20th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers
Sheraton Resort, Nadi, Fiji, 19-23 February 2018

Agenda Item(s) CCEM(20)(INF)XX

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW
MINISTERIAL MEETING

Commonwealth Secretariat
Marlborough House
London
SW1Y 5HX

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1. Introduction

The 20th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEM) will be held in Fiji, on 19-23 February 2018. The CCEM is a high-level meeting held every three years where education ministers from the 52 Commonwealth countries meet to discuss key issues and engage in meaningful dialogue on education. The forthcoming 20CCEM will convene under the theme: ‘Sustainability and Resilience: Can education deliver?’. In line with the theme, one of the primary objectives of 20CCEM will be to address and define mechanisms through which education systems across the Commonwealth can enable sustainable development and address major global challenges, such as climate change. Additionally, as the first CCEM to be held after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for the Sustainable Development, the conference aims to support and further member states’ commitment toward the attainment of inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all.

2. Background

2.1 Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (20CCEM)

The triennial Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEM) is the second largest meeting organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat following the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). CCEMs provide Commonwealth education ministers with the opportunity to discuss key education issues in the Commonwealth in relation to a specific theme. Ministers have the opportunity to share knowledge and good practices in the education sector, receive updates on actions achieved against CCEM mandates, as well as identify areas of action for the next three years for education in the Commonwealth.

The 19th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (19CCEM), ‘Quality education for equitable development: performance, paths and productivity’, was hosted by The Bahamas in June 2015. The conference was attended by over 700 delegates from 38 Commonwealth countries and closely preceded international agreement on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, allowing for discussions pertinent to the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
At 19CCEM, ministers agreed on actions for the strengthening of education in the Commonwealth, acknowledging the need for member states to have education sector plans that support progress towards the SDGs. Initiatives undertaken as an outcome of 19CCEM include: the establishment of the Education Ministers Action Group (EMAG); the establishment of the Commonwealth Accelerated Development Mechanism for Education (CADME) Technical Working Group; the development of the Commonwealth Education Policy Framework and the Commonwealth Curriculum Framework for enabling the SDGs; and the establishment of the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) Task Force.

2.2 Issues and challenges faced by Commonwealth member countries

While advances have been made by Commonwealth countries in education over the past 15 years, in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education For All (EFA) initiatives, there are still challenges that must be urgently addressed. These include:

- **Low early childhood education enrolment rates** - while enrolment in early childhood education is expanding across the Commonwealth, currently only one third of children in developing Commonwealth countries access early childhood education.
- **Low primary and secondary school enrolment rates** - approximately 17 million primary aged children and 16 million lower secondary aged youth remain out of school in the Commonwealth.
- **High adult illiteracy** - over 400 million adults in the Commonwealth are illiterate.
- **Continued gender disparities in primary and secondary schooling** - although gender discrimination towards girls has improved, approximately 3 per cent more boys than girls are enrolled in primary schools across Commonwealth countries. Notwithstanding this, in some countries, boys are underrepresented and underperforming, particularly at the secondary level.
- **Disparities in the allocation of resources to education** - despite the Nassau Declaration reaffirmed commitment to education financing at 4-6% of GDP (or 15-20% of total public expenditure), considerable disparities remain in the allocation of resources to education within the Commonwealth.

3. Progressing towards 20CCEM

The 20th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (20CCEM) is returning to the Pacific region after over 40 years. The conference theme on sustainability and resilience is especially relevant to the prevailing global dialogue on climate change and the capacity of education systems to deal with the challenges brought on by climate change. 20CCEM will be particularly important as it will be the first CCEM to be held following global adoption of the 2030 Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard, 20CCEM will provide an opportune moment for education ministers to discuss progress against SDG 4 targets, as well as to find solutions to challenges facing education systems in the Commonwealth. Education ministers can also utilise this opportunity to deliberate on how the commitments made at 20CCEM can be brought to the attention of Commonwealth heads of government at the next Commonwealth Summit in April 2018.

3.1 Thematic Issues Paper and Status Update Report

The Commonwealth Secretariat has initiated the development of two key reports to present to ministers of education: (1) the Thematic Issues Paper and (2) the Status Update Report. The content of these reports is briefly outlined below.

The **20CCEM Thematic Issues Paper** will cover the conference theme and sub-themes (education for sustainable development; building resilience through education; and education governance and management). In this regard, the paper will draw attention to the intended focus and scope of substantive issues that the conference will address.

