

DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND EDUCATION IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY: RAISING QUALITY THROUGH CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AND GLOBAL SKILLS

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Abstract

Development education is an approach to learning that questions dominant paradigms of development and inspires citizen- and community-driven change towards a world of greater social justice. This article provides an overview of development education and reflects on the extent to which development education principles are currently reflected in, or missing from, mainstream educational policies pursued within an international development framework. In particular, the article addresses the issue of quality in education – one of the key current debates within international education policy – and suggests that, through its critical pedagogy and focus on the development of global skills, development education has a significant contribution to make to these debates. The article suggests that greater collaboration between the field of development education and international education policy could facilitate the creation of an agenda that focuses on education quality and learning processes, as opposed to the current preoccupation with education access and outcomes.

1. Introduction

Development and aid programmes around the world have always needed public endorsement, either in the form of voluntary donations or through the political support of taxpayers for government funding. Beginning in the 1960s, educators and campaigners in many industrialised countries began to encourage greater understanding of development and aid through a range of programmes and campaigns, which came to be known as ‘development education’, aimed at audiences in the Global North. Much of this early practice used an uncritical view of development and economic growth to educate what was perceived to be a largely ignorant or disinterested public, with the goal of ‘open[ing] up hearts and minds, as well as the purses, to the problem of poverty in countries overseas’ (Black, 1992,102).

While it began as a field largely oriented around NGO practice and campaigns, the theory underpinning development education has since evolved through direct contact with social movements and solidarity groups around the world, as well as engagement with the work of critical educationalists such as Paulo Freire (Cronkhite, 2000, 152; Hartmeyer, 2008, 36). By the 1990s, these influences had resulted in the creation of a strong critical pedagogy within development education which, in turn, resulted in new approaches to its educational practice. This includes, for instance, an emphasis on developing partnerships between educators and learners in the Global North and Global South; the promotion of social justice, empathy and solidarity; a commitment to participatory and transformative learning processes, with an emphasis on dialogue and experience; and a critique of dominant power relations and media messages about development that portray peoples from the Global South as helpless victims.

Work in the field of development education, however, has run largely parallel to educational debates within international development policy and practice, with relatively little interaction between the two. This is perhaps partly the result of a problem of recognition and collaboration from those involved in the development education and those focused on education within an international development framework (i.e. in low and middle-income contexts). In

this paper, we argue that this represents a lost opportunity for collaborative engagement with a number of important issues in contemporary international education policy and practice.

One key area of international debate, for instance, revolves around the development and implementation of initiatives and agendas such as Education For All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In particular, it has been frequently argued that international efforts have focused far too narrowly on increasing access to formal education, without attending to the quality of learning actually taking place in schools. In other words, there has been ‘a failure to ensure that schooling actually leads to education’, resulting in ‘a need to recapture the broad understanding of education and its purpose in future goals and frameworks’ (United Nations, 2013,1). These critiques highlight the need for policy and practice to attend not just to learning outcomes, but also to the learning process and the role of pedagogy in providing quality education.

Linked to these educational policy discussions is a large body of academic work from disciplines such as development studies, development education and anthropology that has critiqued international development, and by extension education, initiatives and agendas for their tendency to rely on a ‘Western’ view of what constitutes ‘development’. Authors such as Amartya Sen, Martha Nussbaum, Vanessa Andreotti, Arturo Escobar, Robert Chambers and James Ferguson have argued for a range of alternative conceptualisations of the term capable of providing space for indigenous and local knowledges, diverse understandings of what constitutes a ‘good life’, and acknowledgement of the effects of unequal global relationships.

This shift in academic discourse has also run parallel to a shift in international development policy, which is increasingly moving away from an idea of ‘development’ being organised *for* the Global South *by* actors in the Global North, towards a more holistic idea of ‘global development’, or ‘one world development’ (Sumner and Wiemann, 2012; Cascant and Kelber, 2012), which takes the interdependent nature of global relationships into account. This has been accompanied by increasing questioning of the role of aid and donors in promoting development, as well as a broader paradigm shift from a focus on the provision of aid towards an emphasis on global social justice.

Similar to the debates on educational policy outlined above, this perspective also highlights the need for development policy and practice to attend to the *processes* of development, rather than pre-determined targets or outcomes. This requires a move from assessing development according to simplistic measurements (e.g. the number of children enrolled in school as a measure of access) to exploration of the learning processes that take place in schools, assessments of what constitutes ‘quality’ education in particular contexts, and the wider social and economic benefits for learners.

