

Keynote addresses



UN Photo, Eskinder Debebe

Micheline Calmy-Rey, President of the Swiss Confederation

“Globalization has ushered in remarkable opportunities, but has also revealed risks of unprecedented magnitude: poverty, volatility in financial markets, climate change, global environmental deterioration, the depletion of natural resources, migratory pressures and terrorism.

These risks are interconnected, and they transcend national borders. They increase the interdependence of rich and poor countries, even as the gap between rich and poor countries widens. The per capita GDP of Switzerland is 130 times greater than that of Mozambique. The poorest countries contribute to globalization by exporting their natural resources, but derive scant benefit from it.

The situation calls for States to juggle domestic and external demand, and it raises the following questions:

- One-quarter of the world’s population consumes three quarters of its resources. How should drinking water, food, commodities, natural resources and energy resources be apportioned

affordably and in sufficient quantities to meet the needs of a global population which will soon reach 7 billion?

- How can we make development equitable?
- What form will the social justice discussion take in the twenty-first century?

National leaders must increasingly broaden their understanding of the public good as they set their policies and priorities, to make sure that their decisions do not have an adverse impact on other countries. The prospect of a “global community of destiny” or a “global risk society” is increasingly becoming a reality, paving the way for new patterns of thought.

The current climate policy negotiations are a striking illustration of the fact that a world view constrained within a national outlook can lead to a catastrophic perception of risk. In an interdependent world, rich countries must focus on facing and overcoming the risks posed by poverty, vulnerability and loss of human dignity. A change in

patterns of thought is imperative, so that rights and responsibilities can be negotiated in terms of global public goods. A global risk management approach that is at loggerheads with efforts to curb poverty cannot create the alliances necessary for success.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have the technologies, the knowledge and the financial wherewithal to overcome the global risks. But where climate is concerned, for example, the bottom line is whether we will succeed in bridging the gap between competing interests and forge a shared global identity. For when it comes to global challenges, there is no higher authority which can demand proof or dictate accountability.

- Who determines the nature of risks?
- Who is responsible?
- Who determines the criteria for causation?
- Who decides on compensation for affected groups?

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Every one of us, rich or poor, may be affected by global challenges. The world in which we live today is a polycentric one, where local, national, regional and global processes are linked. In an interconnected world, the decisions that one State takes have effects on the populations of other States, not only on its own. This is why we should endeavour to make our governance

model more pluralistic, by making room alongside nation-States for local governments, multilateral agencies, transnational actors, business forums, non-governmental organizations, civil society and human rights groups.

Since the Earth Summit in Rio, we have made some headway in reconciling economic, social and environmental concerns. The Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council have proved of some value in the quest for a stronger political consensus. But no entity has been able to serve as the platform for a new approach. International governance is still piecemeal and ineffective at a time when, more than ever, we need the following:

- A political authority capable of advancing the sustainability agenda more resolutely;
- More effective responses to States' requests for support and advice, especially from emerging and developing countries;
- An organization which can convert scientific knowledge into a basis for policy decisions;
- An organization which can harness resources and make sure that they are allocated in a more coordinated way;
- Finally, a political venue which succeeds in engaging States, the economy and society not only in discussion, but above all in action.

We need an institution which can give new impetus to help us overcome the numerous impediments now standing in our way. And if we do not necessarily wish to establish new institutions, then the way to proceed is completely to reshape existing ones. Why not transform the Economic and Social Council into a sustainable development council, which could become the forum in which we seek a new political balance? In this respect, Ms. Merkel's 2009 proposal to establish a United Nations economic council and the 2005 proposals by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change to make the Economic and Social Council stronger and more effective are of interest. Let us once and for all take the opportunity to establish a sustainable development council within the United Nations that meets our needs and is equal to the challenges which we face.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Economic and Social Council is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. It is in an unrivalled position to tackle global issues relating to sustainable development and also to environmental sustainability. Not only has it been entrusted with overseeing funds and programmes, it was also designed to provide an institutional link within the United Nations system between United Nations programmes and funds and the specialized agencies. The Commission for Sustainable Development, established in Rio in 1992, occupies an important place among the Council's functional

commissions. Its primary responsibilities are to coordinate the implementation of Agenda 21, strengthen dialogue with non-governmental organizations and other actors and make recommendations to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council.

