

VIRTUAL WORLD ASSEMBLY

"Strengthening The Role Of Youth In The GCE Movement And Beyond"

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The Global Campaign for Education Virtual World Assembly 23–25 March 2021:

‘Building a Resilient and Engaging Movement’

Summary and structure of event:

The GCE virtual World Assembly (WA) took place from 23–25 March 2021, under the theme ‘**Building a Resilient and Engaging Movement**’. The WA brought together close to 300 representatives of the GCE’s members, from 93 national education coalitions, 17 international NGOs and 14 regional networks, youth-led organisations and teaching professionals, as well as guest observers from the GCE’s strategic partners.

The primary aim of the WA was to allow the GCE membership to endorse the resolution on two proposed constitutional amendments passed at the 2018 WA through a voting process; the first, the increase of the youth board seats from one to two; and the second, a change in the naming of the youth constituency from ‘international and regional youth organisations’ to ‘international and regional youth *and student* organisations’.

In addition to the above, the WA assembly provided a space for members of the GCE to engage in strategic and technical discussions on key issues that relate to its initiatives, commitment to strengthening the GCE Movement to deliver its strategic objectives as a collective. These discussions included i) opening and closing remarks, as well as the political report, by Mr Refat Sabbah, President of the GCE; ii) four plenary presentations and iii) nine breakaway discussions. The discussions were designed to enable meaningful exchanges and engagement between members, foster shared understanding among them and provide an opportunity for strategic reflection across the Movement.

Aim of this paper:

The purpose of this paper is to capture in summary the lessons learned and takeaways from the above discussions, as well as recommendations for the GCE’s way forward. The paper will serve as a basis for consideration by the GCE Secretariat and more in-depth discussions in the future.

Summary of proceedings: Day 1

1.1. Plenary session 1: The journey of youth and students since the Youth Caucus in Kathmandu, Nepal, 2018

Since the inaugural Youth Caucus in Nepal in 2018, a precursor to the Global Campaign for Education's 6th World Assembly, the Covid-19 pandemic has drastically changed the education landscape across the globe. Its impacts have been devastating, with approximately one billion learners affected by the fallout. Contrastingly, however, the pandemic also offers an opportunity for innovation and, in particular, for the GCE to reframe its strategies to account for this kind of uncertainty and disruption. While the GCE has largely been able to remain resilient in the face of the pandemic, its members must still come together to forge strong partnerships and build upon its culture to ensure it is able to respond to this historic challenge of Covid-19 and its widespread impact as well as to ensure that no further losses to education are experienced. To do so, the GCE must realign its advocacy policies and promote inclusivity, particularly of the youth and vulnerable, marginalised communities.

As such, this session set out to help the GCE shape the criteria of its membership and to devise new organisational and operational strategies to ensure that it remains relevant in the current global climate, while maintaining alignment with its broader objectives. Priority must be given to harnessing the potential of youth and students to take a leading role and drive the Movement towards bringing about meaningful change. Speakers from the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE), African Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA), Send My Friend to School and members of coalitions in the MENA region and El Salvador shared their experiences of how they are working towards this goal.

1.2. Breakaway discussion 1: Mapping and developing representative structures and spaces for youth and students around the world

1.2.1. Summary of breakaway discussion

The GCE aims to strengthen its collaboration with youth and student organisations, in order to strengthen the work of the Movement overall. To do so, this breakaway discussion allowed the GCE to map youth and student involvement across national, regional and global levels by identifying the actors within youth and student movements. In turn, this will help to further develop an inclusive representative structure for youth and students. As part of this mapping exercise, representatives from several youth and student organisations across the regions, including Studentenes og Akademikernes Internasjonale Hjelpesfond (SAIH) and the Global Student Forum (GSF), shared evidence of the work they have done to influence education policy in their various contexts, in an effort to understand how the broader goals of the Movement can be achieved through collaboration with youth and students.

