

Summary: RTEI Partners Meeting
 February 22-25, 2016

Meeting Overview

Date: February 22-25, 2016

Location: Protea Hotel Courtyard, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

In partnership with HakiElimu, this partners meeting was conducted after the 2015 RTEI pilot was completed and brought together four of the five pilot partners as well as individuals and organizations that have provided important insights in prior RTEI consultations. Meeting objectives were focused on hearing from pilot partners about their experience in completing RTEI as well as their lessons learned and identified areas of improvement. Feedback areas fell into general categories of process, content, calculations, and next steps. Secondary objectives included reflecting on open issues from prior consultations, looking more deeply at the 2016 first round and in country advocacy opportunities, and exploring other aspects of the RTEI community of practice. A training of the Right to Education Project's new monitoring guide was also conducted on the final day of the meeting.

Meeting Agenda

Monday, February 22

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| 8:30 | ARRIVAL |
| 9:00 | INTRODUCTION TO THE MEETING AND WELCOMING PARTICIPANTS Welcome and introduction of participants |
| 9:20 | RTEI PROJECT BACKGROUND <i>Moderator: Tony Baker and Will Smith, RESULTS Educational Fund</i> What is RTEI?, key issues out of 2015 consultations, the 2015 pilot, plans for 2016 and beyond, meeting objectives |
| 10:30 | <i>Tea & coffee break</i> |

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| 11:00 | <p>GOVERNANCE Moderator: Maxwell Rafamoyo, ECOZI and RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 minute presentation by pilot partner on Governance issue revealed by RTEI that partner is highlighting in advocacy; partner's general experience through pilot • Group discussion on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Issues in data collection/availability ○ Specific indicator troubleshooting |
| 12:30 | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 13:30 | <p>AVAILABILITY Moderator: Addie Unsi, E-Net Philippines and RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 minute presentation by pilot partner on Availability issue revealed by RTEI that partner is highlighting in advocacy; partner's general experience through pilot • Group discussion on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Issues in data collection/availability ○ Specific indicator troubleshooting |
| 15:00 | <i>Tea & coffee break</i> |
| 15:30 | <p>ACCESSIBILITY Moderator: Ben Sadek, RESULTS UK and RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 minute presentation by pilot partner on Accessibility issue revealed by RTEI that partner is highlighting in advocacy; partner's general experience through pilot • Group discussion on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Issues in data collection/availability ○ Specific indicator troubleshooting |
| 17:00 | <i>Close</i> |

Tuesday, February 23

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| 8:30 | ARRIVAL |
| 9:00 | <p>ACCEPTABILITY Moderator: Chioma Osuji, CSACEFA and RESULTS</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 minute presentation by pilot partner on Acceptability issue revealed by RTEI that partner is highlighting in advocacy; partner's general experience through pilot • Group discussion on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Issues in data collection/availability ○ Specific indicator troubleshooting |
| 10:30 | <i>Tea & coffee break</i> |
| 11:00 | <p>ADAPTABILITY <i>Moderator: Boniventura Godfrey & John Kalage, HakiElimu and RESULTS</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 minute presentation by pilot partner on Adaptability issue revealed by RTEI that partner is highlighting in advocacy; partner's general experience through pilot • Group discussion on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Issues in data collection/availability ○ Specific indicator troubleshooting |
| 12:30 | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 13:30 | <p>CONTENT REVIEW <i>Moderator: Tony Baker, RESULTS Educational Fund</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking a step back/a big picture review of the content of the RTEI Questionnaire as a whole • Special issues raised out of pilot • Revisiting unfinished feedback from 2015 consultations • Deciding on any indicator-specific issues raised in previous sessions but not yet addressed • Indicator mapping across complementary initiatives |
| 15:00 | <i>Tea & coffee break</i> |
| 15:30 | CONTENT REVIEW (CONT'D) |
| 17:00 | <i>Close</i> |

