



*Introduction to Parallel Group Sessions  
Parallel Sessions, 14:30 – 16:00  
Wednesday 20 May 2015  
Room XXX*

## ***Session Title: Quality Primary and Secondary Education – An Increased Focus on Learning***

### **Background**

Education is fundamental to development. Learning fosters the accomplishment of key development achievements, from health advances and agricultural innovation to private sector progression. Education is the foundation upon which countries experience growth, contributing to social, political, economic, and environmental advances, as well as underpinning peace and security. Despite recent progress in getting children in school, economic, gender and ethnic disparities, and factors such as conflict and disability, still prevent 58 million children of primary school age and 63 million children of lower secondary school age from attending school and learning relevant knowledge and skills, particularly the poorest and hardest to reach.

When it comes to learning, progress has been even less encouraging. Today, an estimated 250 million children are unable to read and write, even after many of them have spent several years in school. Disadvantaged populations are disproportionately affected by shortcomings of education systems, with wide gulfs existing—in terms of both access and quality—among students from different income levels, refugee students affected by conflict, and other marginalized groups.

To fulfill its promise as a driver of poverty elimination and shared prosperity—and also to fulfill the human right to education in a meaningful way—education must mean more than just getting children into classrooms. It must also ensure that all children gain the skills necessary to succeed in life and work.

### **Objectives**

This session will address the target *to ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality basic education of at least 9 years leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes*. A focus on learning and equity will be at the forefront of the discussion, which will bring light to the challenges and opportunities surrounding how education systems can provide all children with quality basic education that will enable them to learn the skills necessary to succeed in life and work. Panelists will share knowledge and experience in this area, highlighting in particular strategies and priority areas that help ensure this education target is achieved.

## Key issues

- Ensuring all children can go to school and learn is essential to ending extreme poverty and building shared prosperity.
- Investments in education should achieve not only higher rates of schooling enrollment and completion but also learning for all, because growth, development, and poverty reduction depend on the knowledge and skills that people acquire.
- Learning for all means ensuring that *all* students, not just the most privileged or gifted, acquire the knowledge and skills that they need.
- Greater efforts and support are necessary to ensure that education systems deliver, especially for the hardest-to-reach.
- Funding alone will not be enough to promote learning for all; a system's ability to transform resources efficiently into learning outcomes is necessary.
- An education system's policies and institutions for governance, accountability, information, financing rules, and school management must all be aligned with learning for all children.
- The provision of good quality inputs, teachers and instructional processes that enable all learners to acquire relevant knowledge, skills and competencies is key to achieving relevant learning outcomes.
- Effectively measuring learning outcomes is an essential part of the education system necessary to improve the quality of education.

## Guiding questions for discussion:

Possible questions include:

- Why is there an increased focus on learning in the post-2015 education agenda?
- How can we ensure that the most marginalized children have access to school and learn?
- Please share an intervention your country has embarked upon that led to the achievement of improved learning. What were key components of this intervention and how did it fit into broader education system reforms?

**For further information on this session, please contact:** Veronica Grigera ([vgriegera@worldbank.org](mailto:vgriegera@worldbank.org)) or Jess Cross ([jcross@worldbank.org](mailto:jcross@worldbank.org)), World Bank Group

## **SPEAKERS**

### **OPENING REMARKS**

**World Bank Group** - Claudia Costin, Senior Director (**CONFIRMED**)

### **MODERATED PANEL DISCUSSION**

**Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam** - Nguyen Vinh Hien, Vice Minister of Education and Training of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (**CONFIRMED**)

**Ministry of General Education, Sudan** – Suad Abdel Raziq Mohamed Sayeed, Minister of General Education (**CONFIRMED**)

**Ministry of National Education, Poland** – Professor Zbigniew Marciniak, Former Polish Under-Secretary of State (**CONFIRMED**)

**Twaweza East Africa** - Dr. John Mugo, Director of Data and Voice (**CONFIRMED**)

**Department for International Development** –Jane Edmondson, Head of Human Development (**CONFIRMED**)

**Global Partnership for Education** – Julia Gillard, Chair of the Board of Directors of Global Partnership for Education and Former Australian Prime Minister (**LIKELY**)