The expected outcomes of this breakaway discussion included (i) creating a space for knowledge- and tool-sharing on mapping initiatives from across the GCE membership; (ii) to engage on the formation of successful youth and student structures nationally, regionally and globally; and (iii) to ideate around youth and student structures for the GCE.

1.2.2. Key takeaways, lessons and recommendations

There is a shared understanding of the value of mapping across the regions of the GCE membership; it is considered an essential tool to get to know and understand the aspirations and needs of the target groups. While youth and students are already organising and actively working on solutions towards unifying youth and student structures within the GCE Movement, mapping will be beneficial to identify the different areas that these organisations are already working in; connecting and joining forces to strengthen the GCE Movement; identifying gaps, problems and opportunities for youth participation in different regions; and, understanding the contexts within which youth work at different levels.

Furthermore, there is a need to develop and support youth and student representative structures, especially in a way that prioritises diversity and inclusivity. Members and discussants highlighted the importance of ensuring that the voices, work and input from marginalised groups are factored into the GCE's mapping and representative structures. Going forward, inclusivity must underpin the work done towards youth and student engagement – marginalised groups such as youth, women and girls, LGBTQIA+ youth, youth with disabilities and indigenous youth all need to be strongly identified, supported and included in the GCE's strategic thinking.

To further this inclusivity agenda, it is essential that the GCE develops a truly democratic organisation and operational structure. To achieve this, the GCE must recognise and give youth and students space and opportunities to take part in strategic decision-making processes across national, regional and global levels.

Lastly, strong communication methods, as well as online and face-to-face engagements across youth and student organisations within the GCE, can serve as the most important approach to creating and building solidarity within the youth and student network across all regions.

1.3. Breakaway discussion 2: Allyship and intergenerational ways of working

1.3.1. Summary of breakaway discussion

The purpose of this breakaway discussion was to reflect and share experiences on why allyship and intergenerational ways of working are important not only for the GCE but for removing barriers within the Movement as a whole. The Movement needs to build solidarity across intersectionalities and the various contexts in which it works. This can only be achieved by fostering strong alliances between all types of member organisations which can, in turn, bring to the fore key constituencies of marginalised people, including youth and women. Some such efforts were shared by ActionAid and ASPBAE. Strong alliances within the GCE – and even outside of it – will allow for the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, which can only strengthen the Movement.

As such, this discussion ensured that the GCE members could share their perspectives on allyship and directions for intersectional engagement, particularly with regards to the youth. It also focused on how to establish and develop formal settings for youth engagements across national, regional and global levels.

1.3.2. Key takeaways, lessons and recommendations

This discussion reflected on the importance of allyship and intergenerational ways of working for the GCE's organisational and operational structures to fully eliminate barriers for youth and student engagement. To have a Movement that truly centres the youth, the GCE will need to address this. One way in which to demolish these barriers to genuine youth engagement is to promote allyship as a vital tool for reframing the way in which the GCE works. The changes of the constitution which increases the youth board seat from 1 to 2 seats and the name of the constituency from International youth constituency, to youth and student are the major changes that show the GCE's commitment to allow youth and students to take leading roles in the Movement and engage them in decision-making processes where the intergenerational transmission of knowledge takes place.

Strengthened allyship for all marginalised groups will better integrate people from various backgrounds into the GCE's work. It will be imperative for the GCE to use allyship to build genuine structures that are not only revolutionary but sustainable. Essentially, this can only occur if spaces for inclusive participation are created and strengthened.

Beyond building intergenerational solidarity with youth and student organisations, the GCE's allyship needs to be intersectional, foregrounding feminism and gender responsiveness in its approach.

1.4. Breakaway discussion 3: Youth and students Community of Practice (CoP)

Summary of breakaway discussion

The purpose of this breakaway discussion was to revisit the terms of reference of the youth engagement Community of Practice (CoP) in the presence of the youth and student constituency, in order to agree on inputs, ideas and a way forward for this structure. The discussion provided members with an opportunity to share experiences and recommendations for the youth CoP, finalise the terms of reference, as well as collectively agree on the next steps for the CoP formation, in order to ensure representation, knowledge-sharing and best practice from national and regional membership.

