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UK National Commission for UNESCO Response to DFID White Paper Consultation “Eliminating Poverty: Ensuring Our Common Future”

About the United Kingdom National Commission for UNESCO

UNESCO

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is a specialised agency dedicated to intellectual cooperation and practical action among nations. It has a key role within the UN system as a global policy leader in its fields of competence. Its work aims at *“the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information”*. All work is carried out within the overriding priorities of Africa and gender equality.

UK NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO

The UK National Commission for UNESCO is an independent civil society organisation set up by Government, in partnership with civil society, as the focal point in the UK for policy advice and programme work relating to UNESCO. It became a company in 2006 and charitable status is now being sought.

It consists of a Board of Directors, sectoral committees and country committees. The sectoral committees are the Education Committee, Sciences Committee, Culture Committee, and Communication and Information Committee. The country committees, the Wales Committee and Scotland Committee (the aim is to establish a similar committee soon in Northern Ireland), reflect the devolved nature of the UK and ensure that the organisation reaches all parts of the UK in its activities. The Board of Directors provides governance, strategic leadership and oversight for the UK National Commission. The operation and related activities of this structure are supported by a small Secretariat of salaried staff members.

There is now a body of about 250 expert members from UK civil society engaged in the UK National Commission, working in a voluntary capacity, with access to wide civil society networks reaching out both nationally and internationally.

Relationship with UNESCO The UK National Commission is part of the global community of UNESCO National Commissions, an arrangement through which UNESCO enlists the support and involvement of civil society in its member states. Unique to UNESCO in the UN system, National Commissions function as essential partners both of governments and of UNESCO, acting as catalysts to involve key national actors in UNESCO's fields of competence. In the context of UNESCO's current efforts to decentralise, National Commissions can be expected to assume a still greater role in the future.

Relationship with Government The UK National Commission was re-established in March 2004 by DFID's Secretary of State. The Education Committee, Sciences Committee, Culture Committee, and Communication and Information Committee oversee work and activities of an international dimension, some work across the whole UK, and work in England where the UNESCO-related aspects of policy have been devolved to the other home countries. The Wales and Scotland Committees, established in 2004 and 2006, run programmes of activities in their own countries, as well as contributing to the UK-wide and international work of the National Commission as a whole.

A number of UK government departments, as well as DFID, have an interest in the UK National Commission's work and include the FCO, DCMS, DIUS, DCSF and Defra. The Welsh Assembly Government and the Scottish Government have specific interest in the work of the Wales and Scotland Committees. Unlike some National Commissions, the UK National Commission is entirely made up of civil society members, and is independent from Government.

The following pages give responses by four of the committees of the UK National Commission for UNESCO (UKNC) – Education Committee, Sciences Committee, Communication & Information Committee and Scotland Committee. The first three operate within their disciplines across the whole of the UK (there is also a Culture Committee); the last addresses UNESCO's disciplines collectively.

Responses to Consultation from the UKNC Education Committee

4. Fragile and conflict-affected countries: How can we create a safer world and the right conditions for poverty reduction?

The impact of attacks on education on EFA and development

DFID should respond to the impact on development of the growing number of violent political and military attacks on education.

- In Swat Valley in Pakistan where 172 schools have been burned down, shelled or blasted with bombs in the past two years, about 80,000 girls are being kept out of class by threats of violence.
- In Afghanistan, where 670 attacks on education were carried out in 2008, including the burning of schools and the killing of 141 students and teachers, and at the start of 2009 670 schools were closed across the country.
- Other countries badly affected in recent years include Colombia, Iraq, Nepal, Palestinian Autonomous Territories, Thailand, Zimbabwe and most recently DR Congo and Niger.

This is an Education for All issue as well as a humanitarian issue. At school level it is hindering the achievement of Education for All in some of the areas most in need of improvements in education provision and educational achievement. In the worst-affected situations the impact on EFA has been devastating.