Given the Council's key position, institutionally speaking, it makes sense for it to play a central role in responding to international sustainability challenges.

We propose that the Economic and Social Council should be gradually reshaped into an effective sustainable development council and that the role of the Commission for Sustainable Development should be more strongly focused on dialogue with non-State actors and on creating incentives to establish multiple-actor coalitions. This goal could be attained by establishing an executive committee.

The Council could even meet in a smaller committee, which would allow it to meet more frequently to deal with sustainable development issues.

Another valuable tool would be a universal periodic review of global sustainability. The universal periodic review is an innovative mechanism established under the resolution which established the Human Rights Council. Such a tool could strengthen international governance for sustainability. At regular intervals, it would consider the achievements of each Member State. It would be

a State-driven process that would give each State the opportunity to report on measures which it had taken. This peer review, based on the principle of cooperation, would guarantee that all countries received equal treatment. It would be interesting to see how such an instrument could be applied to the field of global sustainability and to assess its value.

Another way of making the global sustainability actions of the Economic and Social Council more effective would be to encourage States running for seats on the Council to draw up their commitments before the elections. They would thereby undertake to work towards a certain number of specific goals during their term.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While there is a rich network of institutions which address sustainable development from a range of sectoral perspectives, the actions of the various institutions are not always well coordinated. Moreover, Member States do not always take the same standpoint. The positions of a single country may vary, depending on the institutional setting or the ministry which is putting forth a position. In other words, coherence and coordination are lacking.

There is a need, therefore, to strengthen governance in order to give new impetus to economic, social and environmental policies and to ensure their better integration.”



UN Photo, Paulo Filgueiras

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General, United Nations

“I am pleased to be here for the launch of the 2011 Millennium Development Goals Report. I thank all those who have worked long and hard on this excellent study.

The report paints a mixed picture. On the one hand, it is clear that the MDGs have made a tremendous difference; they have raised awareness and they have shaped the broad vision that remains the overarching framework for development work across the world, and they have fuelled action and meaningful progress in people’s lives. Hundreds of millions have been lifted from poverty; more people have access to education, better health care and improved access to clean drinking water.

Despite the global economic downturn and the food and energy crises, we are on track to meet the MDG targets for poverty reduction. Increased funding from many sources has translated into more programmes and resources for the neediest. We expect global poverty to dip below 15 percent by 2015, well ahead of the original 23 per cent target.

At the same time, progress has been uneven. The poorest of the poor are being left behind. We need to reach out and lift them into our lifeboat. Now is the time for equity, inclusion, sustainability and women’s empowerment.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, investing in human capital must be our strategy and touchstone.

Some of the world’s poorest nations have made some of the largest strides towards reaching universal enrolment in primary education.

The goal now is to ensure similar results in secondary and tertiary education to make sure boys and girls have equal opportunity and to ensure that the education they receive is quality education.

On health, the targeted interventions such as vaccination campaigns have reduced child mortality. Measles-related deaths are down 78 per cent since 1990. Malaria is less deadly thanks to the wide distribution of insecticide-treated mosquito nets.

The MDG report also shows strong results on HIV prevention and treatment. I expect to see this momentum continue with the new targets and resources adopted by world leaders at last month’s HIV/AIDS Summit in New York. There is also good news on tuberculosis.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have success stories to point to, to build on and to scale up. But achieving all the MDGs will require extra effort. Even where we have seen rapid growth, as in East Asia and other parts of the developing world, progress is not universal, nor are the benefits evenly shared. Stubbornly high unemployment persists in rich and poor countries alike. And in many cases, the wealth gap is widening between the prosperous and the marginalized and between urban and rural.