The GCE aims to have a global student and youth caucus between April and May 2021. Until then, members are encouraged to continue engaging on this topic by sending in their suggestions on building the CoP, as well as to nominate potential members to be a part of the CoP.

1.4.2. Key takeaways, lessons and recommendations

The youth CoP is essential to strengthening engagement with various constituencies, as it provides avenues for meaningful participation from youth and students. It needs to be structured in a way that will cultivate and encourage young people to work autonomously while still establishing and maintaining connections between the work being performed across regions. In structuring the youth CoP, the GCE should look to its other CoPs (e.g. Education Financing) to inform the way it is established and maintained.

In order to build and strengthen the youth and student network, the GCE will need to;

- i) conduct more consultations at national and regional levels to clarify the specific needs and expectations of each region and its communities. In so doing, the GCE should also take into consideration contextual differences, to avoid adopting a myopic approach to its strategy;
- ii) conduct more consultations between national and regional youth coalitions;
- iii) put an online system and communication mechanism in place for sharing knowledge and experiences, particularly to avoid excluding constituencies from different geographies, younger children (primary and high school) and marginalised communities;
- iv) create appropriate spaces or forums to ensure that these constituencies are included when building programmes and CoPs;

- v) v) institutionalise these constituencies, especially if they are not part of formal organisations but still need to participate in the Movement;
- vi) vi) conduct more outreach work across all levels to bring these CoPs together and;
- vii) vii) integrate these communities to ensure meaningful impact.

1.5. Breakaway discussion 4: Youth Engagement Strategy

1.5.1. Summary of discussion

This breakaway discussion provided an opportunity for members, including the youth and student constituency itself, to comment and share feedback on the Youth Engagement Strategy (YES). The primary objectives of the YES are to strengthen the voice of youth and students within the GCE and enhance their opportunities for engagement, to ensure the representation of a diverse constituency and to build the capacity of the youth to lead the Movement. This is essential to the work of the Movement, as the youth comprise nearly half of the global population.

To achieve this, members deliberated on ways to enhance awareness of the YES and how to replicate it across regions while contextualising it wherever necessary. Furthermore, the discussion provided a space in which to formulate cross-cutting collaborative efforts for youth engagement in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and the disruption it has caused to the education landscape throughout the world.

1.5.2. Key takeaways, lessons and recommendations

The process of formulating the YES is a goal in itself and is therefore supported by engaging in continuous dialogue. These dialogues help to frame the YES, the key strategies of which are detailed below.

It must be acknowledged that young people have more in common than just their age, which should not be the defining factor of this constituency; 'youth' is a term for a broader sub-group of identities. Furthermore, while 'youth' and 'students' intersect, they are also different members of society – the GCE therefore needs to amend the way it names this constituency (see proposed constitutional amendments in 'Summary and structure of event' above). The GSF is an example of how students are organising themselves irrespective of age. Involving youth and students in the development of the YES will help to establish and strengthen alternative ways of providing education in the current global climate.

A pathway to finalising the YES by 2022 is being developed. A key part of this pathway will require consultations with the youth and student constituency so that their feedback can be incorporated into the final Strategy. Importantly, this process must be

as inclusive as possible, by taking into consideration a diversity of viewpoints, especially those of marginalised communities. To achieve this, the GCE Secretariat will organise consultations between youth at national and regional levels after the conclusion of the WA. The GCE will also host a global student and youth caucus where the YES and other strategic imperatives can be engaged upon and finalised. This inclusivity extends to the engagement of adults, to ensure the intergenerational transmission of knowledge required to strengthen the work of the Movement.

Lastly, it is essential that the YES connects to the core work of the GCE.