- There is the loss of life, the destruction of buildings and materials; the closure of schools by hundreds at a time, sometimes, as in Niger, for years.
- There is the flight of staff – last year 300 teachers asked to leave one province affected by assassinations of teachers in the far south of Thailand – and the difficulty of recruitment which slowly degrades the quality of teaching offered.
- There is the impact on pupil attendance as parents fear to send their child to school. Even if pupils to go back, fear will inhibit their learning.
- There is the immeasurable psychological impact of the brutality, since many teachers are shot in front of their pupils by assassins, some even beheaded. How will the trauma of these experiences affect pupils' well-being and learning in the years to come?

At university level too, as the Scholar Rescue Network has pointed out, it is precisely those countries with low per capita income and small academic populations where academics are most at risk of persecution or being targeted for assassination. With the death of a scholar comes the death of ideas — ideas that could have led to new cures for disease, economic growth in developing economies, improved methods of food production, or better protection of the most vulnerable sectors of society.

Question 4.1: What are the priority actions to address the causes of violent conflict and build capable, accountable and responsive states?

1. DFID needs to support initiatives that reduce the part education plays in aggravating conflict and develop schools as zones of peace and safe sanctuaries by promoting:
 - community involvement in and ownership of schools, which research suggests can reduce the likelihood of attacks
 - curricula sensitive to local language, cultural and religious identity
 - school and educational policies that ensure inclusive, transparently run education at all levels
2. Enduring peace processes and inclusive political institutions can be facilitated through school improvements in terms of increased emphasis on education for democracy, rights and non-violence. Critical political education and/or citizenship education can enable young people to

resist authoritarianism and black and white ‘truths’, and better prepare them to participate politically and in civil society. This means three areas for support:

- teacher education in citizenship and in handling controversial issues, corruption etc
 - materials for teachers on rights, democracy and democratic classrooms, the work of the UN
 - guidelines on alternatives to corporal punishment.
3. DFID should provide aid to support peace agreements that include the measures in point 1 and in which parties recognise schools and colleges as safe sanctuaries and zones of peace.

Question 4.2: Do we need new ways of delivering aid in fragile and conflict-affected countries?

1. Aid to education should be conditional on governments adhering to the Dakar pledge (*Dakar Framework for Action, expanded commentary, paragraph 58*) to uphold the right to education in safety and ensure that schools are “respected and protected as sanctuaries and zones of peace”. It should be withheld from governments that support violence against, or fail to end impunity for violence against, teachers, students, academics, and education trade unionists.
2. Unbroken chains of support, as well as basic services in emergencies, need coherence: the Dutch model of providing massive aid to just one organisation (UNICEF) is to be explored, as the large INGOs are seen as non-aligned and have regional, cross-border concerns as well as national ones. Save The Children are also large and provide continuity and much expertise. The support could be for these organisations and/or the various consortia and clusters they coordinate (which may include UNESCO) in different regions.

Question 4.3: How can we better provide for the security and access to justice of poor vulnerable or marginalized populations?

1. Educational assistance should focus not just on access, but on the treatment of individuals and groups when in school. Support for models of child-friendly schools and rights respecting schools can help to mitigate the drop-out that comes from discrimination and abuse in schools (for example dalit children in India and Nepal, as well as girls in many countries). UNESCO’s 7.500 ASPnet schools provide a model based on UNESCO values of rights, democracy, peace and inter-cultural communication. But changing the cultures of schools has to be linked to wider shifts. ‘Issue based’ capacity development can therefore combine institutional reform and preventative measures, for example support for projects that promote transparency or democracy at Ministry, locality, community and school level.
2. DFID needs to encourage action by the UK government to end impunity for attacks on education.
 - At the international level this means the UK should support the expansion or clarification of the definition of the war crime and grave violation, “attacks on schools”, to make clear that it covers not just attacks on buildings, but also attacks on students and all those who support their learning as teachers or staff at the school, education aid workers or education officials.
 - The UK should press the UN Security Council and UN Secretary General to ensure that the effort to monitor and refer to the International Criminal Court cases relating to the grave violations should no longer be narrowly focused on the use of child soldiers, but should equally address the issue of attacks on schools, including students and staff in line with the expanded definition (see 4 (i)).

