture. The total costs are often not fully appreciated at the commencement of an initiative, and there needs to be a drip-feed approach to subsequent funding. This can cause tensions and a reduction in the willingness of some partners to continue their engagement.

This raises another important point – additional costs associated with delivering partnerships that must be taken into consideration when brokering them. The Partnering Initiative emphasizes that: “The transaction costs can be high, and often time and energy is wasted on a process of partnership building and management that is not well thought through and/or not professionally undertaken. Even worse, there are many scenarios where there is no process in place at all; it is simply assumed that the partnership will work out of a general sense of good will.”<sup>80</sup>

In some circumstances, crafting educational partnerships will be a more expensive way of achieving the immediate outcomes than would be the case in delivering an activity through a more typical contractual solution. Such costs are often willingly borne by participating partners, who see additional value for themselves being created through their engagement with the other partners. For this reason, it is important to share a clear and transparent input-output or cost-benefit schema among all partners involved at the beginning of any MSPE.

## Consistent Strategy and Flexible Delivery

As educational change is a slow process, the early returns on investment anticipated by the private sector may not be as rapidly forthcoming as some partners would like. It is critically important that educational partnerships have a very clear strategy outlined at the beginning, with well-defined roles and explicit resource expectations for each partner.

The strategy must be strictly adhered to for the intended duration of the initiative, supported by the effective monitoring and evaluation that is essential for measuring the impact of an initiative, and accordingly adjusting its parameters. The precise methods used to manage a project may vary by situation and will undoubtedly reflect the reporting requirements of particular donors and partners. However, there is a need for clear targets and objectives, appropriate resourcing agreements, clarity of roles, risk analysis, means of measuring progress and appropriate timelines.

Getting the balance right in a consistent overall strategy to permit flexibility in delivery is – like many aspects of education partnerships – not easy to achieve in practice. One of the lessons from the PfE process is that, even when a clear strategy is in place at the beginning, those involved should ensure that they stick to it for the intended duration, albeit having appropriate processes in place to measure progress and adjust direction when necessary. Just because a new idea comes along does not mean that the direction of an initiative should change midstream. Consistency in approach and delivery are critically important in ensuring that educational partnerships are effective.

Another dimension is the consistency of partners and personnel involved in MSPEs. Often, a new partner wants to join or there is a need to bring a different skill-set on board as a project develops. Ideally, such eventualities should have been considered at the beginning of an initiative, but this is rarely the case in practice. When a new partner joins, it is essential that time is spent reviewing the process that led to the existing state of the initiative so the new partner fully understands the reasons decisions were made. Otherwise, an immense amount of time can be wasted in clarification; more importantly, mistakes resulting from lack of knowledge on behalf of the new partner can be avoided.

<sup>80</sup> [http://thepartneringinitiative.org/what\\_is\\_partnering.jsp](http://thepartneringinitiative.org/what_is_partnering.jsp)

Many respondents emphasized that partnerships are about people as much as organizations. There are considerable consequences when someone leaves an organization, especially if their knowledge of and expertise in a particular partnership initiative has not been passed on to their successor. The time needed to help new representatives fully understand the reasons an initiative is at a particular point is usually more than people anticipate. Moreover, as partnerships are based on individual trust, a change in personnel can bring considerable disruption to an initiative if the personalities involved are different.

Plans should also be made at the beginning of an initiative for what will happen once the partnership period ends. This almost never happens, and is another reason many initiatives fail to have a sustained impact. Ensuring that plans are made in the beginning for the sustainability of an initiative is often mentioned,<sup>81</sup> but the more subtle point about how to dismantle or manage the transformation of the structures put in place during a partnership's intervention is much less frequently noted.

### Effective Internal and External Communication

For their wider success and to enable those who wish to implement new educational partnerships more effectively, it is crucial that greater attention is given to all aspects of communication surrounding their implementation.