Wednesday, February 24

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| 8:30 | ARRIVAL |
| 9:00 | <p>RTEI CALCULATION METHODOLOGY <i>Moderator: Will Smith, RESULTS Educational Fund</i></p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current pilot calculation methodology • Issues discovered • Alternative models |
| 10:30 | <i>Tea & coffee break</i> |
| 11:00 | RTEI CALCULATION METHODOLOGY (CONT'D) |
| 12:30 | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 13:30 | <p>PROCESS REVIEW <i>Moderator: Tony Baker, RESULTS Educational Fund</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General feedback on process • Training needs? • Government review/engagement • Advocacy application |
| 15:00 | <i>Tea & coffee break</i> |
| 15:30 | <p>MOVING FORWARD <i>Moderator: Tony Baker, RESULTS Educational Fund</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would be helpful across the RTEI community of practice? • Additional communication/info sharing? • Advisory group? |
| 17:00 | <i>Close</i> |

Thursday, February 25

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| 8:30 | ARRIVAL |
| 9:00 | <p>RIGHT TO EDUCATION PROJECT MONITORING GUIDE TRAINING <i>Moderator: Delphine Dorsi and Erica Murphy, Right to Education Project</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background |
| 10:30 | <i>Tea & coffee break</i> |
| 11:00 | <p>RIGHT TO EDUCATION PROJECT MONITORING GUIDE TRAINING (CONT'D) <i>Moderator: Delphine Dorsi and Erica Murphy, Right to Education Project</i></p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview |
| 12:30 | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 13:30 | <p>RIGHT TO EDUCATION PROJECT MONITORING GUIDE TRAINING (CONT'D) <i>Moderator: Delphine Dorsi and Erica Murphy, Right to Education Project</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration |
| 15:00 | VISIT TO HAKIELIMU'S OFFICE AND CLOSING |
| 18:00 | <i>Close</i> |

Feedback from Participants

We want to thank Ben Sadek from RESULTS UK for taking notes during the meeting and others for sharing their notes. Below we highlight some of the main takeaways from the three-day focus on RTEI. If essential feedback from the partner meeting has been omitted from the comments below, and you would like them to be added, please email Tony Baker at tbaker@results.org.

Process

- Overall there appears to be proof of concept on methodology.
 - Concerns from prior consultations about CSO ability to complete the RTEI questionnaire were dispelled as all pilot partners completed the questionnaire on time.
 - The anonymous peer review process significantly strengthened the quality of results.
 - Results identified potential focus areas for countries which were then expanded on in country briefs which provided additional country context to help fuller understand the issue.
- The RTEI process increases CSO capacity.
 - There were numerous accounts of pilot partners learning more about their national education system and engaging directly with government officials to access information.
 - Coming out of the RTEI process pilot partners may be some of the strongest national experts on the right to education in their countries, enabling them to drive additional advocacy and trainings through their coalitions and networks.
- There is a need to further refine the advocacy year of the RTEI cycle.
 - RTEI runs on a two year cycle with the first year used for completing the RTEI questionnaire and creating country briefs and the second year using the information to support in-country advocacy.
 - This meeting was used as a forum to brainstorm potential areas of and approaches to advocacy.
 - Pilot partners discussed the potential to use RTEI results in their strategic planning as well as to engage in parallel reporting to UN human rights committees and potentially inform national education plans.

- More information on the advocacy year can be found below in the next steps section.

Overall

- There is a lack of alignment between structural and process indicators. Generally both are needed to see if the law is being implemented in practice.
 - Each section of the Questionnaire will be reviewed to better match structural and process indicators. A few new indicators will be created where needed.
- Some subthemes seem sparse and do not fully represent the concept captured in the title.
 - The better alignment between structural and process indicators will add to the depth in each subtheme.
 - Additionally, the potential combination of the Core and Companion Questionnaire to create an overall score will also add to the comprehensiveness of each subtheme.
 - It is important to recognize that subthemes do not fully represent a concept, as concepts such as teachers are complex. Subtheme titles may be reworded as necessary.
- With some countries having multiple sources of potentially conflicting data, there is a need to identify preferred data sources.
 - This was done informally through pilot partner trainings but should be explicit in the Questionnaire and other RTEI tools.
 - General guidelines for data preferences include:
 - National data is preferred over international data.
 - Most recent data preferred.
 - National Ministry of Education data preferred over other ministries, followed by the Ministry or Bureau of Statistics.