Final comments

DFID should recognise that education can contribute to both to the prevention of conflict, the resolution of conflict and the consolidation of peace, all of which are crucial to development. It should encourage the sharing of experience in promoting peace and tolerance via education in Northern Ireland with education systems in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict situations. This would include the experience of introducing compulsory Education for Mutual Understanding, study of common and diverse cultural heritage, inquiry-based history learning approaches, conflict resolution studies and support for voluntary cross-community contact schemes.

Responses to Consultation from the UKNC Sciences Committee

Members of the Natural Sciences Committee (NSC) welcome DFID's intention to produce a new White Paper on International Development. It is an opportunity to ensure that there is no reduction in the Government's commitment to poverty reduction, climate change and social justice as a result of the global economic crisis and that instead; these issues are given renewed emphasis and greater urgency.

Science, engineering, technology and innovation (SETI) are the drivers of economic growth and key contributors to meeting global challenges such as poverty, climate change, hunger and loss of biodiversity. As Secretary of State Douglas Alexander points out in the foreword to DFID's Research Strategy 2008 -2013 "The challenges we face in making poverty history are large, complex and changing. Without new knowledge, scientific innovation, rigorous evidence, and new ideas we have no chance of success." It is therefore surprising that the consultation document makes no direct reference to the role of SETI. We are concerned that this omission represents a downgrading of DFID's commitment to SETI and urge that these issues are addressed in the White Paper.

1. Building our common future: How to address the emerging challenges

The causes of the emerging challenges extend far beyond the economic mismanagement and market failures that have created the current global economic crisis. The majority of the Earth's population remain desperately poor and therefore ill-prepared to cope with the emerging issues described in the consultation document. Meeting their needs requires mobilising SETI to accelerate wealth creation and distribute the benefits in ways that reduce hunger, poverty and inequality.

The White Paper should emphasise the centrality of SETI in DFID policy and practice.

2. Global economic growth: How do we minimise the impact of the downturn on the poor?

There are many obstacles to achieving growth and development in low income countries, but central among them is the absence of a SETI base. SETI drives the improvements in areas such as infrastructure, agricultural productivity, public health and environmental management that are critical to growth. But economic growth has often been accompanied by a range of adverse environmental impacts that directly impact on poor people. Future growth must be achieved in ways that also protect and enhance the natural systems that underpin our ability to create wealth now and in the future. This will be impossible without the effective application of SETI.

DFID should prioritise the development of strong bases of science, engineering, technology and innovation in developing countries.

3. Climate change: How do we build a low carbon and climate resilient world?

Developed countries should take the lead in combating climate change. It is inequitable to expect developing countries to bear human and financial burdens that are disproportionate with their causal responsibilities. DFID should promote the principle of equity in its climate change proposals.

The main impacts of climate change on people and the environment occur through water. There is a need to focus more on adaptation relative to the current emphasis on mitigation as well as to balance investment to combat problems caused by climate change with investment to combat variability to lessen the impacts of floods and droughts.

Developing countries should be encouraged and supported in adopting low carbon technologies, although this should not be at the expense of their economic development.

DFID should work with other multilateral and bilateral donors to increase the percentage of ODA directed towards the water sector.

4. Fragile and conflict-affected countries: How can we create a safer world and the right conditions for poverty reduction?

Fragile states are often unable to provide even basic services to their people and are usually characterised by weak institutions and ineffectual policy-making. Improving state effectiveness requires political institutions that are transparent and responsive to the needs of citizens. DFID should promote these principles and ensure that the UK is itself a good example of them. State effectiveness also requires access to the latest scientific information that can be used as the basis for decision-making

DFID should help developing countries gain access to the scientific information that is necessary for sound decision-making.

5. International institutional reform: How can we work in partnership to deliver development?

DFID is widely seen as one of the most progressive bilateral donors. It has led the way in untying aid and prioritising poverty reduction and its commitment to increase ODA to 0.7% of GNI by 2013 is commendable. It should use its influence to encourage other bilateral and multilateral institutions to adopt similar approaches.