Solid gains in school enrolment and gender parity hardly signal mission accomplished. The pace of education reform has slowed measurably in terms of both access and quality. The state of maternal health is also worrying. Limited access to proper care makes pregnancy a needlessly high health risk in many developing countries. Sanitation, too, leaves much to be desired. More than 2.6 billion people still lack access to flushing toilets and other basic forms of safe sanitation.

We must also recognize the real and growing threat to the MDGs posed by non-communicable diseases. This will rightly be the focus of a high-level meeting at the United Nations in September. Today's report stresses that equal opportunity for all is vital to our efforts.

Getting girls into school is a critical first step. Gender parity in primary and secondary education is still beyond reach in many regions. Moreover, enrolment disparities are notable between girls from wealthy families and girls from poorer families. This disparity is significantly greater for girls than it is for boys.

We face a similar situation with child mortality. There are huge differences in survival rates between children with educated mothers and those with

unschooled mothers. We must protect against the domino effect in which one early deprivation leads to another, and another, and another.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the agreed deadline of 2015 is fast approaching. We need a rejuvenated global partnership for development. We need breakthroughs in trade negotiations and in climate action. We need to build resilience to shocks, be they conflicts, natural disasters or volatility in food and energy prices, and we need to make next year's Rio+20 Conference a great success. Let us strive to connect the dots among water, energy, food, gender, global health and climate change so that solutions to one can become solutions to all.

Let us also look at the post-2015 picture. When the MDGs were first articulated, we knew that achieving them would, in a sense, be only half the job. We knew that too many men, women and children would go largely untouched by even our best efforts. That is why we are already working with all our partners to sustain the momentum and to carry on with an ambitious post-2015 development agenda.

The report we launch today is meant to help us meet this shared test of our common humanity. I look forward to your contributions and I thank you very much for your commitment and leadership."



UN Photo, Paulo Filgueiras

Irina Bokova, Director General, UNESCO

“The global movement for Education for All was born 20 years ago in Jomtien, Thailand.

The vision of Jomtien was that people cannot be rich without the first of riches—an education.

Twenty years on, this vision is more powerful than ever.

The *2010 United Nations Human Development Report* shows that the fastest movers in human development over the last 40 years have been countries willing and able to invest in education and health.

Education is a human right that brings sustainability to development.

It has been recognized as an accelerator for reaching all of the Millennium Development Goals. This was not always the case.

Since the *Dakar World Education Forum* in 2000, 52 million additional children have gained access to primary education.

South and West Asia has halved the size of their out-of-school population.

Over the last 10 years, real expenditure on education has risen by 6 per cent annually across the Sub-Saharan region.

This shows what can happen when Governments put education first.

There is still a lot to do.

Some 800 million adults in the world lack basic literacy skills. Two thirds of them are women.

Enrolment has increased, but too many students leave school with minimal reading and numeracy skills.

We are not on track to reach the Education for All goals.

But we know also today the obstacles we face. We understand better where we are falling short and we know more about what works.

It is not enough to look at figures on enrolment, gender gaps, or literacy rates. We need to identify who is missing out and why.

Above all, we must innovate and come up with new ways to reach the most marginalized and vulnerable populations.

Education cannot be strengthened in isolation.

It must be integrated with health policy, with policies on cultural diversity. It must be joined with the power of new information and communication technologies to meet new demands.

This High-level Segment is a chance to act on all of this knowledge—to acknowledge the gaps that remain and to join together to overcome them. Experience shows we can do so.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must bridge several gaps to meet the 2015 goals.

First, the equity gap.

Inequalities are holding back progress—inequalities of wealth, gender, ethnicity, language, location and disability.

If we fail to reach the marginalized and to protect the vulnerable, we jeopardize our achievements.