The point made earlier about sharing information with new partners reflects a wider issue related to the communication strategies adopted by multistakeholder partnerships for education. More often than not, these are ill defined or absent. Especially when diverse partners are involved, it is essential that they are kept closely informed about relevant developments taking place within an initiative. A clear approach to information that should be shared, the media through which sharing takes place and the level of input expected with respect to communication is essential.

One of the strengths of the GEI was its regular Steering Board meetings, which convened senior executives from the major international partners. These partners expected regular briefings on each GEI workstream and would swiftly point out any failing to deliver on expected targets. Regardless of the scale, regular and open knowledge sharing of progress – highlighting both the positive and the negative – is needed for success.

External communications are crucial in delivering multistakeholder partnerships for education. This goes well beyond the obvious need to publicize the success of an initiative to guarantee future funding. One of the outcomes of the PfE initiative was the realization that little information is available in a consistent format on the features of and success criteria for such partnerships.

Consequently, there is a tendency for those implementing partnerships to reinvent the wheel and, more often than not, the same mistakes are repeated. The PfE website was intended to help rectify this by making available case study information about different kinds of educational partnerships. But, despite the high quality of the material contained within it, it has failed to gain traction.

## The Global Education Initiative Continues

In summer 2011, the GEI completed its mandate as an active Forum initiative. Several of the GEI workstreams are now continuing independently, with many of the partners still involved.

The Global Education Initiative has helped over 1.8 million students and teachers and mobilized over US\$ 100 million in resource support in Jordan, Rajasthan (India), Egypt, the Palestinian Territories and Rwanda. Today, the GEI engages over 40 private sector partners, 14 governments, 7 international organizations and 20 non-governmental organizations".<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Unwin, T., *Partnerships in Development Practice: Evidence from Multi-Stakeholder ICT4D Partnerships in Africa*, 2005. Paris: UNESCO for the World Summit on the Information Society.

<sup>82</sup> <http://www.weforum.org/issues/education>

“

**Not being well thought through is the issue of strategy and what happens once the programme has ended. Issues around the longer-term impact. Thinking about what happens afterwards.**

”

Haif Bannayan  
Chief Executive Officer, Jordan Education Initiative, Jordan

The experiences of the GEI have shown that there is enormous benefit from implementing educational change through multistakeholder partnerships, but that these are by no means easy to deliver. It is only through such partnerships that the coalition of interests necessary to achieve systemic change can be achieved.

This must be situated within the wider context of international leadership in the field of education. As the Global Agenda Council report previously cited emphasized: “Governmental leadership on the highest level is needed if education is to be thrust to the higher trajectory necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The G20 leadership has the important opportunity to galvanize their support for redesigning education”.<sup>83</sup>

It is remarkable that, despite the importance everyone attributes to education, it does not receive the global attention it deserves. There are signs that this may be about to change. The Education for All Fast Track Initiative has been recently renamed as the Global Partnership for Education (2011), reflecting its belief that it is “a partnership with a long-term future. We are a major funder of education and the only global partnership devoted to getting all children in school for a quality education”.<sup>84</sup> Its country-level governance structure highlights the importance of the governments of developing country partners, civil society organizations, local donor groups and the coordinating agency. Within this framework, the private sector is included only within the context of local donor groups.<sup>85</sup> Nevertheless, the private sector is now represented in the Global Partnership for Education’s global-level governance, and it may be that other strengths that it can bring to educational partnerships will be recognized therein.

Furthermore, major global initiatives have recently emerged to highlight the importance of education at a global scale, notably the Qatar Foundation’s World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) that has been held annually since 2009. WISE seeks to bring together “thought leaders and pioneering practitioners from multiple sectors worldwide to foster new collaborations and develop innovative solutions with the goal of inspiring creative change in education”.<sup>86</sup> The Summit places emphasis on the need to raise political attention on education at a global scale and highlights examples of successful educational initiatives, many of which have been delivered through partnership processes. In 2011, it introduced the WISE Prize as the world’s first major prize for education, which was awarded to Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, the founder of BRAC, formerly known as Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee.