Development education, with its global outlook, emphasis on social justice and focus on critical pedagogy and processes of learning has a strong contribution to make to all of these debates. It is particularly relevant in the contemporary context, characterized by an increasing recognition of the fact that ‘education is pivotal for development in a rapidly changing world’ and the need to place greater emphasis on the social role of education in

enabling ‘people to fulfill their individual potential and to contribute to the economic, political and social transformation of their countries’ (UNESCO, 2013b,1-2) – areas which have not yet been sufficiently addressed within the MDG framework.

The following discussion evaluates the extent to which key principles from development education are currently reflected in, or missing from, mainstream educational policies pursued within an international development framework, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in particular. It begins with an overview of the principles underpinning development education theory and practice, and suggests some of the historical and ideological reasons underlying the failure of mainstream development debates and discourses to take up its insights. The authors then set out two key areas in which development education can substantively inform the post-2015 international education agenda: pedagogical approaches to learning about global issues, and debates about global skills. Taken together, the authors argue that these represent a significant contribution to global debates about education quality and how it might be encouraged through policy. We suggest, therefore, that much greater collaboration and discussion is needed between development educators and those working on education in low- and middle-income country contexts.

2. Development Education and its (Missing) Links to Development Discourse

As a body of educational work, the field of development education has its historical roots in both European academic institutions and NGOs. Recent theory and practice in the field draws on a range of work by academics and thinkers from a variety of contexts around the world, and there is growing evidence of a diverse range of perspectives on development education deriving from a plethora of organisations (e.g. NGOs, government initiatives) anchored in particular national contexts (see Dudková, 2008; Helin, 2009; Ishii, 2003; Knutsson, 2011; Rasaren, 2009; Reagan, 2006). A detailed description of the diverse totality of discussions and practices in this international field is not possible within the space of this short paper and, as such, the following section sets out our own perspective – as UK researchers with strong links to research and practitioner colleagues around the world – on the key principles of development education theory and practice.

In particular, we suggest that there is an emerging consensus amongst NGOs and academics regarding the main constituents of this body of practice. This can be summarised as follows:

Developing an understanding of the globalised world	Developing an understanding of links between our own lives and those of people throughout the world, local-global interdependencies and power relations, global and local development and environmental challenges, and issues of identity and diversity in multicultural contexts
This understanding is developed through:	
A values based approach to learning	A learning approach based on values of justice, equality, inclusion, human rights, solidarity, and respect for others and for the environment
Participatory and transformative learning process	Methodologies are active and learner-centred, participatory and reflective, experiential, and involve multiple perspectives and aim to empower the learner
Developing competencies of critical (self) reflection	A learning process relevant to development in a globalised world develops the skills to evaluate and reflect on the learner's place, role and responsibility in their community and the wider world, to change perspectives and critically scrutinise their own attitudes, stereotypes and points of view, to form their own opinion, to make autonomous and responsible choices, to participate in decision-making processes, and to learn how to learn
Supporting active engagement	This work implicitly and explicitly addresses and investigates attitudes and behaviours (of ourselves, and of others), particularly those that encourage and discourage responsible and informed action and engagement in a more just and sustainable world
The development of the above mentioned skills, values, attitudes and processes of engagement aims to:	
Active local and global citizenship	Empower people to participate in public affairs, strengthen civil society and foster a living democracy, enhance citizens' active involvement and engagement for social change within their local communities, and promote a sense of global citizenship and of co-responsibility at the global level

Source: adapted from Rajacic et al., 2010, 118.

As such, it is a pedagogy that includes influences from a range of theorists and practitioners from around the world (Andreotti, 2011; Bourn, 2008; Cronkhite, 2000), including, significantly, a number of thinkers from the Global South, such as Paulo Freire (Brazil), Ajay Kumar (India), and Catherine Odora Hoppers (South Africa).

Paulo Freire's emancipatory and participatory approach to learning (often referred to as 'popular education'), which prepares students for social change as well as active participation in democratic processes, has had a particularly strong influence on theories and practices of development education. Ajay Kumar, Associate Professor of Development Education at Jawaharlal Nehru University in India, has taken Freire's thinking forward through the assertion that development education must be concerned with:

'how learning, knowledge and education can be used to assist individuals and groups to overcome educational disadvantage, combat social exclusion and discrimination, and challenge economic and political inequalities – with a view to securing their own emancipation and promoting progressive social change' (2008, 41).