This must start with early childhood. The earlier, the better.

This is why UNESCO organized the first *World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education*, in Moscow last September, with some 60 ministers attending.

We are working now to implement the *Moscow Framework of Action and Cooperation*—to enhance the quality of early services.

Bridging the equity gap means quality education for all girls and women.

To this end, UNESCO launched in May a new *Global Partnership for Girls and Women's Education*, with United Nations Secretary-General Ban-Ki moon, the Prime Ministers of Mali and Bangladesh and the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

This initiative works with private sector companies to focus on girls' secondary education and women's adult literacy.

Equity means also protecting education in conflict situations.

UNESCO's *2011 Global Monitoring Report* on "The Hidden Crisis: Armed Conflict and Education" shows that 40 per cent of the world's 67 million out-of-school children live in only 35 conflict-affected countries.

We must send a message to perpetrators that attacks on education will not go unanswered.

We must act on the ground.

This is why UNESCO is running the largest education programme today in Afghanistan, reaching some 600,000 learners in 18 provinces.

This is why we lead in Iraq on teacher training, curriculum development and the rehabilitation of higher education.

The same goal has led the UNESCO Office in Iraq to launch a *Literacy Initiative* to reach some 5 million illiterates by 2015.

We know that literacy is a development multiplier.

We know that the foundations for literacy lie in quality schooling and quality "second chance" programmes.

Quality is the next gap we need to cross.

Far too many learners leave education with skills that are not relevant.

We must understand the causes of poor learning outcomes and how to improve the relevance of all learning.

To this end, UNESCO supports countries in diagnosing and monitoring the quality of education systems.

Improving quality means also making national priorities of teacher education, training and recruitment.

This is the objective of UNESCO's 10-year *Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa* (2006-2015).

All of this requires political will. All of this calls for resources.

This means we must bridge also a financing gap.

Aid disbursements to basic education have stopped increasing for the first time since 2000.

Even if developing countries maximized their own resources, an annual gap of US\$ 16 billion for low-income countries would remain to reach Education for All.

Current aid levels are insufficient.

Governments must act—to invest out of the crisis through education.

The international community must act—to meet the commitments it has made.

The importance of innovative financing lies here, as do new partnerships with the private sector.

Excellencies,

We can bridge these gaps if we work together better.

This means strengthening coordination between the Education for All convening agencies, and with partners like the International Labour Organization and the World Health Organization, to strengthen the close links between health and education. We are establishing cooperation with UN WOMEN to bridge the gender gap in education.

Less than four years away from 2015, we cannot accept business as usual. I will not accept it.

I am positive we can engage in a new global solidarity compact, and start setting the agenda today for after 2015.

But this means we must act now—to renew our commitment and to sharpen our focus on bridging key gaps that remain.”



UN Photo, Paulo Filgueiras

Gordon Brown, Former Prime Minister of United Kingdom¹

“The world is in danger of sleepwalking through one of the greatest injustices of our times. Despite all the promises made to the world’s children—the pledges made and targets set by the international community—today nearly 70 million children are denied a place at school.

Even worse than this abject failure to keep our world is the shocking reality that, despite our promise to get every child into basic education by 2015, on current trends the number of children out of school four years from now will not have gone down but gone up to 75 million.

This assault on opportunity is the second great economic crisis of our generation. The first economic crisis was the failure of our banks and the subsequent devastating impact on the world economy. The second crisis is of millions of young people uneducated not because they are uneducable but because they are unnoticed—and now joining the biggest ever army of young unemployed in a global epidemic, with the projection that over the years to 2025, nearly 1.5 billion young people will suffer a prolonged period out of work.

¹ Text of distributed statement. For audio-video of the statement, please visit: <http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/2011/07/gordon-brown-keynote-addresses-high-level-segment-2011-ecosoc.html>

The consequences of that profound social failure will make this year’s youth uprising in Egypt and Tunisia look like the opening salvo of a wider generational battle for justice for the world’s young people.