1.6. Closing remarks, Day 1

The GCE's President, Mugwena Maluleke, explained the proposed constitutional changes for which members would cast their votes during the WA proceedings. For any amendment to the constitution, a two-third majority is needed and more than 50 per cent of member organisations needs to be present to cast a vote on the matter for it to be ratified. The main change to the constitution would be to Article 9, which relates to the composition of the board, with the youth seat being increased from one to two seats. A second amendment to Article 63 will see the naming of this constituency change from 'international and regional youth organisations' to 'international and regional youth *and student* organisations'.

Summary of proceedings: Day 2

2.1. Plenary session 2: An introduction to the GCE's harmonised policy, advocacy and campaigns plans/Procedural discussions on the renewed GCE strategy

Since the conclusion of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) programme for which the GCE acted as a grant management agent, the GCE has shifted its core mandate towards a three-pronged strategy; the three key pillars of the GCE are now policy and advocacy, campaigns and research. This focus will allow the GCE to exert more credible and informed influence on national, regional and global education policy. The guiding principles for this approach will be the following: equality and non-discrimination, transformative education, education in emergencies and education financing.

With regards to policy and advocacy, the GCE must develop its gender strategy and related work, promote inclusivity in its coalitions and across the organisation, as well as promote information-sharing and the dissemination of knowledge.

In terms of its campaigns strategy, the GCE will seek to formulate robust campaigns at different levels, including two new campaigns: i) One Billion Voices, a 2021 campaign related to education financing and ii) a second campaign scheduled for 2022 on education in emergencies. Key to the campaign strategy is capacity-building, which will include building online courses, and building better CoPs.

Lastly, the GCE's research strategy aims to bring about meaningful change through evidence from action research. Two studies are proposed: i) one on the connections between debt mechanisms and education financing and ii) one on the online publication of transformative education and its potential to bring about institutional change.

2.2. Breakaway discussion 5: Policy and advocacy

2.2.1. Summary of discussion

The goal of this breakaway discussion was to evaluate how the GCE's policy and advocacy plans align with its regional and national interests, to allow members to identify what is missing in their approach and, subsequently, to provide recommendations on how to link the global agenda to different advocacies across contexts. Doing so will deepen understanding of the various regions in which the GCE works and the problems within each that need to be addressed, which, in turn, will strengthen its global advocacy strategies.

2.2.2. Key takeaways, lessons and recommendations

The GCE needs to adopt a more intersectional approach to its policy and advocacy strategy, particularly with regards to the inclusion of gender and sexuality and youth and students.

Gender must be better understood through engagement with the relevant constituencies, as well as used as a tool for analysis. In terms of an approach to a more gendered strategy, the GCE must focus on how it uses feminist approaches to serve women. Additionally, this strategy must extend to matters of sexual orientation of all kinds, particularly with regards to promoting gender and sexuality education. This should also include men and boys. In so doing, the GCE must consider the contextual differences across the regions in which it works, as these inform the way in which gender and sexuality are conceptualised in different parts of the world. Upon implementing the gender strategy, the GCE must build capacity towards monitoring these plans against the GCE's broader objectives.

Further to this intersectional approach, the GCE must consider including youth and students in its advocacy agenda, as well as other intersectional identities, such as those with disabilities and other marginalised constituencies. The GCE must promote a strong youth and student voice in its advocacy plan, one that is based on intergenerational allyship at national, regional and global levels.

Another key recommendation is the need for the GCE's strategies to account for the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has disrupted the education landscape across the globe. It has also exacerbated issues related to gender and sexuality (e.g. gender-based violence) and digital connectivity. The pandemic has come to serve as the backdrop to this WA against which the GCE must consider reframing its strategies to better serve vulnerable and marginalised communities going forward. To do so, the GCE must collaborate with other sectors of society, including the health sector, and with other key role players within the global education movement, such as UNESCO and the UN, to facilitate dialogue between governments and civil society organisations – it is critical to pressure governments to account for the impact of the pandemic when determining future policies.