The **Status Update Report on SDG 4 in the Commonwealth** will provide a snapshot of education in all 52 member countries. The report will present valuable data and analysis to member countries on their progress on SDG 4 since the implementation of the new global education agenda in September 2015.

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1 Commonwealth Secretariat. 2015. Education in the Commonwealth: Quality Education for Equitable Development
In addition to the documents above, the following will be presented for the consideration of ministers at 20CCEM:

- Reports from:
  - The Commonwealth of Learning (COL)
  - The Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowship Plan (CSFP)
  - The Commonwealth Tertiary Education Facility (CTEF)
  - The Commonwealth Secretariat’s Education team on its 2015 - 2018 Work Programme

4. **20CCEM Objectives & Outcomes**

The overall goal of 20CCEM is to advance the attainment of inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all across the commonwealth. In line with the conference theme, one of the primary objectives of 20CCEM will be to address and define mechanisms through which education systems across the Commonwealth can enable sustainable development and address major global challenges, such as climate change.

In light of the above, the main objectives of 20CCEM are to:

- Outline the commitments and reforms needed to facilitate inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning in the Commonwealth and agree key messages to be communicated to heads of government convening at the 2018 Commonwealth Summit; and
- Agree on actions to address specific issues affecting education systems in strengthening sustainable development and building resilience across the Commonwealth.

The desired outcomes of 20CCEM are:

- **Education partnerships:** The Commonwealth Secretariat is supported to facilitate the establishment of regional education partnerships to strengthen education governance & leadership, build resilience and deliver skills development.
- **Domestic financing to advance SDG4:** High-level political commitment and action from Commonwealth heads of government at CHOGM 2018 towards the provision of adequate domestic financing of education in line with international benchmarks (at least 15-20 percent of total public expenditure).
- **Smarter working practices:** Commonwealth organisations and member governments to work smarter and more effectively to achieve SDGs by improving service delivery from Commonwealth organisations working in partnership with regional partners to member states.

5. **20CCEM Programme**

The ministerial programme comprises of the following main elements below. Further details on each of the sessions is provided in Appendix I.

5.1 **Resilience qualifications side event**

This half-day meeting on the Professionalization of the Resilience sector is an official side event for 20CCEM and will be held two days before the formal commencement of 20CCEM. It will be a high-level meeting for senior government officials across the Commonwealth to deliberate on the prospect of developing Resilience qualifications in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector. The meeting will be co-hosted by the European Union’s Pacific Technical and Vocational Education and Training initiative (EU PacTVET) and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

5.2 **Pre-20CCEM EMAG**

A brief meeting of the EMAG specifically focussed on the outcomes of 20CCEM will be held before the formal commencement of 20CCEM. This will be the final EMAG meeting under the chairmanship of the Minister of Education, The Bahamas before handing over to incoming chair, the Minister of Education, Heritage and Arts, Fiji.
5.3 **Senior Officials Meeting**

The Senior Officials’ Meeting will also be held prior to the formal commencement of 20CCEM and will provide senior officials from the ministries of education of Commonwealth countries with the opportunity to meet and discuss relevant issues in relation to the 20CCEM theme.

5.4 **Small States Ministerial Meeting**

First held at the 19CCEM, the Small States Ministerial Meeting will run concurrently with the Senior Officials Meeting and will provide a platform for the effective discussion of issues specific to small states within the Commonwealth, which comprise approximately 60% of the Commonwealth’s membership.

5.5 **Education Ministers Meeting**

The ministerial meeting will convene over three days and is restricted to ministers of education across the Commonwealth, their designated representative(s) and invited observers. Two keynote speakers will address ministers on a topic in line with the prevailing theme. Ministers will also have the opportunity to participate in ministerial roundtables on education for climate change mitigation, skills for development, and education governance and management. Please see Appendix I for further details on each of the sessions. At the closing of 20CCEM, Ministers will issue a ministerial declaration (Nadi Declaration) that outlines a clear set of commitments for member states and sets out education priorities and agenda for the next three years across the Commonwealth.