I believe our failure to meet our promise on education is not the biggest denial of opportunity the world has ever seen, but also a profoundly immoral neglect of our most vulnerable citizens—one that should trouble the conscience of all nations. We made an explicit pledge to the world’s children that we would create school places for them as part of the Millennium Development Goals. With each day that goes by we are breaking the trust we asked them to place in us: we are demonstrating that we cannot be relied upon to honour our word. In the course of this campaign I have met young people from the remotest part of Tanzania, to the worst city slum of Delhi, and everywhere they ask me why they cannot go to school: why are there still no teachers, no school buildings, no computers or books?

I believe that the promise we made to the world’s children must come first. When you break a promise to an adult you might disappoint them, and perhaps even harm their material well being. But when you break a promise to a child you risk damaging them

forever, destroying their faith in the human spirit and their hope in life itself. You create an attitude of cynicism that is almost impossible to reverse.

And the world is not even breaking its promise with the heavy heart, with expressions of regret and remorse, but doing so in a manner that is casual, almost glib. It is hard but inevitable, we are told—everyone is suffering and we must all tighten our belts. But I believe we are better than this.

So for me it is absolutely essential that we build on recent successes of getting many more millions of children into school through smart aid and debt relief. And it is essential too that national governments do their bit to make sure that all children, rich and poor alike, have a chance at getting an education, just as Western Cape Province has done so successfully in South Africa.

We've developed some of the talent of some of the children for some of the countries; now we need to develop all of the talent of all of the children of all the countries.

And I believe this not only because it is a moral imperative, or merely as a means to avoid calamity in the future: it is also a way to build a stronger and more prosperous world for everybody. Education is the key to ending poverty and increasing global growth. Educated people are more likely to get jobs, stay AIDS-free, immunize their children and build the businesses that lift their families and their communities out of poverty.

We can achieve education for all without breaking the bank. We spend about \$100.000 in Britain and in America to educate a child from their infancy to their teenage years. In Africa the average spending is \$400. In other words, 250 times more is spent on the British child than on the African child. We collude in crippling the life chances of Africa's children and then we blame them for a continent-wide lack of technology, industry and productivity. The 13 billion extra a year we need to fund Education for All—to get every child into school by 2015—is the equivalent of investing less than 5 cents a week in those children. This small price is tiny relative to the huge human and social cost of not investing in the next generation.

Those of us engaged in this fight are always prepared to answer the cynics who claim the world has already been overgenerous in aid. Or indeed that aid does not work. The fact is that a mere \$10 a year goes in aid towards the education of the average child in sub-Saharan Africa: the equivalent of just 20 cents per week—or 4 cents for every school day. No one can say that aid does not work when only 4 cents a day is spent trying to educate an illiterate child. The plain truth is that real aid has not even been delivered and found wanting: it has not been delivered.

Nor do I believe there is a fatigue in giving by the people of the world, or a retreat into individualism or selfishness because of the recession. In fact, the

willingness of the public to share in hard times has never been stronger. The British charity Comic Relief, under the leadership of Richard Curtis and Emma Freud, recently held a public appeal that broke all records, and charitable giving has increased in many other areas, providing that the generosity and altruism of ordinary people is often sharpened by a climate where everyone is suffering hardship. We sometimes see the world through an entirely different prism when an economic downturn strikes: we feel an insecurity, see our own frailty in others more clearly, and as a consequence our sense of togetherness and community grows.

Now is the time for the public, whose demands that we improve the lives and prospects of the world's poor are getting louder, to throw down the gauntlet to governments to honour the promise we made at the turn of the new millennium.

The leadership on this issue provided by Sheikha Mozah, the UN Special Envoy for education, has been truly inspirational. In the coming months my colleagues at the Global Campaign for Education and I will be launching an unprecedented coalition of faith groups, business leaders, civil society organizations and ordinary members of the public to support her—combining fund-raising, political action and ways for people to provide education directly, and I'm particularly delighted to be co-convening GCE's High-level Panel with my good friend Graca Machel, whose lifelong commitment to education is absolutely unwavering.