2.3. Breakaway discussion 6: Campaigns

2.3.1. Summary of discussion

This breakaway discussion focused on the GCE's upcoming Global Action Week for Education (GAWE) which will be linked to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) replenishment. Speakers from the Arab and Latin American regions highlighted the areas in which better campaign building is needed, particularly in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on the global education landscape.

2.3.2. Key takeaways, lessons and recommendations

The need for better advocacy efforts emerged as a key theme in this breakaway discussion, especially as it relates to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. There are major concerns for the social justice issues that are being exacerbated by or are arising as a result of the pandemic, such as inter-country and gender-based violence. As this relates to education financing, the GCE needs more efficient knowledge exchange to be able to study this problem; there is a need for better evidence to advocate for the increase in funding to education, which must also take into consideration issues of gender and girls' education.

Furthermore, it appears that current policies are proving inefficient for tackling access to quality education during the pandemic. In light of all of this, the GCE must form better alliances with education coalitions, so as to strengthen advocacy efforts and build capacity across contexts. To do so, and to ensure that this information is disseminated effectively, the GCE must implement a set of training programmes and research activities. The GCE coalitions should be known as serious contenders for advocacy by letting other stakeholders know what its members have achieved through their programmes.

With regards to youth and students, this constituency needs to be heard; for that to happen, a dedicated space must be created for and led by youth. The GCE also needs to create opportunities for their involvement –youth should be actively involved in dialogues on education policy, gender equality and the struggle to end gender-based violence.

2.4. Breakaway discussion 7: Research

2.4.1. Summary of discussion

This breakaway session deliberated on the critical importance of action research and ensuring that the GCE members utilise this research as an effective tool to inform advocacy. Multiple examples from different geographies, including the Philippines, the Dominican Republic and Colombia, were discussed, to understand the importance of action research and using it in the realm of advocacy to strengthen narratives.

2.4.2. Key takeaways, lessons and recommendations

The relevance of the GCE's research work on education financing and debt alleviation was noted and appreciated. Participants shared the importance of undertaking context-analysis research to inform evidence-based policy advocacy and campaigns. In addition, participants shared their overall experiences of conducting research in their specific contexts, offering multiple examples of how members of the GCE

undertake research, to understand the importance of action research and using it to strengthen advocacy.

One of the key recommendations for the GCE's research work is the need to undertake action research that ensures the engagement of the communities, citizens and youth affected by the issues being investigated. The significance of this was emphasised not only for community development but as an organic, bottom-up process that can influence the GCE's advocacy work.

A recommendation was made to create platforms to share research findings and to facilitate knowledge-sharing in general. Social media, as well as local and independent media, is such a platform and, in the dissemination of information to a broader audience, can also bring research to non-conventional spaces. Relatedly, and importantly, the GCE needs to strengthen the methodological and technical capacity of the Movement through online courses and the exchange of knowledge.

Lastly, the GCE needs to focus its research efforts on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the global education landscape, particularly with regards to its consequent military aggressions in different parts of the world.

2.5. Closing remarks, Day 2

Apart from an emphasis on becoming more inclusive of youth, gender, disability and other marginalised identities, education financing emerged as a key theme in the day's proceedings. While there are contextual differences among constituencies, education financing is an issue common to all and the GCE needs to continue strengthening education budgets across contexts. The world needs to see education as an investment with long-term benefits, rather than simply as an expense.

Summary of proceedings: Day 3

3.1. Plenary session 3: Introduction to GCE communication processes

As the GCE operates in a volatile environment, as well as within a broad and diverse network, one of its main objectives must be to reach and engage all its stakeholders. Its communication strategy will be key to achieving its political goals and strengthening its operational plans. In light of this, the GCE now needs to prioritise strengthening its communication strategy to be more inclusive of its diverse constituents, as well as reframe it to align with the Movement's revised three-pronged strategy. The aim of the communication strategy should be to garner organisation-wide support for all activities happening at regional and national levels so that coalitions, as well as the solidarity of the Movement as a whole, are strengthened.

In addition, both proposed constitutional amendments received a majority vote and were declared valid.