At all educational levels, political leadership is immensely important if any lasting change is to take place. For multistakeholder partnerships to be effectively implemented, they must be championed by those driving the wider educational partnerships forward. Against this wider context, there is a need for a new partnership champion and broker; greater knowledge sharing; and a realization that multistakeholder partnerships are but one element in improving the learning experiences of people across the world. Three important aspects about the future of the multistakeholder partnership agenda should be emphasized.

### A New Champion and Broker for Multistakeholder Partnerships for Education

Multistakeholder partnerships require champions at all levels, and an experienced partnership broker is crucial for their success. Ideally, the champion and broker should be one and the same. While there are many groups and individuals implementing educational partnerships, there are no major initiatives at a global level championing multistakeholder partnerships as espoused by the GEI. To some extent, the vision is being carried forward by UNESCO,<sup>87</sup> and summits such as WISE host sessions and debates on the subject.<sup>88</sup>

However, none of these are providing the brokering function necessary to bring partners together, nurture them and help them deliver major educational initiatives. Likewise, leading brokering organizations have not engaged as much as hoped in multistakeholder partnerships for education. The IBLF’s Partnering Initiative, and its offshoot, The Partnership Brokering Project, have considerable expertise in partnership brokering, but little of their work has been explicitly in the field of education.<sup>89</sup> Hence, a significant gap exists in the current configuration of global organizations working in the field of education.

<sup>83</sup> *Global Agenda Council on Education Systems: Global Redesign Proposals*, 2010. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

<sup>84</sup> <http://www.globalpartnership.org/about-us/our-new-name/>

<sup>85</sup> <http://www.globalpartnership.org/about-us/partnership-structure/>

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.wise-qatar.org/content/about-us>

<sup>87</sup> [http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=54284&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=54284&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

<sup>88</sup> <http://www.wise-qatar.org/content/multistakeholder-partnerships-education>

<sup>89</sup> <http://thepartneringinitiative.org/>

## The Need for Enhanced Knowledge Sharing

Closely linked to the call for a champion broker is the need for increased knowledge sharing about when and how to implement MSPEs. The UNESCO/GEI Partnerships for Education portal (<http://www.pfore.org>) still exists and, given that it contains a considerable amount of useful material on education partnerships including case studies, templates and advice, the potential for the portal to play a global knowledge sharing platform remains. New initiatives would be more successful if information was readily available to them and they could gain from the lessons of others.

Greater openness and knowledge sharing in the field of multistakeholder partnerships for education is required, particularly for effective monitoring and evaluation reports that generate useful insights. The GEI has generated a wealth of information, and both the Forum and UNESCO have done much to make this available through their digital environments and in hard copy.

## Partnerships Are Not the Simple Solution that Many Once Thought They Were

MSPEs are difficult and costly to implement effectively. But the rewards for success are huge, especially in terms of the impact that they can have on learning opportunities for people who previously were unable to experience quality education. Their complexity, the time they take to deliver and the need for continued commitment on the part of partners, mean that they are extremely difficult – and at times frustrating – to deliver.

The initial over-optimism of many people a decade ago, who saw public-private partnerships as being a relatively simple solution to the “problem” of education has long since dissipated. The GEI was born during this tide of enthusiasm and, over the last eight years, those involved in it – from school teachers to CEOs – have continued to commit to its delivery and learned a huge amount about how to implement such partnerships.

The challenge of making education systems fit for purpose remains. By sharing these stories about the implementation of the Global Education Initiative, the authors hope to have offered inspiration and insights that will enable those committed to this challenge to respond.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Models of Partnership

### Circular Models of Partnership

This model focuses on four key stages of scoping and building, managing and maintaining, reviewing and revising, and sustaining outcomes. Critically, the final stage of moving on is conceptualized as leading back into a further phase of scoping a new basis for collaboration, so that it is the partnership itself that is maintained. From such a perspective, various partners involved see value primarily in the partnership for its own sake and wish to find ways of maintaining it. Three key principles of effective partnerships that the IBLF has identified across all scales and contexts are equity, transparency and mutual benefit. These principles are embedded within their definition of what a partnership actually is.