Kumar goes on to suggest that development education is a form of emancipatory and dialogical learning based on “critical humanist pedagogy” (2008). Such dialogical education, he suggests, is where learners collaboratively pose problems, enquire and seek solutions. This approach builds on Freire’s notions of teachers and students being co-investigators in an open and ongoing enquiry, and is combined with Gandhian notions of education aimed at liberating us from servitude and instilling mutual respect and trust.

Another key strand of thinking comes from Catherine Odora Hoppers, Professor of Development Education at the University of South Africa, who raises the important question of the privileging of certain knowledges at the expense of others. In particular, she emphasises the importance of valuing a variety of knowledges, particularly indigenous knowledge systems and, in doing so, explicitly engaging with the multiplicity of worlds and forms of life (Odora Hoppers, 2008 and 2010). She further argues that the focus of development education should be not on learners’ competency to adapt to the current state of globalization, but the destabilization of the homogenization of diverse forms of knowledge.

Development education practices have consistently emphasised the importance of promoting the voices of the oppressed and ensuring that those most directly affected by international development policies are heard and understood (Andreotti, 2008). Central to this approach is a recognition of the role that power and ideology plays in determining what and how education is delivered, how knowledge is constructed and interpreted, the importance of understanding dominant and subordinate cultures and of looking at the root causes of issues as well as the broader social context (Giroux, 2005; McLaren, 2009; Andreotti, 2008).

In a sense, development education can be considered a ‘pedagogy of global justice’, as its questioning and critically reflective nature inevitably raises a desire amongst learners to bring about positive social change. Development education’s critical pedagogical perspective empowers learners to further economic, political and social change, and therefore could make a valuable contribution to the global drive to secure quality education for all. This also highlights a clear connection between development education and development more broadly, in that aspects of the theoretical foundation of development education have also had a powerful influence on theories of participation and empowerment within development practice. In the 1980s, for example, Freire’s ideas were part of an emerging critique of development from Latin American theorists.

The lack of practical synergy between the fields is perhaps partly the result of a lack of recognition and collaboration from those involved in both development education and education in low- and middle-income contexts. While there are a variety of perspectives represented amongst academics, policy

makers and practitioners in both fields, there is a tendency for mainstream development discourses to view development education as an approach to promoting charity amongst affluent audiences in the Global North, with correspondingly little relevance to the Global South. Similarly, some recent research in development education has tended to see ‘development’ (or ‘the development industry’) from a critical, post-colonial stance which has perhaps led to limited engagement with mainstream development discussion and debate (Andreotti, 2008; Bryan and Bracken, 2011; Jefferess 2008). This suggests that, in order to generate innovative thinking about international education and development policy and practice in the future, there is a real need for greater engagement and collaboration on both sides,.

In particular, we argue that development education has a significant role to play in the development of effective learning, skills, global engagement and critical thinking amongst young people around the world. The nature of globalisation demands that educational programmes in all countries prepare young people to understand global relationships and concerns, cope with complex problems and live with rapid change and uncertainty. Insufficient recognition of the importance of these issues in international education and development policy, not to mention research, undermines international efforts to engage *all* citizens around the world (and not just those in the Global North) with development processes and debates.

3. Reflections on the Importance of Quality in Education

International policy and initiatives related to education in low- and middle-income country settings have historically focused on increasing access to schooling and the provision of educational infrastructure and measurable ‘inputs’, such as schools, teachers and textbooks, which were perceived to lead to improvements in basic education (Lewin, 2007, 4-5). This emphasis on provision rested on an assumption that ‘development’ – widely viewed as synonymous with economic growth – would result from increased enrolment and access to basic education. It also resulted in an instrumentalist and technical view of education focused primarily on establishing a universalized, global education infrastructure, often at the expense of attention to the quality of the education actually provided in diverse contexts around the world. It has also meant that international agendas have often been implicitly driven by a perceived need for *more* education per se, rather than *better quality* education.

Such instrumentalist approaches to development have been widely criticised for neglecting to account for the complex social and cultural dimensions of human existence (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2011; Escobar, 1994; Chambers, 1997; Ferguson, 1990). As a result, a range of countervailing efforts in international policy have since attempted to address the complex social dimensions of education and development – including work on gender equality, sustainability and educational quality. Research and policy on quality, in particular, have sought to formulate improved ways of understanding what this might mean in

various contexts (Alexander, 2008; Delors, 1996). Unfortunately, the pressure of indicators, targets and measurements has often ‘stripped’ educational goals down to enrolment rates, completion rates, gender parity indexes (Mochizuki, 2012) and basic numeracy and literacy targets.