DFID has also been pivotal in focusing international attention on Africa. It has supported a number of important studies and initiatives that reflect the priorities of African countries. This should continue and we particularly emphasise the role of NEPAD as an African initiative that DFID should continue to support.

Final comment

DFID should continue to prioritise Africa and support African led institutional initiatives such as NEPAD.

1. Building our common future: How to address the emerging challenges?

The challenges facing the world cannot be tackled by looking at the poor as numbers of people, whose lives need to be changed for the better. It is time to consider the quality of aid delivery over the quantity, and also where the poor are actually to be found. For instance, many poor people live in middle income countries on which DFID no longer focuses. Quality aid comes through understanding the diversity of local culture and responding to local need through better information and knowledge networks available for all.

In these areas the UK National Commission for UNESCO is well positioned to provide DFID with advice, experience, and networks who consider these issues in the commercial, educational and not for profit sectors. The UK National Commission for UNESCO's (UKNC) expert membership is drawn from many of the UK's leading institutions in education, the sciences, culture and communication. Many of these members have long and diverse professional histories in DFID's focus countries.

2. Global economic growth: How do we minimise the impact of the downturn on the poor?

Question 2.3: How can the UK best help developing countries take advantage of opportunities to promote low carbon, climate-resilient growth?

DFID has largely neglected the important role of encouraging the media in developing countries as a means of relieving poverty and improving governance. The media sector offers considerable leverage as a means of achieving development targets when funds are under pressure, all while capitalising on UK media strengths.

People living in developing and middle income countries need to be given the opportunity to debate alternative options for both growth and greater equality of opportunity. There needs to be a counter balance to the marketing of big business interests around macro-economic solutions for countries. The media provides a national forum, as long as it is well-trained and has adequate support. We should be further supporting the media to debate and discuss business and economics with mass audience and decision makers, yet business and economics programming in many developing and middle income countries remains woefully poor, un-engaging and irrelevant to the needs of mass audiences. Therefore developing media programmes around business and economics content for mass audiences is of great value.

3. Climate change: How do we build a low carbon and climate resilient world?

Questions 3.1: What support is needed for developing countries to integrate climate resilience into their development plans?

How can we ensure that the most vulnerable are protected from the impacts of climate change?

Even in the UK, radio becomes a tool for local populations at times of floods or natural disaster. This is even more important in saving lives in the developing world. Communication and Information are essential to any country's resilience to climate change. Practical information campaigns in Bangladesh are saving thousands of lives during monsoon and flood periods.

Journalists and scientists must work more closely in reporting on both long-term climate change issues and natural disaster emergencies. A UNESCO journalism workshop on reporting about climate change will be held in London in advance of the 2009 World Conference of Science Journalists, but more is needed. UNESCO could work with DFID to support and work with in-country broadcasters, print media and online journalists to develop 'disaster preparedness' approaches, while supporting university mass communications departments to train journalists in this field of reporting.

Fostering journalistic training institutions in Africa as a whole is key to Africa's development, whether for tackling poverty, fostering democratic practices or promoting social change. UNESCO's Potential Centres of Excellence in Journalism Training in Africa maps the capacity and potential for excellence of almost 100 journalism schools across Africa, highlighting development challenges and opportunities and identifying specific areas for support from development partners. The UK National Commission for UNESCO would like to work with DFID and other partners to see UK journalism training institutions form mutually beneficial and sustainable links with their African counterparts.

4. Fragile and conflict-affected countries: How can we create a safer world and the right conditions for poverty reduction?

Question 4.1: What are the priority actions to address the causes of violent conflict and build capable, accountable and responsive states?

Information is at the heart of conflict, and must become a priority action. Information can both end and cause violent conflict on a national or regional scale. Capable, accountable and responsive states have to engage in inclusive dialogue, and accept the scrutiny of the media and civil society in a positive light. However, for this to work, both the state and the media need to understand both their rights and their responsibilities.