We hope you will join us, because getting the children of the world into school is not just a noble aim; it's a deliverable result. The prize of a generation is within our grasp."



UN Photo, Jean-Marc Ferré

Simon Willis, Global Vice-President, Cisco

It's an honour and a privilege to continue the partnership that we have with the UN, UNESCO and with the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, which we've been very closely involved in, by participating in this morning session. Adding just a few brief comments about what we have learned from our own experiences in education from the private sector perspective. My company, Cisco, does networking. About 60 or 70 per cent of the Internet runs over things that we make. We specialize in distributive networking and collaboration. Many years ago we met a challenge in the field of education, which was that there were insufficient engineers educated to keep up with the expertise demand that the proliferation of networks required. So, we started a programme in partnership with education ministries, the UN, the World Economic Forum and with others—but, always on the ground, in partnership with the local or national government—to extend network-based education in networking.

We call it the Cisco Networking Academy and it has expanded over the last 10 years to the point that we are now putting around about one million students per year through the programme, which covers basics in IT, broadband deployment, advanced engineering in networking. None of the training is specific to Cisco's own products,

but to the general networking products of all companies. More recently, we've added a strand on entrepreneurship and assisting young people in the skills needed to set up small businesses. The twin inputs of creating an environment in which small businesses can be easily set up, thrive and grow; and of a more rapid and distributive deployment of education resources to people between the ages of 15 and 25 are the keys to unlocking the problems of unemployment and economic growth in every country of the world. We have found this to be true whether we are working in Scandinavia, Singapore, China, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Gulf or in Russia. The same problems of obstacles lying in the way of innovation, entrepreneurship and technical skills gaps are holding back the creation of small companies and the creation of employment, which are the motors of economic growth, which we seek to tackle as the foundation for all of the Millennium Development Goals.

The programme we run now operates in 165 countries, 16 languages, and has cost us to-date just over US\$ 400 million and we regard that as a worthwhile investment because of the returns to us. This is a form of enlightened corporate-social responsibility that has benefits for the communities which it's delivered as well as benefits for the entire IT sector. We've also pushed extremely

hard to increase the proportion of girls and women participating in these programmes. This is particularly tough in the areas of engineering, IT, and entrepreneurship because, in many countries and cultures, these are regarded as male interests and professions. We face a particular struggle in our sector to entice and encourage young women to participate in these professions which have traditionally been regarded as male. Progress to date is not as much as we would like. Overall, we are approaching 25 per cent of all students as female. In Sub-Saharan Africa and in Southeast Asia this rises to 28 per cent and in the Middle East we are currently at 35 per cent of girls and women passing through the Cisco Networking Academy programme. We still have some way to go.

A number of years ago we decided to take what we had learned from this programme, which is a cascading programme in which students after a number of years become teachers, which is how we are able to scale to such a large number of students given that we are a relatively small company, small compared to many of the governments represented in this room. We took the learnings from this programme and started to work with a number of national education systems to see if we could use the tools of distributive networking, collaboration, video and information technology to increase the speed in which education systems were scaled and the speed at which teachers could be brought up to date and trained, and to expand the effectiveness

of teacher training. We started in our home country of the United States where we worked with the schools that were affected following Hurricane Katrina in the rebuilding of that school program from which we learned a huge amount. We then moved to New York, taking inspiration from a large number of innovative initiatives that were not only being pushed forward by the New York Board of Education but also by a number of not-for-profit organizations working in New York, particularly in the poorer parts of New York, and in which all three or four sectors have been involved in expanding and making more resilient the education systems in poor parts of New York by pulling on the resources of parents, local companies, national companies, the public education system, and the not-for-profit sector to expand the reach of the education system there. There have been a number of projects you may have heard of, the iSchool the iZone, the School of One, which have won a number of prizes for their innovative approach to extending education into poor communities.