“A partnership is a cross-sector collaboration in which organizations work together in a transparent, equitable and mutually beneficial way towards a sustainable development goal and where those defined as partners agree to commit resources and share the risks as well as the benefits associated with the partnership.”<sup>90</sup>

### Linear Partnership Models

Although the precise intended outcomes of any partnership using the above model would clearly need to be discussed at various stages within it, particularly in the scoping, planning, implementing and measuring stages, it is evident from the nomenclature used in Figure 2 that the core focus is on the actual partnership rather than on any specific development outcomes. Any notion of the actual outcomes or deliverables from the partnership is noticeably absent from the terms shown in the visual image of the model.

In contrast, other models have concentrated much more overtly on the ways in which partnerships can indeed concentrate on intended development outcomes, and these have tended to be much more linear in approach.<sup>91</sup> In such linear models, whether or not the partnership survives beyond the necessary completion of a task is not the core focus, but what does matter is the all-important delivery of some specified development intervention. As will become clear in the chapters that follow, the GEI’s emerging model was in this latter mould rather than in the circular or cyclical stereotype proposed by the IBLF.

Tom Cassidy’s analysis of the GEI country partnership model<sup>92</sup> emphasizes four main stages in the process, beginning with the importance of having values in place, a vision and organizational readiness. Cassidy next identifies the need for a project management office addressing management issues, planning, communications and resource mobilization. This then facilitates the integration of ICT companies and other partners with the needs of schools and communities, which in turn leads to development outcomes or results.

While this overall vision of the way in which educational partnerships can operate is rather different from the circular IBLF model, both have much in common in terms of the key factors that are necessary for effective partnership building and delivery. There is an increasing consensus around some of the most important attributes that are necessary for successful partnership implementation.<sup>93</sup> These include:

- Importance of trust
- Clear output-based focus for the partnership
- Enthusiastic, able and committed leaders
- Clear emphasis on sustainability from the outset
- Balance between the demand for and supply of resources
- Investment of time in partnership building and networking
- Transparent and ethical basis for the partnership

<sup>90</sup> “Our Approach”. The Partnering Initiative, IBLF, [http://thepartneringinitiative.org/what\\_is\\_partnering.jsp](http://thepartneringinitiative.org/what_is_partnering.jsp), 2008.

<sup>91</sup> See, for example, Unwin, T., *Partnerships in Development Practice: Evidence from Multi-Stakeholder ICT4D Partnerships in Africa*, 2005. Paris: UNESCO for the World Summit on the Information Society. For a review of various models, see Geldof, M, Grimshaw, D, Kleine, D, Unwin, T., *What are the key lessons of ICT4D partnerships from poverty reduction? – Systematic Review Report*, February, 2011. London: UK Department for International Development.

<sup>92</sup> Cassidy, T., *The Global Education Initiative (GEI) Model of Effective Partnership Initiatives for Education*, 2007. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

<sup>93</sup> See, for example, “Guiding Principles for Partnerships for Sustainable Development”, United Nations, [http://www.iisd.ca/wssd/download%20files/annex\\_partnership.pdf](http://www.iisd.ca/wssd/download%20files/annex_partnership.pdf), 2002; *Multi-stakeholder Partnerships: Issue Paper*. November, 2003. Kuala Lumpur: Global Knowledge Partnership; Tennyson, R. *The Partnering Toolkit*. London: IBLF and GAIN, 2003; Unwin, T. *Partnerships in Development Practice: Evidence from Multi-Stakeholder ICT4D Partnership Practice in Africa*. 2005. Paris: UNESCO for the World Summit on the Information Society.

## Appendix 2: The Idea of Civil Society

The London School of Economics' Centre for Civil Society (LSE CCS) defines civil society as “the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated”.<sup>94</sup>

Unlike the state, which maintains the power of coercion, or the private sector that is interested primarily in profit, civil society is fundamentally concerned with shared communal or collective action. It is thus generally considered to be a term that can subsume non-governmental organizations (NGOs), unions and similar collective movements at a range of scales from the local, through the national to the global; a parent-teacher association in a school is therefore just as much a civil society actor as is a major international NGO.