6. **Integrated Partners Forum**

Concurrent to the ministerial meeting, teachers, civil society members, higher education leaders and students will meet for the Integrated Partners Forum (IPF). The forum will provide an opportunity for the wider education community across the Commonwealth to meet, network and exchange ideas; engage in dialogue; and communicate their priorities to ministers. The programme will feature a mixture of panel sessions, presentations, debates and world café style workshops. There will also be opportunities for IPF representatives to meet and engage with Commonwealth ministers and senior government officials. At the end of the forum, IPF partners will present a joint Statement to the Commonwealth education ministers detailing their shared recommendations for education across the Commonwealth.

The forum delegates will amongst other things:

- Discuss and debate key issues to advance an inclusive and equitable quality education, including skills development, and lifelong learning opportunities for all, accountability in education and sustainability and resilience.

- Develop and present a communique to Commonwealth Education Ministers with recommendations for key messages that Commonwealth education ministers wish to communicate to Heads of Government convening at the next Commonwealth Summit.

While prior CCEMs have held separate forums for civil society stakeholders, higher education leaders, students and teachers, the 20CCEM steering committee agreed that this will take the form of an integrated forum at 20CCEM. This format will allow for greater collaboration among the various groups who each have an important role in helping Commonwealth education ministers attain the SDG 4 targets.

*For further information and details please contact the Education Section:*

20CCEM@commonwealth.int
Appendix I: Draft programme background

Monday 19 February

Professionalization of the Resilience sector: Experience from the Pacific & opportunities for other Commonwealth countries

This half-day meeting on the Professionalization of the Resilience sector is an official side event for 20CCEM. It will be a high-level meeting for key government officials across the Commonwealth to deliberate on the prospect of developing Resilience qualifications in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector. Experiences from the Pacific region in developing and accrediting Resilience qualifications will be shared with other countries in the Commonwealth, in particular small and climate vulnerable nations who are facing similar threats from climate change and natural hazards who may be interested in offering and accrediting these qualifications. The meeting will be co-hosted by the European Union’s Pacific Technical and Vocational Education and Training initiative (EU PacTVET) and the Commonwealth Secretariat and will comprise of presentations and group discussions.

A set of recommendations will be developed to take forward discussions during both the Small States Ministerial Meeting and the Ministerial Meeting. Key outcomes anticipated for this meeting are:

- Recommendation for the professionalization of the Resilience sector (including the strategy for regional accreditation and appropriate strategies to reliably and efficiently recognize and assess prior learning) in the Pacific region and wider Commonwealth.
- Development of a plan that identifies opportunities, challenges and solutions to offer TVET qualifications in Resilience in Commonwealth countries.

Tuesday 20 February

Senior Officials Meeting (SOM)

The Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), chaired by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts, Fiji, will provide an opportunity for senior officials of Ministries of Education to preview and discuss the agenda items ahead of the main ministerial meeting. These include:

- The Nassau Declaration Action Plan
- 20CCEM Ministerial Programme
- 20CCEM Thematic Issues Paper
- Status Update Report
- Progress reports
- Communiqué drafting process for Nadi Declaration

A report from SOM proceedings will be presented to the Commonwealth Education Ministers in the opening session of the Ministerial meeting on 21 February 2018.

Small States Ministerial Meeting

The Small States Ministerial Meeting was first held at the 19CCEM in The Bahamas and will once again be convened at the 20CCEM due to its uniqueness in providing an avenue for ministers to prioritize the challenges faced by small states in the Commonwealth. Education Ministers from small states will have the opportunity to engage with issues and challenges affecting education systems in their countries. In line with the 20CCEM theme, ministers will reflect on targeted solutions or strategies to promote sustainable development and build resilience through education. Since climate change is a major issue for many small states in the Commonwealth, the meeting will focus particularly on strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change on education systems in small states.
The half-day meeting will be attended by Education Ministers from small states and selected representatives from the Integrated Partners Forum will be invited to attend and contribute to discussions.

The meeting will begin with a moderated panel discussion covering three selected topics pertinent to education in small states. During this session ministers will have the opportunity to share their experiences and deliberate on potential strategies and solutions to tackle some of the major challenges faced by small states in the education sector. At the end of this session the moderator will briefly summarise the main points that emerge from discussions.

The subsequent session will reflect on the critical role of universities in building the climate resilience of small states. More specifically, it will consider how Commonwealth Higher Education Institutions, particularly The University of the South Pacific (USP) and The University of the West Indies (UWI), which together cover 28 territories, as well as Fiji National University (FNU), can lead their own research to support small states to make informed investments in resilience and enable innovative practices to address sustainable development and resilience in Commonwealth small states. Presenters from UWI, USP and FNU will explore feasibility of building a “Commonwealth Climate Research Network” of Commonwealth Universities, in partnership with The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU).

