

# FORMAT AND PARTICIPATION

## E-discussion, “Building a future for today’s youth: improving access to education” on Facebook

**16 February to 16 March 2011**

The e-discussion aims to address the following [five principles](#) the [United Nations Academic Impact](#):

1. A commitment to educational opportunity for all people regardless of gender, race, religion or ethnicity;
2. A commitment to the opportunity for every interested individual to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for the pursuit of higher education;
3. A commitment to building capacity in higher education systems across the world;
4. A commitment to addressing issues of poverty through education; and
5. A commitment to promoting sustainability through education.

### **Format**

Five members of the United Nations Academic Impact will be selected to participate in the project. Four will moderate the overall four-week discussions on Facebook, and the fifth will coordinate, in collaboration with the Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), a short report presenting some of the key policies. Key recommendations will be inserted in the report of the UN Secretary-General on the theme of “Education”, to be presented at the annual session of ECOSOC in July 2011.

### **First week, 16 February 2011 ([Check the online discussions](#))**

During the first week, starting on Wednesday 16 February, discussions should focus on **principle #3**, the important aspect of educational opportunity for all people regardless of gender, race, religion or ethnicity. While universities will be responsible for managing the discussion, it is suggested that questions focus on, but be not limited to, the following issues: the level of education; educational policy; cost of access to education; access to education by girls; the role of race and religion in access to education...

## **Second week, 23 February 2011 ([Check the online discussions](#))**

During the second week, starting on Wednesday 23 February, discussions should focus on **principles #4 and 5**, the opportunity for every interested individual to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for the pursuit of higher education, and building capacity in higher education systems across the world. While universities will be responsible for managing the discussion, it is suggested that questions focus on, but be not limited to, the following issues: the role of secondary education in ensuring access to higher education; cost of access to higher education; unemployment rate for university graduates; government policies in favour of higher education, and in relation to the job market; government policies promoting vocational training in relation with the job market; global education opportunities such as study abroad or exchange programmes...

## **Third week, 2 March 2011 ([Check the online discussions](#))**

During the third week, starting on Wednesday 2 March, discussions should focus on **principle #8**, a commitment to addressing issues of poverty through education. While universities will be responsible for managing the discussion, it is suggested that questions focus on, but be not limited to, the following issues: free access to education; government incentives for education, including vocational training; strategies to ensure that local talents are employed; strategies to bring back to their countries of origin young nationals and professionals who have emigrated abroad ...

## **Fourth week, 9 March**

During the fourth week, discussions should focus on **principle #9**, a commitment to promoting sustainability through education. While universities will be responsible for managing the discussion, it is suggested that questions focus on, but be not limited to, the following issues: steps taken to ensure that educational goals have an impact on sustainable development policies; governmental programmes in place to raise awareness about sustainability issues...

## **Outcome**

The outcome of the e-discussion will be reported back to the Economic and Social Council at the Global Preparatory Meeting expected to take place during the first week of April 2011. The four moderators will be expected to present key findings of the discussion and their implications for policy

formulation along with the moderators of the e-discussion that will be taking place on UNDP's MDG-Net.