The expansion in the number and influence of civil society organizations since the late-1980s has been seen in part as having been influenced by the neo-liberal hegemony in Europe and North America, and the pulling back of the state from many of the areas of activity for which it had previously taken responsibility.<sup>95</sup> The rise of civil society movements has been used by governments as an excuse for not delivering the services that many, especially in some of the poorer countries of the world, believe that they should have.

Civil society has often been seen as a power for good in that it is an essential element of the rising ride of global democracy that can hold governments to account. It should also be recognized that civil society organizations are themselves microcosms of the political challenges of representation and governance associated with such democracies, and are also driven by the need to generate income for their own survival.

<sup>94</sup> [http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what\\_is\\_civil\\_society.htm](http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm), 2005. See also Gawin, D, Gilinski, P., *Civil Society in the Making*. Warsaw: IFIS Publishers, 2006.

<sup>95</sup> For a wider discussion of the emergence of notions of civil society, see, for example, Cohen, J.L, Arato, A., *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Boston MA: MIT Press, 1994. Hann, C.M, Dunn, E., *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models*. London: Routledge, 1996. Ehrenberg, J., *Civil Society: the Critical History of an Idea*. New York: New York University Press, 1999.

## Appendix 3: About the GEI Steering Board

GEI Steering Board companies were drawn from the pool of World Economic Forum Industry and Strategic Partner companies that have an interest in education and agreed to commit the necessary time/resources to support the GEI. The following companies served on the GEI Steering Board:

### GEI Steering Board Companies

Abraaj Capital  
AMD (until 2009)  
CA Technologies (until 2007)  
Cisco\*  
Deloitte  
Edelman  
EMC  
Goldman Sachs (until 2009)  
HCL  
Heidrick & Struggles  
Hewlett-Packard  
Juniper  
Intel\*  
Lenovo  
Manpower  
McGraw Hill  
Microsoft\*  
SAS Institute  
Satyam (until 2009)  
SK Group (until 2010)

\* Member of the GEI Steering Board for the duration of the GEI (2003-2011)

# Acknowledgments

The Global Education Initiative involved many governments, companies, civil society organizations and individuals across the world. We have learned much from their examples and inspiration, and we thank all of those individuals and organizations involved who made the GEI a reality in 2003-2011. We are also very grateful to all those who so kindly responded to our interview questions and shared their insights with us in preparing this report, both formally through responding to our interview questions, and also informally through the many conversations and discussions that have shaped our ideas.

We have written the report so that others may learn from the experiences gained by everyone involved in the World Economic Forum's Global Education in the eight years of its existence between 2003 and 2011. We hope that it will inspire others to build on our experiences, and craft new and exciting multi-stakeholder partnerships that will truly advance the vision of quality education for all.



**Tim Unwin**  
Professor Emeritus,  
Department of  
Geography  
Royal Holloway,  
University of London  
United Kingdom



**Alex Wong**  
Senior Director, Head  
of Centre for Business  
Engagement, World  
Economic Forum

March 2012

## About the Authors

Alex Wong is Senior Director and Head of the Centre for Business Engagement at the World Economic Forum. He led the GEI throughout its entire duration from 2003 to 2011.

Tim Unwin served as Programme Director of the GEI's Partnership for Education initiative with UNESCO in 2007-2008. He is Senior Adviser to the GEI and brings perspective on the character of partnerships and the ways in which they influence wider development processes. He is the chief executive officer of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization.



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World Economic Forum  
91–93 route de la Capite  
CH-1223 Cologny/Geneva  
Switzerland

Tel.: +41 (0) 22 869 1212  
Fax: +41 (0) 22 786 2744

[contact@weforum.org](mailto:contact@weforum.org)  
[www.weforum.org](http://www.weforum.org)