Governance

- Question on justiciability of the right to education in national laws. Some concerns with the complexity of the concept.
 - Additional guidance was provided to pilot partners.
 - For the “Yes, but not justiciable” response, respondents should be prompted to explain their reasoning in the comment box.
 - Consider adding an indicator asking about whether citizens can or have taken the government to court over the right to education.
- There is no regional treaty indicated for countries in Asia.
 - After group discussion there was no treaty identified.
 - RTEI partner in the Philippines will look to see if there such a treaty exists.
- The question on data availability is really two questions.
 - The question will be split into two by first asking how often data is collected and then asking if the collected data is publicly available.
 - The response categories will be adjusted to indicate that the preferred timeline for data collection is annually.
 - More precise definition needs to be used for data.
- There are too many potentially very political subcategories in the data disaggregation question.
 - Reduce the number of categories considered. Perhaps to the disaggregation asked for in the rest of the Questionnaire.
 - Additionally, as disaggregated data is requested elsewhere, this question may not be needed.

Availability

- It was recognized going through RTEI pilot calculations that this theme is in need of substantial benchmarking. Explorations across SDG, GPE, UNESCO, RTEI, and RTE Project indicators did not reveal appropriate international benchmarks. In alignment with the national standards that capture the assessment indicator the following approach is proposed.
 - First, does the country have minimal standards in place (for sanitation, toilets, textbooks, etc.)
 - Second, what is the national standard.
 - Third, what does the current data show.
 - For indexing purposes, the relative percent of the national standard (i.e. how close are they to meeting the national standard with 100 percent indicating that the national standard is met) can be calculated.
- The question asking what percentage of school has toilets in inadequate.
 - Preceding this question we should add a pupil-toilet question following the approach outlined above.
- There is some concern that more developed countries may not collect information on sanitation or textbooks.
 - The approach outlined above may keep developed countries from having fully absent subtheme scores.

Accessibility

- Participants had an in-depth discussion on mother tongue and minority language.
 - The right to education basis for including mother tongue in the Questionnaire needs to be reviewed.
 - Participants emphasized the importance of education in mother tongue in the early years with a transition to national language in higher education levels.
 - RTE Project will send REF a UNESCO concept note on mother tongue.
- What is included in the measure of household spending, should it be restricted to just spending on fees?
 - A question on household spending on school fees can be included, although the general sense from participants was that household surveys do not always ask for a breakdown at that level.
- Does private school enrollment and completion rates have a basis in the right to education framework?
 - In reviewing the right to education framework, the focus is on overall enrollment and completion rates.
 - It was suggested that disaggregation by public and private may be useful for country level advocacy but can skew the Index.
 - Private school enrollment share and private school completion rates will be removed from the Index.
 - There are remaining private school questions on textbook alignment, minimum standards, and liberty to choose.

Acceptability

- Concerns with assessment question being limited to math and literacy and promoting those over other valuable parts to education.

- A question asking how the assessment aligns with the aims of education as laid out in the right to education framework is being looked into.
 - This would follow related questions that cover the aims of education through national law, curriculum, and teacher training.
 - This would potentially identify countries that only focus on math and literacy in their assessments.
- Learning environment subtheme is limited.
 - More questions on school safety and infrastructure may be included in the subtheme.
 - This may entail having indicators correspond to multiple subthemes.
 - Technically this makes Index calculation more challenging.

Adaptability

- Subtheme on children with disabilities seems to be missing information on teachers.
 - There are some questions on teacher preparation for children with disabilities included in the Companion Questionnaire.
 - Adding a process question in this subtheme will be explored.
- There is a need to further understand and break down the question discussing migrant, refugee, and internally displaced people.
 - IDP are citizens and therefore should fall under the general right to education laws.
 - Need to explore whether there is justification for identifying IDP independently in the right to education framework.
 - Consider breaking question into question on migrants and question on refugees.
 - Consider adding alignment with education system, similar to question on alignment of education available in prison to general education.

