

Consultation Overview

Date: April 23, 2015

Time: 12:00 GMT – 1:00 GMT

This consultation focused on the Draft RTEI Questionnaire. It solicited general feedback on the proposed indicators, embedded guidance in the questionnaire, and potential areas or indicators omitted from the Draft RTEI Questionnaire. Additionally the consultation sought out specific support regarding concerns with data availability and comparability. Given the richness of the material covered the one-hour call acted only as a starting point of more specific conversations and feedback that can be provided over email and in the documents themselves.

Prior to the consultation call, individuals were provided the materials below via email. Included in this email and re-emphasized at the end of the call were directions for providing feedback on the questionnaire which included the following five suggested steps.

1. Read the RTEI Background Paper to get familiar with project aims and history.
2. Review the Background to Indicator Selection to explore the RTEI Indicator Criterion and the key issues and challenges in selecting appropriate indicators.
3. Explore the Draft RTEI Questionnaire. Be sure to read through the full questionnaire as many of the specifics are addressed through the disaggregation of individual questions.
4. Provide comments on included indicators or suggest additional indicators using the RTEI Questionnaire Feedback Guidance.
5. Email William Smith at wsmith@results.org with your comments, feedback, or questions.

The full consultation period will run until Friday, May 15th.

Materials Included in Consultation

- **[Background to Indicator Selection](#)**: This document outlines the process of identifying and selecting indicators for inclusion in the draft RTEI Questionnaire. It includes RTEI Inclusion Criterion, addresses general concerns with index specificity and data availability, and provides examples of how RTEI Indicator Criterion was applied to already-reviewed indicators.
- **[Draft RTEI Questionnaire](#)**: The Draft RTEI Questionnaire is the primary document for feedback at this time. Civil society partners will be supported to complete the questionnaire over a two-month period, collecting the information necessary to assess a country's progress on various areas of the right to education. Information from the RTEI Questionnaire will be used to calculate overall RTEI results, providing country-specific results that act as indications as to how well a country respects, protects, and fulfills the right to education for its citizens. This draft in its current state represents an all-in-one document including the questionnaire, guide, and fillable forms.

This draft also represents a comprehensive attempt to capture indicators/questions explicitly derived from the international right to education legal framework, anticipating that this consultation will serve to help further refinement.

- **[Draft Framework for RTEI Analytic Handbook](#)**: This draft outlines the framework of the RTEI Analytic Handbook which will provide users with the means for interpreting overall index results as well as how the index can be flexibly used to draw attention to different themes, such as private education, girls' education, income inequality, regional disparities, teachers, etc. For each theme, the Analytic Handbook will provide possible interpretations of the responses and potential leverage points to address if results are low. Although not the focus of this consultation, feedback on the framework is welcome.
- **[RTEI Questionnaire Feedback Guidance](#)**: This form provides guidance for participants should they wish to provide feedback on specific indicators included in the Draft RTEI Questionnaire or suggest other indicators for inclusion.

Consultation Agenda

- Goals of Consultation (Tony Baker, RESULTS Educational Fund)
 - Where we are at.
 - What we hope to achieve in this hour.
- Introduction to Right to Education Index (RTEI) and Project Background
 - Project background (Tony Baker)
 - General Comments/Questions from Participants
 - RTEI tools included in this consultation (Will Smith, RESULTS Educational Fund)
- Draft RTEI Questionnaire (Will Smith)
 - Governance and the 4 A's
 - Themes, subthemes, and transversal themes
 - How to provide feedback
- Open Forum for Feedback from Participants

Feedback from Participants

When provided responses to feedback from RESULTS Educational Fund (REF) staff are included below the initial participant feedback in *italics*. If feedback from the consultative call has been omitted from the comments below and you would like them to be added please email Will Smith at wsmith@results.org.

Comments of Breadth of Index

- It was suggested that the index should focus on one or two areas instead of being so ambitious in the first phase.
 - *Response indicated that this draft the RTEI Questionnaire started as comprehensively as possible. The consultation, ideally, would be used to narrow things down further.*
- It was proposed to isolate 10 of the most important indicators to produce an index to complement the questionnaire. This would create an index that would be representative and include a good number of countries.
- The issue of reducing indicators or focusing on one specific aspect of the right to education was raised?