The next session will provide an update on the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) developed by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). The VUSSC is a network of small countries committed to the collaborative development of free content resources for use in an educational context. Participating countries focus on the collaborative development of post-secondary, skills-related courses in areas such as tourism, entrepreneurship, disaster management, life skills, use of information and communication technologies (ICT), and small fisheries management. In this session presenters will outline the recent activities and insights emerging from VUSSC.

During the last session of the meeting, the Commonwealth Secretary General will address the ministers. Following these remarks, the chair will summarize any key recommendations or outcomes emerging from discussions. These will be reported to education ministers in the main ministerial meeting the following day and thereby be considered for inclusion in the final ministerial declaration.

**Education Ministers Action Group (EMAG)**

The Commonwealth Education Ministers Action Group (EMAG) was established to take forward the actions agreed at the 19CCEM (Nassau Declaration), maintain momentum and provide oversight between the CCEMs, whilst ensuring commitment to the delivery of SDG 4 across the Commonwealth. The EMAG has ministerial representation from 10 member countries (representative of all Commonwealth regions: The Bahamas, Fiji, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Namibia, Solomon Islands, St Lucia and the United Kingdom) and is currently chaired by the Minister of Education, The Bahamas (19CCEM host).

A brief meeting of the EMAG will be convened to enable members to receive an update on the Nassau Declaration Action Plan as well as address the following agenda items:

- 20CCEM Outcomes and Priorities
- Strengthening the role of EMAG

This will be the final EMAG meeting under the chairmanship of the Minister of Education, The Bahamas, before handing over to the incoming chair, the Minister of Education, Heritage and Arts, Fiji.

**Wednesday 21 February**

**Education Ministers Meeting**

- **Session 1: Keynote on Education for sustainable development**
  This session will explore in detail one of the three 20CCEM Sub-Themes. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) enables learners to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to shape a sustainable future. The advancement of ESD in addition to being directly associated with the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) also supports Strategic Outcome 3 of the Secretariat’s Strategic
Plan, that is, ‘People of the Commonwealth fulfil their potential with dignity and equality in a healthy environment’.

During this session, education ministers will have the opportunity to engage in a focused, evidence-based debate on how best education systems across the Commonwealth can enable sustainable development, recognising that ESD is essential for the sustainability of our future and the Commonwealth. Education that seeks to encourage positive and sustainable behaviour fosters increased tolerance and resilience; more environmentally sustainable choices; improved hygiene and health; and greater civic participation. To support this education vision, the Education Commission argues that decision-makers should prioritize the poor and early years where social returns are the highest.

The Commonwealth Secretariat recognises the importance of education in addressing many of world’s global problems and thus calls on member states to commit to meeting internationally agreed funding targets for education. The session will consist of a 20-minute keynote address followed by questions and discussion.

- **Session 2a: Update on Nassau Declaration Action Plan**
  At 19CCEM, ministers agreed on actions for the strengthening of education in the Commonwealth as articulated in the Nassau Declaration. Delivery on the actions documented in this declaration were supported by the Nassau Declaration Action Plan. The Plan was approved by the Education Ministers Action Group (EMAG) at their 1st meeting held in January 2016.

  During this session ministers will receive a status update on key actions highlighted in the Nassau Declaration Action Plan. These include:

  - Establishment of the Education Ministers Action Group
  - Establishment of the Commonwealth Accelerated Development Mechanism for Education (CADME) Technical Working Group
  - Development of policy frameworks - the Commonwealth Education Policy Framework (CEPF) and the Commonwealth Curriculum Framework for the SDGs
  - India’s offer to set up a Malaviya Commonwealth Chair for teacher education
  - Support for the expansion of Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships

- **Session 2b: Thematic Issues Paper**
  The 20CCEM Thematic Issues Paper, developed by the University of South Pacific, outlines the substantive issues that the conference will address. In line with the conference theme and sub-themes and within the context of the Commonwealth, the paper will explore the critical role of education in achieving sustainable development and building resilience as well as the capacity of education systems to deal with the challenges and targets agreed in the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. The paper will conclude with recommendations and a roadmap to guide the commonwealth community and national governments in their efforts to achieve SDG 4.