UNESCO's Global Forum in Indonesia established the Power of Peace Network, which created an innovative, alternative system that uses broadcast technologies, satellites and Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) to produce content locally and distribute it globally in an integrated manner. The network promotes cultural diversity rather than serving national interests or making broadcasters richer. The network has developed an online curriculum in peace and conflict studies for university students, a training programme and Tool Box for local journalists who find themselves reporting on potential or emerging conflicts, and training for reporters dealing with water as a potential conflict issue.

How can we better support the development of sustainable and enduring peace processes and inclusive political institutions?

Continuity is key for long-term solutions, which means UK engagement for decades. The media can support enduring peace, but it needs to engage for a generation as opposed to an 18-month project.

Therefore how DFID hands over projects must be more staged, and considered, and less at the whim of domestic or global politics. There needs to be an "air lock" for concluding DFID engagement. This could be through DFID developing second wave donors – either through partnership with the UN structure, with public/private agreements, or with greater support to foundations who focus on sustainable and enduring growth.

Question 4.2: How can we ensure that there is an unbroken and constructive chain of support from humanitarian crises through to post conflict recovery, and long term development?

Linkage between policy units, emergency relief teams, and country programmes is at the heart of this issue. The UK National Commission for UNESCO's Communications and Information Committee is keen to engage a wide variety of government departments to look at those linkages from the perspective of the sector, and start a debate about fresh approaches. It is reviewing this work in 2009 and would welcome discussions with all relevant departments in DFID.

How can basic services, like health and education, be delivered when states are weak or violence is ongoing, while 'doing no harm'?

Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) are powerful vehicles for enabling distance based education and health delivery – even and especially in places of violence and conflict. ICTs provide a vital role in health and education in these circumstances at a national level, at low cost and circumventing national bodies or physical obstacles that prevent the transfer of knowledge.

The media can also school professions in strengthening their skills where no opportunities exist. For

example, a Development News Exchange, funded by DFID so that it reaches the poorest, would spread understanding of Development issues.

Question 4.3: How can we better provide for the security and access to justice of poor, vulnerable, or marginalised populations?

There is an essential link between developing democratic institutions and respecting diversity. No society is truly homogenous and transition to democracy cannot be accomplished without recognition of that fact. By strengthening inclusive and sensitive media outlets (such as radio, internet access or mobile phones) in these areas we can provide better security and access to justice. If the poor and marginalized remain out of the public eye, and their issues stay unaddressed, then society leaves the “reasonable man in the street” ignorant to the issues of these groups. This is not about marginalized programming, but mainstreaming disability, poverty, women, children in to national issues.

How can we ensure that our assistance equally protects the rights of women, men, children and particularly marginalised groups such as the disabled and elderly, and tackles discrimination?

Depending on demographics, “marginalised” groups can often represent the majority groups in some societies (women, or children for example). Therefore it is essential that the majority of society has equal access to information, technology and education. In many societies access to, or selection of media is controlled by head of household. New technology can circumvent this limited access, but it also needs to have appropriate content that will benefit these new audiences. The development of culturally relevant media content which seeks to target and assist marginalised groups, such as people with disabilities, must also be supported.

Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) plays an important role in reflecting the lives of marginalised people and communities to a broader audience. The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions 2005, to which the UK is a signatory, underpins nation states’ rights to take measures aimed at enhancing the diversity of the media, including through public service broadcasting. The Convention underlines that cultural diversity - flourishing within a framework of democracy, tolerance, social justice and mutual respect between peoples and cultures - is indispensable for peace and security at local, national and international levels. The UK’s strong history of PSB should be harnessed to assist developing countries in this important area.

By showing media organizations in all countries that diversity in society and the media makes good business practice. By increasing the inclusiveness of coverage, media organizations can break out of segmented markets and strengthen their connections with potential new markets.

How should we combine top-down institutional reforms with grassroots and preventative measures?

Through long-term national, trans continental (i.e. between countries in sub-Saharan Africa) and international dialogue. This is a slower, yet more thorough process, which increases the chances of better quality of impact and thereby increases the quantity of outcomes.

Question 4.4: How can we improve coordination of diplomatic, defence and development efforts to ensure the right conditions for poverty reduction in fragile and conflict-affected states?