- *Response indicated that the project design is not an issue-based index. Although the closest might be core content or minimum obligations index, but that may be similar to what the RTEI Questionnaire is to date. REF is looking for the logical ground for further targeting but in a way that does not turn RTEI into an issue-based index and would welcome feedback on how to further refine this.*

Data Availability

- Concerns for data availability included whether it would be realistic to get data needed (i.e. expenditures in 2015 for 2013, 2014 data in 2015). Additionally, it was suggested that most countries cannot complete data in time and that many indicators are not that recent.
- It was suggested that some of the included indicators may be too subjective, even if peer reviewed. Some indicators may be limited to individual opinion.

Practical Concerns

- Participants inquired about which countries would be included in the pilot.
 - *Response indicated that pilot countries have not been identified at this time. REF is hoping to work with 5 countries (3 from Africa, 1 from Asia, 1 from Latin America) to check for regional variance.*
- It was suggested that finding organizations that have the time and ability to collect the information needed for the index may be challenging.
 - *Response indicated that REF believes the pilot process will help recognize gaps in necessary support for data collectors.*

Index Creation

- The issue of converting responses to numbers was brought up. This included concern over the grey area that cannot be captured in some indicators that are presently designed to be coded 1 (yes) and 0 (no).
 - *Response indicated that the questionnaire has some binary questions and some questions with 4 or 5 responses on a scale. The scales include descriptors like regularly and rarely which REF is asking for assistance in defining.*
 - *Response indicated that REF believes the triangulation and verification process with independent reviews and government comments will strengthen validity.*
- The challenge of using numbers to capture the nuances of the right to education was emphasized.

Concerns with Quantification/Rankings/Accuracy

- It was suggested that REF look at this more project more as a report than an index.
- Participants were concerned that RTEI might be used in the naming and shaming of countries. The naming and shaming of countries is especially problematic when rankings are provided off of a limited set of indicators.
- The issue of praising a country that seems to be doing well but actually is not was brought up and weighing indicators were suggested as one approach to ensure that results accurately represent what is happening in countries.
- It was suggested that results of the index many represent relative resources, with higher scoring countries being those with more resources.

Other Comments

- Participants asked if there was a link between plans of action and costing and if the omission of the link was purposeful.
 - *Response indicated that costing is not currently included in plans of action. REF suggests that this is where comparing across sub-themes would be useful, plans of action can be evaluated in light of the funding directed towards different education levels.*
- It was suggested that with the human rights framework constantly evolving it may be challenging to ever capture a full set of indicators.
 - *Response indicated that the RTEI depends on a certain level of consistency to track progress over time. Knowing the index will hold governments accountable, the included indicators lean heavily on explicit derivation, i.e. indicators that are in treaties and conventions. Questions in the present draft are taken nearly verbatim from the international right to education framework. Do to this strict explicit derivation criteria REF is not considering indicators of indicators for the RTEI.*
- Financing and resources were identified by participants as a potentially weak spot for the index.
- It was suggested that the index does not, in its current form, reflect differences between immediate and progressive obligations.
 - *Response indicated that some progressively-realized questions had previously been removed from the index. To capture progressive realization REF hopes to use interval data collected over time.*

List of Participants

David Archer, ActionAid

Sylvain Aubry, Global Initiative for Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (GI-ESCR)

Tony Baker, RESULTS Educational Fund

Kolleen Bouchane, A World at School

Allison Corkery, Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR)

Delphine Dorsi, Right to Education Project

Anna Gelderd, RESULTS UK

Laura Gianecchini, Campaña Latinoamericana por el Derecho a la Educación (CLADE)

Ed Gragert, Global Campaign for Education, U.S. Chapter (GCE-US)

Allison Grossman, RESULTS

Zehra Kaneez, Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE)

Albert Mitchell, New Jersey Minority Educational Development (NJ MED)

Erica Murphy, ActionAid

Susan Randolph, University of Connecticut (UConn)

Rene Raya, Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE)

Taryn Russell, RESULTS Canada

Will Smith, RESULTS Educational Fund

Anne Sørensen, IBIS Denmark

Anjela Taneja, Global Campaign for Education (GCE)

Nikola Wachter, Education International (EI)