3.2. Breakaway discussion 8: Deepening the GCE's political objectives, influence and impact through communication: opportunities and challenges

3.2.1. Summary of discussion

Communication is a strategy in itself. The purpose of this breakaway discussion was to ensure that the plethora of media tools available to the GCE is used for relevant political engagements while supporting and highlighting the achievements of its campaigns. The GCE must ensure that it capitalises on the strengths of its communication work while accounting for what it can do differently or incorporate anew, in order to build a strong communication presence across all relevant media.

3.2.2. Key takeaways, lessons and recommendations

In formulating a communication strategy going forward, the GCE must first leverage and improve what it uses now before exploring new or alternative methods of communication. This will involve assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the current communication strategy.

It will be useful for the GCE to perform a stakeholder analysis of its various communication platforms, to better understand its target audiences and assist in pitching its messages more effectively. Essentially, the GCE must map the spaces it wants to influence and determine the most effective communication strategies needed to effectively influence decisions in these spaces, especially in the current context where influencing is done primarily virtually. There are three groups that the GCE wants to reach and each one deserves an analysis in terms of what platform to use to reach them:

1. International advocacy spaces – it appears that direct communication is important for effective advocacy.
2. Allies and partners who share the GCE’s narrative – the GCE needs to strengthen engagement and be quicker in capitalising on strategic communication.
3. Key populations (general public) – the GCE must effectively handle a diversity of communication channels and build content that is mindful of intersectional identities.

As it stands, the GCE has quite a fair presence on Facebook and Twitter, so it is in a good position to leverage these social-media platforms to translate its work into compelling and effective narratives and thereby extend the reach of its messages. On the other hand, it was suggested that Instagram be used as the youth- and student-led communication platform, so as to reflect the diversity of the GCE’s membership while creating a profile young people can relate to. It is therefore important for the GCE to understand the age range of its various audiences if it wants to adapt to the realities of each platform.

The Covid-19 pandemic and its impacts should also inform the GCE’s communication strategy. In the last year, as more of the world and its operations moved online, virtual spaces have become crowded and it is thus becoming more pertinent to adopt a more targeted approach to online communication. As such, the GCE’s approach to the entire virtual landscape needs to be rethought.

Importantly, the GCE must consider the implications of this in light of low digital literacy levels in various contexts. While harnessing the potential of social media, it is imperative that the GCE does not disregard the value of more traditional modes of communication, so as not to exclude anyone who cannot access digital communication for whatever reason, such as an online skills gap. The GCE has to take into consideration the variations in its audiences (e.g. based on age or context) if it wants to achieve maximum reach.

Communication through emails remains an excellent approach but it must be more inclusive. For one, emails should be sent in various languages, including sign language, to expand their reach, as well as contain creative, visual elements such as infographics and conceptual maps to increase engagement.

While emails are the GCE’s go-to method of communication, their messages must be clearer, as well as more targeted and relevant, so as to cut through the clutter of emails and information members receive on a daily basis. For this reason, it is also important to create a hierarchy of information, i.e. which messages are essential to communicate and which are not. There is a Microsoft Excel tool that allows for masses of emails to be sent in different languages that can be used for this purpose. Furthermore, these

messages must be delivered in a timelier manner, to avoid being delayed or unsuitable to particular time zones.

The GCE's communication strategy needs to promote information-sharing, particularly as this relates to the results and accomplishments achieved within the strategic areas of the GCE's work. Documenting and sharing the outcomes of the GCE's work will help to increase and maintain member engagement. Another mode of communication involves the GCE visiting each member in its country to participate in a workshop or conference; this will give more credibility to the coalitions.

Lastly, there needs to be a system in place through which to regularly update membership information.

3.3. Breakaway discussion 9: Accelerating membership engagement, collaborative initiatives and partnerships through communication: lessons learnt and the way forward

3.3.1. Summary of discussion

This breakaway discussion focused on how to use the GCE's communication strategy more effectively, especially to reach all of its members and to accelerate their engagement with one another across different regions.