  The full paper, along with an executive summary, will be given to ministers at the conference for their consideration. A brief summary of the paper will be presented in this session, highlighting the main issues and raising key questions for discussion. The presentation of the paper will be 15 minutes, followed by questions and discussion.

  The key outcomes anticipated for this part of session 2 are:

  - Education ministers are made aware of the intended focus and scope of substantive issues that the conference will address.
  - Ministers are provided with a framework for their deliberations over the course of the conference.

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- Ministers have the opportunity to discuss critical issues that relate to the conference theme and sub-themes.

**Session 3a: Global advancements and challenges to achieving SDG 4**

In September 2015, the international community adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which represent a universal, comprehensive and ambitious agenda that commits to the promotion of development in a balanced way - economically, socially and environmentally. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) played an instrumental role in the framing of this agenda and serves as the lead agency for delivery on Sustainable Development Goal 4 ‘Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning’. SDG 4 effectively replaces the MDGs and EFA goals and for the first time covers the full spectrum of education.

Achieving SDG 4 will require increasing efforts, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia and for vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people, refugee children and poor children in rural areas. It is evident that economic uncertainties, changing global demographic trends and challenges such as climate change will have an impact on making SDG 4 a reality. Notwithstanding this, two years after the adoption of the SDGs, many countries continue to capitalise on gains made in the MDG and EFA era which will provide the necessary impetus to attain the SDG 4 targets by 2030. The Commonwealth has clearly articulated its commitment to helping all member states advance on SDG 4.

This part of session 3 consists of a presentation followed by questions and discussion. The presentation, referencing the valuable and relevant guidelines contained in the Incheon Declaration and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, will provide Commonwealth education ministers with a global perspective on how countries are progressing on the various SDG 4 targets and the challenges faced, particularly with respect to implementation and assessment/measurement. It is envisioned that this session will also provide substantial opportunity for education ministers to offer lessons learnt and highlight challenges faced from a national and regional perspective.

The key outcomes anticipated are:

- Understanding of the global landscape and associated recent developments in relation to SDG 4.
- Data and information shared in the session supports the ministers’ policy dialogues and informs actions and interventions they may want to adopt in order to accelerate and/or sustain progress and achievements on SDG 4 and its targets for 2030.
- Ministers unanimously pass a declaration for high-level support from Commonwealth heads of government 2018 Summit for the provision of adequate domestic financing of education in line with international benchmarks (at least 15-20 percent of total public expenditure) to help member states progress towards SDG 4 targets.

**Session 3b: Status update report on SDG 4 in the Commonwealth Countries**

This session will present key findings of the Status update report on SDG 4 in the Commonwealth Countries, commissioned by the Commonwealth Secretariat for 20CCEM. The report will provide a snapshot of education in all 52 member countries. It will present valuable data and analysis to member countries on their progress on SDG 4 since the implementation of the new global education agenda in September 2015. Common challenges confronting the Commonwealth as a whole as well as those associated to specific countries, group of countries or regions will also be identified.

This report represents the first ever initiative in the post-2015 era to map progress against SDG 4 targets - at a time when agreement on various indicators between policy makers and development partners is yet to be fully concluded. It will give education policy makers in the Commonwealth a head start in establishing priorities and agreeing plans to address data gaps to measure SDG 4 targets.

Alongside the Thematic Issues Paper, the evidence and analysis pulled together in the Status Update Report will feed into the global debates of the conference. The full report will be given to ministers at the conference for their consideration. The presentation of the report’s key findings will be 10 minutes, followed by a respondent. The floor will then be opened for questions and discussion by ministers.

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The key outcomes anticipated for this part of session 2 are:

- Data and discussions emerging in the session supports the ministers’ policy dialogues and informs actions and interventions they may want to adopt in order to accelerate and/or sustain progress and achievements on SDG 4 and its targets for 2030.
- A Commonwealth-wide agreement on provision of quality data for continuous mapping of progress against SDG 4 targets.

### Session 4: Progress reports and work programmes

Since the conclusion of 19CCEM in June 2015, the Commonwealth Secretariat and other Commonwealth organisations have implemented a number of programmes and initiatives to advance quality and inclusive education across the Commonwealth. This session will provide an opportunity for the undermentioned organisations to provide an update on their programmes implemented over the period 2015-2018.