There is a substantial academic literature related to quality, but the 2005 Global Monitoring Report – The Quality Imperative (2005,2) – presents a key policy statement about the concept. It defines two key dimensions of quality: the first relating to the development of learners’ cognitive development, and the second to ‘education’s role in promoting values and attitudes of responsible citizenship’. Clearly the latter element is far more difficult to monitor and assess, with the result that although there is broad support for more comprehensive approaches to addressing quality, cognitive development is often prioritized at the expense of the crucial values and skills needed to play an active and responsible role in society.

This indicates a need to reaffirm the social purpose of education, placing an emphasis on the learning processes themselves, rather than inputs and outputs (Alexander, 2008; Barrett, 2009). Key to this is gaining an understanding of how education equips learners to understand and shape not only development processes but also the broader impact of globalization on their lives. As Mochizuki (2012,2) highlights, what matters is promoting ‘learning achievement that correlates with development both at individual and collective levels’. This perspective aligns well with the principles of development education, and can provide important insights into pedagogical approaches and skills that support development at both of these levels.

Indeed, in many national contexts, development education and related approaches (identified by various names, including global citizenship education, global learning, education for sustainable development, etc.) actively challenge the idea that ‘education’ is driven by inputs and its success measured by objective outcomes, such as enrolment or completion rates. Rather, as outlined above, development education efforts focus on teaching approaches that encourage critical thinking skills, exposure to multiple perspectives and an awareness of global concerns. Development education therefore is not aimed at delivering fixed bodies of knowledge (e.g. information *about* development issues), but rather is a holistic approach to learning that gives equal weight to the development of knowledge, values and skills relevant to learners’ lives.¹

While these approaches are becoming increasingly integrated into school curriculums and educational agendas in higher-income country contexts around the world, pressure from international aid funders to prioritise access to ‘basic education’ has resulted in these approaches being sidelined in low- and middle-income contexts. This leaves little room for learners in such contexts to develop the meaningful knowledge and understanding required to live and work in a globalising world.

Such contrasting approaches to education in the ‘North’ and ‘South’ also contribute to the continuance of global inequalities, thus working directly against the aims of ‘one world development’. It is therefore crucial to ensure

¹ Its key concerns, therefore, also parallel debates on the links between quality and education with respect to sustainable development (Pigozzi, 2007), as well as those regarding education quality and climate change (Bangay and Blum, 2010).

that learners around the world are given equal opportunity to develop the skills, values and knowledges needed to tackle global (and local) challenges. This strongly resonates with the recently launched UNESCO Education First Initiative, which brings global citizenship and transformative learning to the fore. According to Ban Ki Moon, founder of the initiative, 'Education gives us a profound understanding that we are tied together as citizens of the global community, and that our challenges are interconnected'.² The subsequent section explores the potential contribution of development education, and its emphasis on pedagogy and global skills, to realising this global vision of education.

4. The Contribution of Development Education to Debates on Quality: Bringing Pedagogy and Global Skills to the Fore

Perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of this 'global vision' is the often harsh realities of trying to implement it. As both EFA and the MDGs were intended to address a range of complex social, economic and environmental concerns, the need to achieve 'measurable' outcomes has led to a preoccupation with targets and indicators. This has had a significant impact on efforts aimed at those dimensions of education and development – namely quality – that are less easily 'measurable'. The UNESCO Quality Imperative report suggests that 'knowledge and cognitive skills...have received the lion's share of attention in assessment exercises that have provided internationally comparable data' because they are relatively value-neutral compared to other educational goals and hence more amenable to measurement through standardised testing (Barrett, 2009,7). Similarly, EFA Goal 6 refers to 'improving all aspects of the quality of education... so that *recognized and measurable outcomes* are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills' (UNESCO, 2000,17; emphasis added). Cognitive outcomes, which are easier to measure than other elements of quality education, are therefore often favoured over key issues such as pedagogy, life skills and meeting learners' social and affective needs. In other words, 'quality has tended to be conceived not as what it actually is but as how it can be measured' (Alexander, 2008,3).