3.3.2. Key takeaways, lessons and recommendations

Emphasis was placed on driving inclusivity towards strengthening language-based communication, so that messages reach members in the language they understand. While the GCE does provide meeting material in different languages alongside dedicated interpreters and translators, this can be improved, especially with regards to communication in Portuguese. Adequate translation of meeting reports should also be prioritised.

It is important to allow youth and students to actively participate in these spaces; to enable this, communication processes need to be improved. Youth and students can drive communication via digital platforms to extend their reach. Furthermore, communication should encapsulate a mixed-media format to include images, infographics, videos and other visual elements. Mixing traditional and novel tools of communication is necessary to engage both older and younger constituencies.

At present, there is a great emphasis on the GCE's internal communications. However, each region performs its own context-specific work within the broader Movement of the GCE. Therefore, the work performed in one region needs to reach others, so it is essential that the overall communication strategy achieves maximum reach beyond

the boundaries of geography. Furthermore, this information needs to transcend the boundaries of the GCE as an organisation – the GCE’s messages are not reaching the stakeholders who hold the ability to effect change, such as lawmakers and policymakers. As such, there needs to be a way to translate communication into actionable results, perhaps by also forming alliances with different organisations and ministries. Essentially, there needs to be a way to reach the strategic and political actors who have the power to make changes based on the information the GCE communicates.

A lot of the coalitions do not have dedicated communication personnel, so there is an urgent need to train people within the coalitions to overcome their technical and financial limitations to communicate more effectively. Building basic resources such as websites is crucial for all coalitions and the GCE must provide support to enable this and to help coalitions maintain and update their websites. Social-media and website management are major challenges within themselves, and the provision of training in online communication skills is something the GCE can and must facilitate. This will help to drive a digital communications strategy and create more online communities for engagement.

Finally, another critical recommendation is the need to better align all the GCE’s information on its website. The website should also be a space for sharing knowledge, where all the networks of coalitions can be linked to one another so that they can access information in real time. This will help to unify the broader network of coalitions.

3.4. Plenary session 4: Introduction to knowledge-sharing platform with live demonstration

This session saw the launch of a knowledge-management and sharing platform (or hub) for the GCE’s members. The launch involved i) clarifying the rationale of this platform and ii) a live demonstration of how to use it.

Members can use the hub in three ways: i) they can engage with content and share knowledge; ii) they can engage with other members; and iii) they can share and disseminate information and learning resources, as well as upcoming events. Essentially, this platform aims to enhance collaborative learning and ongoing engagement across constituencies in all contexts and build capacity that cuts across its strategic areas.

Members will be able to participate in engagement activities by sharing information about region-specific events. A shared learning portal will allow members to share research material, case studies and best practices, which can then be replicated across regions. Furthermore, an online collaboration tool will allow members to

discuss and collaborate on relevant issues. To share expertise, there will be a dedicated section for hosting a list of experts within the network with whom members can engage. This platform will also create a knowledge repository where all members can access documents related to various topics.

In demonstrating the use of the platform, the following was noted: i) the platform will contain sections for discussing key objectives, advocacy and current campaigns, membership information and constituency engagement; ii) it will be available in all the GCE's official languages via Google Translate; iii) the homepage will allow members to view coalition-specific calendars for events and campaigns; iv) there will be a dedicated page for the GCE's strategic objectives; v) members will be able to publish and store documents so that they can be accessed widely and; vi) the platform will include a discussion board for specific and general discussions among members.

Each institution or member organisation will have one set of log-in details and one designated moderator and manager to maintain their page. In addition, training sessions will be rolled out across regions.

3.5. Closing remarks, Day 3

This WA has demonstrated the need for the GCE to realign itself with the changing face of the world, especially in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and the resultant fallout. The discussions that took place during this event have set the Movement on a new path, one that involves a revised, three-pronged strategy and a comprehensive communication and engagement plan. This will ensure that the GCE is able to remain a key player in the global education movement.