- Commonwealth of Learning (COL)
- Commonwealth Tertiary Education Facility (CTEF)
- Commonwealth Secretariat’s Education Team (COMSEC)

### Thursday 22 February

**Education Ministers Meeting**

- **Session 5: Building resilience through education**

  Given the climate vulnerability of Commonwealth countries and the increasing recognition that education has a critical role to play in addressing climate issues, this session will look at strategies to build the resilience and capacity of education systems to respond to this global concern. A key area that will be explored in this session is the role of education in weaving resilience using traditional knowledge, local culture and society. These issues will be discussed particularly in relation to the unique challenges of displacement and migration due to climate change.

  Additionally, this session will consider how appropriate skills, knowledge and values can be imparted to Commonwealth citizens so that they effectively contribute to climate change mitigation, support the green economy and contribute to the sustainable development of their respective countries, and by extension the Commonwealth.

  This session will be 90 minutes, beginning with a short presentation on the role of education in building resilience and addressing climate change, drawing on the experience and challenges faced by Commonwealth small states. This will be followed by a 20-minute keynote address and then the floor will be opened for questions and discussion.

  The key outcomes anticipated for session 5 are:

  - Engaging ministerial discussion on building resilience through education and traditional knowledge to inform policy and planning.

- **Session 6a: Integrated Partners Forum statement**

  Concurrent to the ministerial meeting, teacher groups, civil society members, higher education leaders and students’ associations will meet for the Integrated Partners Forum (IPF). In this session, representatives from the Integrated Partners’ Forum will present a joint statement to the ministers detailing their shared recommendations for education across the Commonwealth. The presentation of the statement will be 20 minutes followed by questions and discussion.

  The outcomes anticipated for the session are:

  - Greater awareness of key stakeholders’ concerns and priorities for education across the Commonwealth.
  - Fruitful engagement between ministers and stakeholders’, encouraging a shared vision for strengthening education across the Commonwealth.
  - Agreement over high-level stakeholders’ priorities for addressing education challenges within the context of 20CCEM theme and associated sub-themes.
• Session 6b: Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) progress report

Since the conclusion of 19CCEM in June 2015, the Commonwealth Secretariat and other Commonwealth organisations have implemented a number of programmes and initiatives to advance quality and inclusive education across the Commonwealth. One key initiative was the establishment of the Task Force to review and enhance the impact of Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP). This second part of session 6 will provide an opportunity for representatives from the CSFP Task Force to offer an update to ministers.

• Session 7a: Roundtable 1: Education for climate change mitigation

Education is an essential element of the global response to climate change. It helps young people understand and address the impact of global warming, encourages changes in their attitudes and behaviour and helps them adapt to climate change-related trends. This roundtable will deliberate on the role of education in addressing issues of climate change. It will provide ministers with an opportunity to consider how appropriate skills, knowledge and values can be imparted onto Commonwealth citizens so that they effectively contribute to climate change mitigation and support the green economy. A key focus of discussions will be on the reviewing of national curricula to ensure that it facilitates the development of the necessary knowledge, skills and values to address climate change and globalisation.

The roundtable will be chaired by a Minister of Education and will include three 10 minute presentations followed by questions and discussion. The presentations will provoke questions and discussion rather than be purely information-giving. Selected representatives from the Integrated Partners Forum will be invited to attend and contribute to discussions. The outcomes anticipated for this roundtable are:

  o Commonwealth education ministers reiterate the threat posed by climate change and increase their commitment to address this through education systems strengthening.
  o Commonwealth education ministers commit to undertaking a reorientation and renewal of their national curricula so that it takes into consideration major global challenges such as climate change.

• Session 7b: Roundtable 2: Skills for development

By 2030, the Commonwealth’s population is projected to reach 2.5 billion of which half will be under the age of 25. This will increase the labour force in member states and it will take careful planning to equip people with the skills appropriate to the opportunities that will become available. In their broadest sense, these include mastery of foundation skills such as basic literacy, numeracy and ICT; transferable or employability skills; and the more specialised technical and vocational skills. Programmes of learning must also produce soft skills of creative thinking, teamwork and problem-solving - both technical and non-technical - all of which are essential to building capacity. In a world of constant and rapid change, a functional educational system must have efficient delivery mechanisms and flexible pathways to effect socio-economic transformation.