By developing reporting beats for journalists in countries where DFID and other government departments work to monitor policy inconsistencies, poor programmes and identify local corruption.

How can UK efforts be strengthened?

Through consistent approaches towards developing countries via policies across all ministries. This should include maintaining public questioning and pressure at the most senior of levels around the extent to which broadcasting codes and similar obstacles may be impeding free and independent reporting.

How can the international institutions be reformed?

Through inclusive dialogue and open debate about reform, and engaging a wider public through exciting media on international topics. Through all journalists from every sector reporting on overlaps in aid and weaknesses in systems, both locally and at an international level.

5. International institutional reform: How can we work in partnership to deliver development?

Question 5.2: What can we do to improve the performance of the UN in supporting poverty reduction?

What can we do beyond our strong support for the 'One-UN' reforms to build greater consensus on the role and performance of the UN in development?

UNESCO is widely respected by the poor in many developing countries and is seen as a positive force that can counteract actions or comments by national or state bodies. It is also seen as a counterweight to some other bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors. This positive view may not be shared in northern countries, however, it is a force through which – if correctly harnessed - much positive work can be done.

Germany provides \$21m for the International Programme for the Development of Communication's (IPDC) Funds in trust provided to IPDC projects. The UK through DFID, provides no funds. The UK could bring to bear greater influence on the quality of UNESCO's funding in this area by contributing to the IPDC fund and becoming more intimately involved in IPDC decision making..

DFID could also give more support for the important dimension of 'culture' in development practice. Cultural diversity is a driving force of development, not only in respect of economic growth, but also as a means of leading a more fulfilling intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual life. This is captured in the seven culture conventions, which provide a solid basis for the promotion of cultural diversity. Cultural diversity is thus an asset that is indispensable for poverty reduction and the achievement of sustainable development.

At the same time, acceptance and recognition of cultural diversity – in particular through innovative use of media and ICTs – are conducive to dialogue among civilizations and cultures, respect and mutual understanding.

The promotion of cultural diversity – the "common humanity heritage" according to the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001 – and its corollary dialogue, has become one of the most pressing contemporary issues and, for this reason, is central to the Organization's mandate.

DFID could support the development of shared 'open' resources. To this end UNESCO has started and leads the discussion in the UK on Public Service Media, and is developing a Blueprint for non-broadcast media and public service content. DFID should also support Science Education through the media – essential to understand and operate in the modern world, and to supplement poor schooling. This would also prove a driver for development as ideas would be picked up and adapted for local use by entrepreneurs.

Question 5.4: What further reforms are needed in other institutions, including the Regional Development Banks and the global funds to support poverty reduction? *and*

Question 5.5: What can be done to further improve the effectiveness of the international aid system?

***How can we help to build real mutual accountability at the country level and internationally?
How can we gain better information on the results of aid, particularly aid delivered through the multilateral organisations?***

Can more be done to ensure a better allocation of all aid across countries to ensure that it reaches those who need it most?

We should make best use of the power of networks to collaborate more between donors, partner countries, civil society, private sector and others.

It is important to mention in relation to this that not all poor people live in poor countries.

Therefore DFID and UNESCO need to find mechanisms for supporting the many poor people in middle-income countries.

DFID should try to ensure that all its programmes are driven by the needs of the people they seek to help. This should be done though looking at societies as diverse cultures, not figures. DFID should work even closer in collaboration with like minded donors; and should do more to change the attitudes and practices of people (citizens and companies) here in the UK. To this end the UK National Commission for UNESCO has a network of over 250 organisations in education, the media, culture, science and information sectors in the UK with a membership and affiliate organizations who are keen to engage with DFID in the debate.

Responses to Consultation from the UKNC Scotland Committee

The Scotland Committee welcomes DFID's White Paper consultation, as it believes in fairer development both in the UK and in developing countries, which will prove strained in the current economic crisis. The current crisis can be resolved only through international cooperation and a shift in priorities towards greater solidarity. The Scotland Committee believes that sustainable solutions to the crisis lie in counter-cyclical investments (e. g., protecting or increasing public spending on education), maintaining and increasing aid commitments (with added efforts on actual disbursement), putting in place special measures to help the poorest (safety nets, preparedness), and by increasing efficiency and transparency in the economy.