We then got more ambitious and decided to take our learnings in our home country into a number of other countries in cooperation with their governments. The first place we went to was Jordan and we worked with the Government there to look at expanding particularly math and science education, the training of math and science teachers, and with a particular emphasis on including both women and men in that system.

From what we learned there we expanded the programme into Mexico, Egypt, Lebanon, Rajasthan and Palestine and then onto many other countries. Each of these systems is different, each of the local requirements is different, but there are certain common patterns and elements to each of the experiences which we've had working both in the Technical Networking Academy and in the area of making national education systems more extensive, more resilient, and taking the very limited resources of many of these places further and deeper into the communities.

So, what have we learned? Well it's difficult to summarize in a few words, but I promised to be very brief and I'd strongly encourage anybody who wants to go more deeply into this either to grab me over coffee over the next few days or to visit the stand that we have in the Innovation Fair where a number of my colleagues would be delighted to take you more deeply into what our experiences have been and what we've learned. I guess the first thing we've learned is how essential it is to involve these three sectors that I've talked about. The centralized, top-down public sector only model of education is failing in many ways and will continue to fail to bridge the gap that we challenge ourselves with in this particular Millennium Development Goal. We need civil society, the not-for-profit sector, the private sector and companies (like ours) orchestrated, guided and regulated by the public sector to join in this massive challenge, which the

previous two speakers have laid out so eloquently. That is the first thing we learned.

The second is, I think in our world of distributed networking and the Internet there's been somewhat of a paradigm shift in the way organizations work with authority, experience and knowledge. The centralized, hierarchical and authoritative approach to many social problems, including the one we are discussing here today, breaks-down in this environment. What these new technologies have unlocked is the possibility of empowering the edge, local communities, parents and students to begin to participate in a co-creation of their own education. This is hugely powerful, it's also a little threatening. It's difficult to manage. It tends at times somewhat towards anarchy. But the resources and the flexibility and the innovation which are unlocked in these distributive environments with the empowered edge in learner-centred systems is huge and the benefits that we can gain in every part of the world in every kind of community at every level of socio-economic development are huge. And that is just as well because we have much work to do very quickly. The coherence and flexibility of these distributed engine-powered systems is that they feed diversity of the edge back into the system, the diversity of experiences.

We found in our own journey about how to improve and scale out technical education. Much of our inspiration, in fact, comes from the most challenging environments. We've learned about

citizen-run education systems in the poorest parts of Rio de Janeiro. We learned from the Harlem's Children's Zone. We learned from Pratham, indeed from Ushahidi, which are represented here today. We learned from the extraordinary Sugata Mitra who you may have seen with his Indian hole-in-the-wall experiments, which allow children to effectively take their own education into their hands and build the most extraordinary results without any supervision at all. He's now gone on to another extraordinary project called Granny Net where he connects retired women particularly from the developed countries with learning children all over the world over the Internet with video so that they can assist in their education in an entirely voluntary way. It's kind of an extraordinary gain for both sides of the equation. Tapping the huge knowledge resources of the now increasingly aging population, many of whom are not being fully employed, and using that to address the huge gap in children's education and solving as

it were two problems in one go. These are the kinds of extraordinary innovations which are unlocked in a distributed networked environment.

What we've also learned is that it is important to blend the real, the personal, and the human with the technical. You cannot deliver education purely using computers, networks and the Internet. It doesn't work; but, you can hugely scale the power and reach of education systems by employing those tools sensitively and intelligently.

Most of all, I think, what we've learned is that when you go about opening yourself, opening your mind and opening your education systems, to what people calling out for education are telling you, you can rebuild those systems in extraordinary ways, which will begin to help us bridge this most important gap.

Thank you very much for your time and attention. I look forward to speaking with you later.