This roundtable will consider the implications of changing demographics, global economic and employment trends, and the ability of education systems in the Commonwealth to respond to these challenges. It will recommend implementable skills development strategies that will prepare young people for employment and ultimately lead to economic growth that is equitable and sustainable.

The roundtable will be chaired by a Minister of Education and will include two 10 minute presentations followed by a discussant and then questions and discussion. Selected representatives from the Integrated Partners Forum will be invited to attend and contribute to discussions. The presentations will provoke questions and discussion rather than be purely information-giving. The outcomes anticipated for this roundtable are:

  o Ministers recommendation for imparting foundation, soft and more flexible skills as a part of the formal and informal learning processes.
  o Ministers agree on the planning and resource allocations to be prioritised to transform educational systems so that they better support skills for development initiatives.

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Session 7c: Roundtable 3: Education governance & management
Governance is a critical factor in enabling conditions for quality learning and overcoming inequalities in education. The Commonwealth Education Policy Framework (CEPF) highlights governance as one of the four enablers that must be in place to support the development and subsequent implementation of policy prescriptions designed to meet the SDG 4 targets. The achievement of SDG 4 targets is directly linked to the overall capacity of an education system that is effective, economic and efficient. This roundtable will assess what mechanisms are in place across Commonwealth education systems to enable transparency, accountability and improved learning outcomes; specific focus will also include school leadership and education governance standards. It will draw on the latest findings of the 2017/18 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report ‘Accountability and education: Meeting our commitments’ to inform discussion.

The roundtable will be chaired by a Minister of Education and will include two 10 minute presentations followed by questions and discussion. The presentations will provoke questions and discussion rather than be purely information-giving. Selected representatives from the Integrated Partners Forum will be invited to attend and contribute to discussions. The outcomes anticipated for this roundtable are:

- Commonwealth education ministers will commit to making additional steps to strengthen partnerships with key education stakeholders based on Commonwealth best practices shared at CCEM, to support SDG 4 delivery; and
- Commonwealth education ministers will advance a position on administrating the efficient governance of education.

Session 8: Reports from ministerial round tables - Plenary
The three chairs from the roundtables will report back on the key discussion points that arose from their respective sessions. These reports will offer ministers an overview of what was covered in the other roundtables and will give them the opportunity to contribute to deliberations across all three topics covered. This 90-minute session will consist of reports from each of the roundtable chairs, with time for questions and discussion after each reports. Selected representatives from the Integrated Partners Forum will be invited to attend this session as observers.

Friday 23 February

Education Ministers Meeting

- Session 9a: SDG 4 elements: Early Childhood Development and School Readiness: Models of essential and coordinated services for young children and their families
The inclusion of early childhood development (ECD) for the first time on the global development agenda represents a unique opportunity to galvanize efforts around this goal. In September 2017, ministers of education, health, social services and finance sectors and senior government representatives from 15 Pacific Island countries, gathered in Nadi Fiji for the first Conference on “Moving Forward with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for Early Childhood”. A key challenge discussed was the need for adequate coordination and communication within and across ministries. This challenge is not unique to the Pacific. In many Commonwealth countries implementing and overseeing coordinated and convergent services for ECD services is a concern. In many countries, ECD has lived in ministry of social protection/welfare. Yet as ECD evolves, ministries of education have spearheaded the holistic programmes and policies. While ministries of education have a key role to play in every country, they cannot be solely accountable for the ECD agenda. Key elements of this agenda include creating essential and coordinating elements - across ministries - as well as budgets and monitoring tools that effectively create a system of services responding to children ECD needs, including learning. There is no ideal coordination framework, but 20CCEM offers a rare opportunity for Commonwealth countries to share experiences and consider coordination options.

The session will be co-hosted by UNICEF and will address the role ministries of education play in the coordination of (holistic) inter-sector ECD (IECD) policies and programmes for young children and their families. It will be 45 minutes, consisting of a one short presentation followed by country examples of coordination of ECD from two Ministers of Education. The room will then be open for questions from the floor.

Key outcomes anticipated for this meeting are:
- Identification of emerging management and coordinating systems.
- Actions agreed for development and strengthening of national IECD systems and programmes for young children and families in the Commonwealth.
- Prioritizing incorporation of ECD into national development plans using with cost effective, innovative and scalable interventions.