1. Building our common future: How to address the emerging challenges? *and*

2. Global economic growth: How do we minimise the impact of the downturn on the poor?

As Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, affirmed at the recent UNESCO Future Forum on the Global Financial and Economic Crisis (2/03/09):" *The financial crisis is an ethical one and compels us to re-examine the aspiration that govern our global society. We must use this crisis to make the multilateral system more inclusive, effective and coherent, especially in addressing the present and future needs of developing countries.* »

In a global financial and economic crisis of such depth and uncertainty, multilateralism has to be part of the of the solution and investments in global public goods necessary. There will be no sustainable way out of the crisis if poverty reduction, education, science, culture and communication are not properly addressed nationally, by States, and internationally, through "strategic joint action" by the UN system organizations.

In this crisis, the UK Government - as the Scottish Government - has a duty to foster international development, protect the world's poorest; ensure access to fundamental social services, promote gender equality; and mobilize action to address environmental threats, in particular climate change.

The current crisis is also an opportunity to design new policies which will lay the foundations for more inclusive and sustainable societies. This is why the issue of climate change is so crucial: nothing would be more dangerous than to let the crisis prevent us from reaching a robust climate deal in Copenhagen in December 2009. We must support a greener low-carbon growth and help countries – in particular the poorest – mitigate and adapt to climate change that is already taking place. To achieve this spending on green technologies must increase, local knowledges and solutions must be heard, and we also need to strengthen the long-term capacity of countries – especially developing countries – to drive the research for even better solutions and better understanding of climate change.

The fundamental pillars of society – education, the sciences, culture and communication –are often the first to be hit in a recession. But with research showing that each extra year of schooling boosts GDP per capita by 4 to 6 percent, Education is one of the smartest investments a country can make. A counter-cyclical injection of resources in Education now would not only help spur a recovery but also support more vigorous growth in the future. Since developing countries, especially in Africa, cannot afford such an education stimulus plan, donors must account to their promise not to let countries seriously committed to achieving EFA fall behind for want of resources.

Improving the environment for business and facilitating trade, particularly in developing countries, means allowing the majority of the marginalised smallholder farmers to participate in trading of their produce to better markets at competitive prices, supporting the small and medium enterprises or local traders who directly interface with the rural farmers with credit facilities and access to market information. This would also require capacity building of the poor in business management and use of market information. In the future, the emphasis ought to be on local production and regional markets, as developing countries, the African ones in particular, cannot be autonomous on the global scene without strong industrial and rural local capacities and an integrated regional environment.

DFID could also give more support for the important dimension of 'culture' in development practice. Intercultural dialogue, in a n age of globalization is more important than ever. Cultural diversity is a driving force of development, not only in respect of economic growth, but also as a means of leading a more fulfilling intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual life. This is captured in the seven culture conventions, which provide a solid basis for the promotion of cultural diversity. Cultural diversity is thus an asset that is indispensable for poverty reduction and the achievement of sustainable development.

3. Climate change: How do we build a low carbon and climate resilient world?

Climate change is inextricably linked with economics. The global financial crisis poses Climate challenges : e.g alternative energy companies are already having difficulties financing investments and energy intensive industries may oppose climate regulation; foreign aid spending could be threatened, complicating efforts to forge North-South deal on climate change. But there are also climate opportunities linked with the crisis. Declining carbon emissions due to recession may buy time for technological advances and policy innovations. Also, economic stimulus packages may generate substantial funding for promoting low-carbon energy. There is room also for international global initiatives such as UNEP's Global Green New Deal that would link responses to the economic crisis with efforts to address environmental problems.