With respect to pedagogy specifically, this tendency to focus on measurement has resulted in:

'[A] recurrent tendency in the literature on education for development: making pedagogy fit the available measures rather than the measures fit the pedagogy. Pedagogy is defined as a controllable input rather than as a process whose dynamic reflects the unique circumstances of each classroom and which is therefore variable and unpredictable; and the only aspects of pedagogy which are admitted as 'inputs' are those which can be measured' (Alexander, 2008, 7-8).

² See the UN Secretary-General's Global Initiative on Education, <http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/about.html>

Discussion and initiatives related to skills have been similarly affected. EFA Goal 3, for instance, aims to develop ‘life skills’ for young people and adults, yet it has received only limited attention due to both the vagueness of the goal and uncertainty as to how to measure it (UNESCO, 2012,24). In 2012, an EFA global monitoring report on skills was specially commissioned to address these concerns. Central to that report is the conviction that if countries are to grow and prosper in a ‘rapidly changing world they need to pay even greater attention to developing a skilled workforce’ (UNESCO, 2012, 23). Debate continues, however, as to what kinds of skills should be prioritised, and how.

These (often negative) effects of a heavy emphasis on measurement are being recognised in the task of setting priorities for the post-2015 development framework. Sumner and Tiwari (Barrett, 2009, 9), for instance, argue that there should be a shift away from the ‘quantitative, physiological, material consumption set of poverty measures’ underlying the MDGs to focus on process goals influenced by a well-being, capability-enhancing and value-based approach to development. Should post-2015 development goals ‘define human development *outcomes*, or *opportunities* to achieve outcomes?’ (Karver et al., 2012, 3; emphasis added). If the latter, educational goals will need to give much greater attention to learning environments, learning processes and pedagogy. This would mean that ‘education is not only expected to enhance employability or livelihoods at the individual level and economic development at the national level but also to develop democratic values and responsible citizenship behaviour that contribute to stable and peaceful communities and nations’ (Barrett, 2009, 9).

While there is ever greater recognition of the need to focus on pedagogy and learning, and the development of critical approaches to education that incorporate diverse perspectives and skills, uncertainty remains, however, about precisely how to achieve this in practical terms. The following section highlights how development education’s focus on critical pedagogy and global skills could help to move these discussions forward.

4.1. Critical Pedagogy

Development education adopts a pedagogical approach that enables learners to challenge their own assumptions and come to understand issues from diverse perspectives. This critical approach draws on the work of theorists such as Paulo Freire, bell hooks and Henry Giroux. At the heart of Freire’s approach is an emphasis on learners’ ability to think critically about their lives and circumstances. This allows them to recognize the connections between their individual concerns and experiences and the wider social contexts in which they are embedded. Such a commitment to critical thinking has significant implications for pedagogy; it is about recognising competing views and vocabularies, and opening up new forms of knowledge and creative spaces (Giroux, 2005). This approach is focused on learning that is open and participatory, but also deeply political, and incorporates a recognition of power. It also requires learners and teachers to actively collaborate in the learning process (hooks, 1994).

A concrete example of the use of this approach in practice is the Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry (OSDE) project. It works to create an open

and safe space for learners to ‘engage critically with their own and different perspectives’ (OSDE, 2006) on a range of issues. This methodology has also been developed into a web-based programme, ‘Through Other Eyes’, which translates post-colonial theory into critical pedagogical practice by employing a variety of educational methods to enable learners to ‘identify and understand how different groups understand issues related to development and their implications for the development agenda and to critically examine these interpretations’ (Andreotti and De Souza, 2008, 23). This is crucial to avoiding the inadvertent reinforcement of ‘notions of the supremacy and universality of “our” (Western) ways of seeing and knowing, which can undervalue other knowledge systems and reinforce unequal relations of dialogue and power’ (Andreotti and De Souza, 2008, 23).

We argue that such critical approaches to pedagogy are relevant to learners throughout the world, not just those in high-income contexts. Given that the post-2015 development agenda ‘is expected to broaden its scope beyond poverty reduction and economic growth to include social and political challenges such as tackling environmental degradation, responding to climate change, promoting tolerance, democracy and good governance, and ensuring peace and security’ (UNESCO, 2013b, 2), education which incorporates these kinds of critical and reflective pedagogical approaches to learning has the potential to make a key contribution.

