

Learning Community - Inclusive Education and Early Childhood (IEEC) Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

Learning Communities are one of the practical knowledge exchange and learning spaces, originally derived from Communities of Practice (CoP) across the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) movement. GCE established Learning Communities as virtual platforms that bring together diverse stakeholders from the GCE membership and external partners who share the interest and passion for collaborating and taking joint actions in addressing thematic issues of concern by interacting on an ongoing basis. The Learning Communities were established to serve the following purpose:

1. To provide multi-stakeholder and multi-purpose platforms where members of different constituencies with diverse expertise engage, collaborate, and share ideas and innovative practices around common topics.
2. To promote thematic discussions and sharing of information, knowledge, and resources on GCE's key advocacy and campaigning priorities.
3. To respond to the emerging thematic learning needs and advocacy moments.

Currently, the GCE Secretariat coordinates four Learning Communities, which include: i. Education in Emergencies (EiE), ii. Education Financing, iii. Youth and Student Engagement, and (iv) Gender. GCE-US, Light for the World, and other involved organisations and advocates have been coordinating the Inclusive Education and Early Childhood (IEEC) CoP carried out through bimonthly meetings and coordinating participation in all opportunities for advocacy work related to inclusive education and early childhood topics. From June 2023, the GCE Secretariat based in South Africa will be expanding the capacity and reach of the IEEC CoP / Learning Community, which will be coordinated alongside the other four platforms indicated above.

Through this document, the GCE Secretariat is sharing suggested terms of restructuring the IEEC CoP / Learning Community including the standard deliverables that will inform the general coordination of this platform. These Terms of Reference (ToRs) include GCE's brief analysis of inclusive education and early childhood education, outline of the processes set to coordinate the learning community compositions and membership, indication of tools and platforms used, indicative standard plan for annual review and updates and lastly the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plans for tracking the results and impact of the IEEC Learning Community¹.

¹ The GCE Secretariat adopted the term "Learning Community" to replace Community of Practice to ensure that continuous learning, engagement, and joint advocacy through these platforms is facilitated in between meetings or

2. Situation Analysis: Inclusive Education and Early Childhood Education

The UN Transforming Education Summit was an opportunity for world leaders to commit to transforming education so that every child in the world can access quality, equitable, inclusive education and lifelong learning – including the 240 million children with disabilities worldwide who, even before COVID-19 disruptions to education, experienced disparities in learning. Compared to children without disabilities, children with disabilities were 49% more likely to have never attended school and 42% less likely to have foundational reading and numeracy skills (UNICEF, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these discrepancies, compounding the learning crisis for the most marginalised learners.

By 2021, UNESCO (GEM Report 2021) estimates that 75% of children were enrolled in pre-primary education one year before the official primary entry age in the school year ending in 2019. This figure considerably varies all across regions, showing significant disparity in the access to ECCE. In sub-Saharan Africa and in Northern Africa and Western Asia, for example, the rate was about 50% (GEM report 2021).

Global statistics confirm the limited supply of care and education services for children from 0 to 3 years of age. Millions of women around the planet see their opportunities to access the world of work, education, free time and social and community participation relegated because they do not have access to institutionalised programs or in the family framework. In addition, children lose enormous opportunities for socialisation, learning, interaction and play with their peers.

GCE fully subscribes that every child – especially the most marginalised – should have the opportunity to access early childhood care and education and governments should ensure comprehensive and integrated services for young children – including care, health and education – that are regularly monitored to ensure high quality. GCE believes that curriculum and approaches should meet the educational, developmental, nutritional, health and individual needs of children and that parents should be educated and supported, while teachers and other staff should be trained, qualified, supported, and valued professionals.

3. Key Engagement Topics and Platforms

The engagements in the IEEC Learning Community will be centred around the following critical topics relating to inclusive and early childhood education advocacy and campaign priorities, aligning with the 2023-2027 advocacy and campaign priorities of the GCE Movement. However, should

webinars by integrating a variety of innovative online platforms for knowledge banking and sharing around topics of engagement for each learning community.

members of the community wish and suggest exploring other topics that may not be directly linked to the sub-topics outlined below, the suggestions will be considered for integration in the plans that will be developed for each year.

Inclusive Education and Early Childhood Development – Subtopics
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disability inclusion 2. Inclusion of historically excluded populations and groups 3. Transformative ECCE

The activities of the IEEC Learning Community will be delivered through an interconnected process that makes use of accessible online platforms and tools to enable the community members to interact on an ongoing basis. These include interactive online engagement spaces and discussions through webinars and meetings with the idea of linking the creating collaborations from these engagements into undertaking joint advocacy actions, as depicted below.

Interactive Online Space (Learning Hub)	Online Meetings/Webinars	Joint Advocacy Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IEEC Repository of Resources ▪ Repository of Practices ▪ IEEC Online Discussion Page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quarterly Webinars ▪ Learning Briefs ▪ Discussion Materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contributions to joint advocacy actions ▪ Contributions to joint campaigning actions

4. Composition and Membership

Lead Convener: GCE Secretariat

The IEEC Learning Community is coordinated and managed by the GCE Secretariat. The Secretariat sets up the communities and develops the process for effective coordination and implementation of activities to achieve the desired results and impact. GCE provides and caters for the administrative and operational costs of running the IEEC Learning Community.

Co-Conveners: Organisations/Coalitions

GCE is introducing a new coordination approach for its learning communities, which entails the involvement of GCE coalitions, organisations and partners with knowledge and expertise in a specific topic of interest for each learning community as co-conveners.

The primary function of co-convening partners will be working with the GCE Secretariat to lead at least one session per year for the Learning Community that they have both interest and knowledge to contribute to. This approach will ensure that we strengthen collaboration and members' contributions into the coordination of learning communities. The co-conveners will be expected to fully engage, contribute, and support the execution of their proposed webinar/meeting, including organising, promoting, and facilitating the learning community activities.

Membership

Membership to the IEEC Learning Community is open to representatives of member coalitions and organisations of the GCE movement, as well as representatives of interested external organisations and education stakeholders beyond the GCE movement. The existing Inclusive Education & Early Childhood CoP membership of nearly 500 members, current managed by the GCE-US will be reviewed from June 2023 as GCE will be a loose permanent audience whose engagement goes beyond mere participation but also to contribute to delivering the activities and reflect on the results and impact of the learning community.

As a result, both re-joining and new members of the learning community will be encouraged to undertake the following registration process once to reconfirm and recommit membership once the IEEC Learning Community is relaunched:

1. IEEC Learning Community [Membership Registration Form](#). The GCE Secretariat will maintain an up-to-date directory of all members including organisations, email addresses, and other contact details.
2. [Register](#) to access the Learning Hub.
3. Join the IEEC Learning Community [online page](#) on the Learning Hub.
4. Community email address: ieec@gcelearning.org.

Upon gaining access to the IEEC Learning Community online page, registered members will be able to access the learning community's resources, including guidelines to contribute to the community, a repository of practices, a repository of resources, a community calendar and links to the current advocacy and campaign calls or actions on inclusive education and early childhood development.

The GCE Secretariat will also reach out to potential members from all sides of the audience through existing mailing lists, website, social media platforms to publish the invite to the IEEC Learning Community. For questions, members can email: khuselwa@campaignforeducation.org.