- **Session 9b: SDG 4 elements: Adult education and learning**
  There are approximately 400 million illiterate adults in the Commonwealth. Adults with poor literacy and numeracy skills face multiple sources of disadvantage. They find it more difficult to make use of opportunities in society and to exercise their rights. They are also more likely to be in poor health (UNESCO 2015). Adult learning is an important element of lifelong learning. Whilst the target focuses on improvements in literacy and numeracy, there are benefits to be gained for individuals and society from broader adult learning as part of a quality and inclusive lifelong learning system.

  During this session, education ministers will have the opportunity to engage in a focused discussion on the key priority areas for adult learning in the Commonwealth, including delivering flexible programmes that minimize barriers to access; educator development and certification; reintegration programmes; learning cultures and recognition of prior learning. The session will be 45 minutes, consisting of two 10-minute presentations followed by questions and discussion.

- **Session 10a: SDG 4 elements: Universalising access to quality primary and secondary education**
  Low primary and secondary school enrolment rates is one of the major challenges that requires urgent attention. Approximately 17 million primary aged children and 16 million lower secondary aged youth remain out of school in the Commonwealth. A quality primary and secondary education embeds the foundation required to support sustainable thinking and practices.

  In light of the above, this session will enable ministers to debate and subsequently outline strategies required to improve upon the successes achieved in the MDG era with regards to universalism. Within the Commonwealth, greater priority must be given to vulnerable groups who are most of risk at being excluded from learning. The Education Commission posits that this can only be accomplished through progressive universalism - expanding the provision of quality education for everyone while prioritizing the needs of the poor and disadvantaged. The session will be 45 minutes, consisting of two 10-minute presentations followed by questions and discussion.

- **Session 10b: SDG 4 elements: Technical and vocational skills**
  The Commonwealth challenge is unique due to its membership, geographic spread and the population demographics of member states. The traditional MDG led initiatives have led to a demonstrable increase in enrolment rates in many countries. However, there are high drop-out rates at secondary and higher secondary levels resulting in a broad gap in transition to any form of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) or to the world of work. Conversely, there has been increasing recognition to prioritise skills development for economic growth and productivity, not just for local economies but in the broader context of globalizing economies where skills standards are increasingly transnational, global and unpredictable in many sectors. Several of the SDG 4 targets focus on technical and vocational skills, however, important issues requiring the attention of policy makers include: Pathways for decent employment (productive, dignified and fairly paid); Reskilling and upskilling of adults; Re-engagement with students including second chance; and Industrial partnerships, technology, governance & enabling environments.
It is anticipated that the session outcomes will inform planning for the future skill needs, aligning supply and demand, sector base approaches and greening of TVET. The session will be 45 minutes, consisting of two 10-minute presentations followed by questions and discussion.

- **Session 11a: SDG 4 elements: Higher Education to meet the changing needs of Employment**
  Higher Education will be critical to meeting the changing needs of employment on today’s global knowledge economy. More than ever, strong and adaptable Higher Education systems will be required to develop the curious, flexible, adaptable, innovative, entrepreneurial, value driven and ethical individuals and leaders that are able to cope with the rapidly changing world of employment. The pace of change will also demand flexible higher education systems for nurturing the ability to learn throughout life and promoting access to lifelong learning. Universities will also have a role to play in developing appropriate social and political responses to technological change.

  This session will address how universities and governments can better understand and address the challenges of the rapidly changing world of work, while maintaining the wider developmental contributions of universities. Six critical issues will be discussed: ensuring access to quality higher education, developing adaptive “future-proof” universities, developing of entrepreneurial skills, improving education-industry engagement, improving data regarding graduate outcomes to better inform policy, and ensuring student mobility across different types of higher education institutions and over the life-course.

  This session will be informed by a dialogue conducted by The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) in association with Wilton Park, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the University of Pretoria and the National Research Foundation South Africa, as part of the Wilton Park Youth Dialogues series. The session will be 45 minutes, consisting of two 10-minute presentations followed by a discussant and then questions and discussion.

- **Session 11b: Discussion on the Nadi Declaration**
  This session will provide an opportunity for ministers to reflect on discussions held over the course of the meeting and deliberate on a draft declaration prepared by the drafting committee.

- **Session 12: Closing of Ministerial Meeting and Nadi Declaration issued**
  During the final session of the 20CCEM ministers will issue the Nadi Declaration, outlining the priorities and agenda for education across the Commonwealth for the next three years (2018 - 2021). The host for the subsequent CCEM will also be announced.