4.2. Global Skills

Whilst no one will dispute the value of increased numeracy and literacy skills in principle, relatively little attention has been paid thus far to the global dimension of skills development (King, 2011; UNESCO, 2012). International policy has also often failed to take into account the global context in which individual nations develop skills programmes for their citizens.

The concept of ‘global skills’, on the other hand, makes the relationship between globalisation and the skills required to cope with it explicit, and is a key part of development education. It encompasses a broad and deep conceptualisation of skills, going beyond the numeracy, literacy and technical skills needed for work to include broader social and intercultural skills that both benefit the workplace and enable people to make a positive contribution to society. Key to the development of this broader range of skills is appreciation of the social, economic and cultural context within which they are developed: a context which ‘recognises the nature of society, its cultural base, its rapidly changing economic forces and the challenges of dealing with the unknown’ (Bourn, 2011, 14).

The concept addresses people’s need for skills to understand and critically engage with the impact of globalisation on their own lives and communities, to deal with uncertainty and insecurity, to be able to critically reflect on their own values base, and to make a positive contribution to society. Economic development is often considered one of the key drivers in skill development, but in debates regarding ‘global skills’, it is vital to give adequate consideration to *social* as well as economic needs.

Global skills could therefore be said to encompass the following:

- An ability to communicate and work with people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds
- Critical thinking to question and reflect upon a range of social, economic and cultural influences on the learners' life
- Openness to a range of voices and perspectives from around the world
- Willingness to engage in society, resolve problems and seek solutions
- Recognition and understanding of the impact of globalisation on people's lives and the ability to make sense of a rapidly changing world
- Willingness to play an active role in society at local, national and international level (Bourn, 2011, 13).

This perspective draws together not only contemporary international concerns related to skills development, but also wider discussions regarding the nature and promotion of 'quality' learning. As a recent UNESCO statement argues, for example:

'...[T]he notion of "learning" in the education and development discourse cannot be reduced to learning outcomes and their measurement. It should be broadly conceived and comprehensive. It should focus on learning goals, contents and processes as well as on outcomes. It should consider the effective acquisition of foundational skills and transferable competences, as well as the relevance of learning for individuals, their families and communities, and for society at large' (UNESCO, 2013a, 5).

It is clear that globalisation poses questions not only about what is taught and which skills are developed, but *how*. This reminds us that the broader pedagogical environment is to determining the development of skills amongst learners. Many employers feel that new entrants to the labour market lack transferable skills, pointing out that such skills cannot be learned from a textbook, but must be developed through quality education. Employers require people who are able to 'deploy their knowledge to solve problems, take the initiative and communicate with team members, rather than just follow prescribed routines' (UNESCO, 2012, 28).

We argue that incorporating the concept of 'global skills' within discussions of skills development policy and initiatives post-2015 provides a means of bridging the tensions between economic/work oriented skills and social justice oriented skills that have, until now, undermined attempts to achieve EFA Goal 3.

5. Taking the Discussion Forward

As outlined above, indications of changes within the discourse of the international development sector towards the notion of 'one world development' – as opposed to binary divisions of 'North' and 'South' – and a corresponding focus on process- rather than outcome-related post-2015 development goals, must be reflected in the international education agenda. Attention is currently being drawn to education quality and the learning processes in order to address,

post-2015, the inadequacies of current EFA and education MDGs overly preoccupied with education access and outcomes. Furthermore, instrumentalist and technical views of education are increasingly being complemented by acknowledgement of the pivotal social role of education in equipping learners with the knowledge, skills and values to play an active part in transforming the world around them for the better (UNESCO, 2013b and the Education First Initiative website).

The appreciation of the importance of education for development illustrates a gradual convergence between the key concerns and approaches of development education and international policy for education in low- and middle-income contexts. This is clearly demonstrated by the Education First Initiative, which states: 'It is not enough for education to produce individuals who can read, write and count. Education must be transformative and bring shared values to life. It must cultivate an active care for the world and for those with whom we share it'.³

Overall, then, the potential of education to equip individuals and societies to deal with uncertainty regarding current and future global challenges (i.e. climate change, poverty, inequalities, etc.) and to understand and critically examine processes of development and globalization, is being increasingly recognized. Due to its long history of implementing transformative educational approaches with a global dimension, development education can make a strong contribution to these discussions, particularly with respect to critical pedagogy and global skills. There is therefore a need for greater dialogue between actors in the fields of development education and education in low- and middle-income countries in order to ensure appropriate strategies and approaches are set for the future.

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3 See <http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/220.htm>.

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