

[Facilitator's Note: Welcome to the 5th Annual ECOSOC AMR E-Discussion on Education: Closing the Gap. The third phase focused on Innovation in Education. The moderator's message can be found [here](#) and background information can be found at the [2011 AMR E-discussion website](#). This is the final live online contribution to the third phase of the AMR E-discussion on Education. We want to thank all the contributors for their thoughtful and informative feedback. All further contributions will be included in the final digest and summary report of the e-discussion. Thank you]

Dear Friends and Colleagues

Thanks for your exchanges on innovation. I have to say that I found it simultaneously encouraging, interesting and disappointing.

It was encouraging because quite a few of you explicitly or implicitly agreed with my view that innovation was needed and because there were several very good suggestions about making advocacy for education less technical and more direct, including through linking it directly to people.

It was interesting because there were many thoughtful comments, both to our themes and beyond them. Non-state actors can potentially provide education more effectively than state ones, both by being closer to the students and by being able to spend more efficiently. Technology clearly has enormous promise for education. And we were reminded about the need to take a more scientific approach to learning, including but not dominated by neuroscience.

So why was I also disappointed?

First, I had hoped to learn of innovations that were not previously known and that might have wider applicability – I still think this is worth pursuing, perhaps through some sort of database.

Second, I had hoped to hear more ideas about what might be done to stimulate the non-state sector – several of you did mention the need for a public policy framework but these remarks tended to be general rather than saying what should go into such a framework, and also seemed to be mainly about community and NGO schools without also including private ones. The content of such policy frameworks definitely needs attention.

Third, I had hoped to see a more direct linkage of innovative financing and innovation in education, though some contributors did hint at this, and of innovation and non-state actors.

Fourth, despite many agreeing with the view that innovation was important, I had expected more of an endorsement of the need for change, of the unsustainability of present approaches in the face of the global learning crisis, the shift towards knowledge economies and societies, and the continuing access

issues for the poor and disadvantaged to all levels of education. We need to be careful not to be smug or we will again be overtaken by other sectors in the global competition for attention and funding; however objectively important is education, we can't assume that what is obvious to us in the field is so obvious to others. Which brings us back to the need to improve our advocacy.

Thanks to all for your participation.

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