RTEI Calculation

- Concern with initial response to Index scores.
 - Scores seem too high/misrepresentative.
 - Scores may be dismissed if they do not represent general understanding of the right to education in the country.
 - Especially problematic when developed countries are added to the Index.
 - To normalize the range and increase the face validity of the Index the following approach will be tried.
 - Combine the Core and Companion indicators into an overall Index score.
 - Companion indicators, which capture progressively realized rights, will be added to the Index score using approach A from the SERF Index.
 - The basic structure of subthemes, themes, and governance and the 4 As will be maintained.
 - Elevate data availability to a theme to put greater importance on missing data.
 - Need to consider whether missing data should be calculated at the indicator or subtheme level.
 - Equally weighing structural, process, and outcome indicators
 - As outcome indicators make up the minority of indicators through the Questionnaire, equally weighing the three types would put greater emphasis on not just passing laws but realizing the right to education.
 - Reclassify completion and enrollment as outcome indicators to better align with RTE's monitoring guide.

- **Benchmarks**
 - International benchmarks are generally not available.
 - National benchmarks or standards will be used with the distance from the benchmark used in calculations.
- **Data availability**
 - General consensus that the present way data availability is calculated does not provide a strong enough missing data penalty. As disaggregation is a key issue in all countries it should be highlighted.
 - Considering moving data availability to the theme level.
 - Encouraged pilot partners to identify missing data issues in their country brief.

Next Steps

- **Greater collaboration with RTE's monitoring guide.**
 - Exploring ways that RTEI and the monitoring guide can support each other.
 - Potential for in-country training.
 - RTEI as a diagnostic tool spotlighting issues on which the monitoring guide can be used to explore more deeply.
- **How can RTEI be used to support the SDGs.**
 - Potentially creating an SDG transversal theme from the SDGs list of global and thematic indicators.
 - RTEI can be used for shadow reporting on the SDGs. For example SDG indicator 4.1 does not capture access to free and compulsory education.
- **Future RTEI products and support.**
 - Website currently under development.
 - Global pilot report will be out shortly.
 - Ecourse is being designed to help with pre-data collection partner training.
- **Advisory group.**
 - Discussed and general interest was present for the formation of an advisory group.
 - The advisory group is not a board or steering committee.
 - Ongoing discussions on what the function of the advisory group would be.
 - Present thinking includes help in Questionnaire review, country briefs review, planning, advising/lesson sharing, network connections on specific issues or in-country contacts, and coordination across right to education initiatives.
 - Participants identified pertinent organizations, expert knowledge, or skills that should be present in the advisory group.
 - Suggestions included UNESCO, GCE (Global, regional, and national bodies), methodologist/index expert/statistician, teachers' union, GPE, human rights experts, or donors.
- **Greater collaboration across right to education initiatives more broadly.**
 - As above, there is the interest and real possibility for greater coordination across right to education initiatives, including RTEI, RTE's monitoring guide, SDG shadow reporting, UN parallel reporting, engagement of Local Education Group/GPE processes in education sector planning and review, and strategic litigation. Leading organizations including REF, RTE, and GCE will continue to explore how to enhance such coordination.

List of Participants

Sylvain Aubry, Global Initiative for Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
Tony Baker, RESULTS Educational Fund
Mireille de Koning, Open Society Foundations
Delphine Dorsi, Right to Education Project
Boniventura Godfrey, HakiElimu
John Kalage, HakiElimu
Erica Murphy, Right to Education Project
Chioma Osuji, Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA)
Maxwell Rafomoyo, Education Coalition of Zimbabwe (ECOZI)
Rene Raya, Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE)
Ben Sadek, RESULTS UK
Cathleen Sekwao, Tanzania Education Network (TENMET)
William Smith, RESULTS Educational Fund
Anjela Taneja, GCE-Global
Addie Unsi, E-Net Philippines
Boaz Waruku, Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA)
Antonia Wulff, Education International