With regard to climate change, alongside support for traditional models of "pro-poor innovation" (innovating on behalf of the poor in university/ R&D lab settings), DFID should give some support for "per-poor innovation" (undertaken from within poor communities themselves); finding ways to capture, analyse and scale such bottom-up, community-led innovations. Renewable energies (biomass,solar, wind, geothermal etc) offer considerable hope for developing countries (particularly in Africa), and must be supported by funding and investment, through co-operation in NEPAD (The New Partnership for Africa's Development, <http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/inbrief.php>), which will provide leadership and good governance.

4. Fragile and conflict-affected countries: How can we create a safer world and the right conditions for poverty reduction?

Fragile and conflict-affected countries are often unable to provide basic public services (health, education, etc). Those who suffer the most are often the poorest and most marginalized (particularly women and girls). The current economic crisis risks exacerbating already growing disparities in fragile and conflict-affected countries.

To address those issues, the UK and UN institutions must address the deeper cause of the conflicts which may have led to corrupt or weakened states. However, besides supporting inclusive political and public service management assistance in post conflict-affected communities, the core strategy for restoring peace and reducing poverty in these communities should primarily focus on restoring the livelihoods and rehabilitating and reconstructing lost assets (such as houses, infrastructures.) in order to enhance the sense of dignity, normality and confidence lost during the period of conflict and deprivation. Most donor programs focus on aspects such as governance and the strengthening of institutional capacity.

In its work, DFID should seek to reinforce and strengthen wherever possible the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (www.oecd.org/dac/incaf) **Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations** (adopted 2007), of which the preamble says:

"A durable exit from poverty and insecurity for the world's most fragile states will need to be driven by their own leadership and people. International actors can affect outcomes in fragile states in both positive and negative ways. International engagement will not by itself put an end to state fragility, but the adoption of the following shared Principles can help maximise the positive impact of engagement and minimise unintentional harm. (...)The long-term vision for international engagement in fragile states is to help national reformers to build effective, legitimate, and resilient state institutions, capable of engaging productively with their people to promote sustained development."

The 10 basic principles are (<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/61/45/38368714.pdf>):

1. Take context as the starting point
2. Ensure all activities do no harm
3. Focus on state building as the central objective
4. Prioritise prevention
5. Recognise the links between political, security and development objectives
6. Promote non discrimination as a basis for inclusive and stable societies
7. Align with local priorities in different ways and in different contexts
8. Agree on practical co-ordination mechanisms between international actors
9. Act fast... but stay engaged long enough to give success a chance
10. Avoid pockets of exclusion ("aid orphans")

5. International institutional reform: How can we work in partnership to deliver development?

The UK, which has committed to increase ODA to 0.7% of GNI by 2013, must use its influence to encourage other developed countries to do the same. But ODA must not come with conditionality, as the failure of the Structural Adjustment Policies of the IMF and the World Bank to reduce poverty have so sharply shown. Through conditionalities, Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), generally implement "free market" programs and policy, which are the very ones currently in crisis.

It follows that much creative thinking will be needed at the highest level to ensure that strategies are devised to provide a buffer against 'rationing by price' that always leaves the developing countries at a disadvantage, further widening the gap between rich and poor. There are real dangers in the present international financial crisis that further re-distributive effects will reduce the impact of ODA and increase the debt burdens unless donor countries correct for currency fluctuations and capital flows that place slender resources at risk in the weaker economies of the South.

Although more resources ought to be found for the IMF and the World Bank in this global crisis, a critical assessment of these institutions' policies is needed to ensure that emerging market economies and poorer countries can engage (as developed countries do) in macroeconomic/ fiscal adjustments that will mitigate rather than aggravate the impacts on them of the crisis.

Delivering as One UN

When taking office in 2000, UNESCO's Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura launched a major process to modernize, streamline and refocus the Organization's work. So, UNESCO is already well advanced in its own internal reform that has anticipated much of the thinking of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence. Therefore, although UNESCO is heading in the right direction, further efforts are needed in order to align the Organization better with the overall reform process of the UN system. In fact, the need for greater harmonization among UN bodies, for closer alignment with country-led development processes and for more transparency and accountability across the board are goals that UNESCO shares, and is already seeking to implement in its work.