



Right to quality education for all

Executive Summary

The Apostolic Challenge for Right to Education

The Society of Jesus has a long trajectory in the field of education. From its very beginning education was considered an important component in carrying out the mission of promoting the dignity of all persons as children of God.

Education faces many challenges in today's world: we are confronted with the extreme poverty of more than one billion persons and 61 million children and adolescents who are denied the right to education. 774 million adults have had the right to education denied them in the course of their life and can neither read nor write. We know however that providing schooling for all of them requires only as much of an investment as the rich countries spend on their military for just six days. Quality education continues to be a tremendous challenge, given the inefficient educational systems, poorly paid teachers, dilapidated infrastructure, curriculum content that is irrelevant for large sections of the population, top-down pedagogical practices, and extremely high levels of school dropouts.

The victims of this systematic violation of the right to education are the most vulnerable sections of the population, namely rural communities, indigenous peoples, refugees and displaced persons, the elderly, disabled people, girls and women...

In the light of these challenges, GC 35 issued a direct call to the whole Ignatian family to promote political advocacy as a new dimension of our apostolic mission, deeply rooted though it might be in our history. Our educational activity should be reviewed and enhanced in the light of this call as we contemplate the reality of education in our world.

A group of Jesuit organizations working in education from different conferences have decided to unite forces and resources to collaborate for political advocacy towards the promotion of the right to quality education for all. At the beginning of this partnership we developed a common position and understanding of the right to education, and what its defence and promotion means for our works. Ignatian Spirituality and our educational mission in more than 70 countries lead us to defend quality education, not only for the small numbers to whom we attend to in our works, but also for all those persons in need of education. We therefore speak from the perspective of the poor and of those deprived of good quality education. We declare ourselves to be in solidarity with them.

Education is the inalienable right of every human being. It is not just any right, but rather the right without which it is practically impossible to gain access to other human rights and to enjoy basic human freedom. The right to education means the right to quality education for all persons. The diversity of living conditions and cultural differences of different

populations means that the starting point of education of persons (and communities) should be different. It is not possible to offer the same thing to everybody if all are to be at the same level; for true equality we need to give more to those who have less and hence require more.

Quality education being a public good and a basic right for all persons, the state has the obligation to guarantee it; the state must therefore assume responsibility for promoting the synergy of the different factors involved: family, communities, educators, government, business... and then provide an education to build societies that are democratic, just, diverse, and inclusive.

Present response of the Society of Jesus:

In 2012 the network mapped information available in the Provinces and conferences to know what the Society of Jesus is doing on advocacy for the right to education and to establish connections between Jesuit and non-Jesuit institutions.

76 institutions (Schools, Social Centres, NGO, universities and others) belonging to various Conferences of South Asia (27), CPAL (19), Europe (15), Africa (13), Asia-Pacific (1) and USA (1) replied to the questionnaire. These institutions are mainly dedicated to the care of children and youth, and indigenous populations in marginalized rural and urban areas.

- They consider advocacy as a priority, though the number of people dedicated to this task in these organizations is very small, or in some cases, none.
- The recurrent topics for advocacy are: a) quality of education, b) education of girls and women, c) education of marginalized groups, d) promotion and defence of education as a human right.
- Besides these institutions, many more local organizations and institutions are in touch with the grassroots with a potential for mobilization and communication. Hence we can develop into a universal body, enabling the capabilities of others within the framework of the GIAN.

Finally, the context: 2015 marks an important horizon on the international agenda with the review of the objectives of *Education For All* and the *Millennium Development Goals*. The Ignatian advocacy network for the right to education can take advantage of this opportunity to contribute and join the international movement of the civil society. The recent launch of a new UN initiative, "Education First", opens another interesting sphere of influence.

Mission and Objectives of the Network

The network is committed to influencing public policies regarding quality education for all ensuring transformative education, to defending the right to quality education for all throughout their lives, to promoting equity for those most in need and to guaranteeing education as a common good.

Three lines of work that we have defined for the network are:

- Raising Awareness on the right to education and capacity building within the Ignatian family.

- Developing international advocacy on education through strategic participation in the international movement on education.
- Reinforcing local /national advocacy initiatives through these means: supporting the international dimension they may have, sharing experiences and using online communication tools.

Possibilities for Collaboration

- Contribute to the reflection and promotion of the right to education within the Ignatian family, using the position document, and stimulate participation in GIAN education.
- Participate in the Global Campaign for Education.
- Share experiences and contribute to a report on the right to education of vulnerable populations.

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Position document

Introduction

The Society of Jesus has a long trajectory of work in education. From the very beginning education was considered a critical component of our mission to promote the dignity of all persons as children of God. Inspired by the principle of the Ignatian Magis, the Society has, through many initiatives around the world, given special attention to offering quality education in its educational centres and to providing support to people on the margins of society. Despite the work of the Society and the efforts of many other organizations, there are still many challenges in the field of education today. Many groups are still deprived of the right to education; the quality of education in many places, even those with greater economic resources, still continues to be poor; and education in values and citizenship is often neglected.

In the light of these challenges and the many other problems that affect our brothers and sisters, GC 35 issued a direct call to the whole Ignatian family to promote political advocacy. This is deeply rooted in our history, and the call to make it a new dimension of our apostolic mission is in decree 3.28 which says: "The complexity of the problems we face and the richness of the opportunities offered demand that we build bridges between rich and poor, establishing advocacy links of mutual support between those who hold political power and those who find it difficult to voice their interests."¹ Our educational activity needs to be reviewed and enhanced in the light of this call as we contemplate the reality of education in our world.

As a group of Jesuit organizations working in education within different conferences and under the leadership of the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (SJES), we have decided to unite forces and resources in order to collaborate in political advocacy for the right of all persons to quality education. We seek to promote the cultural and political changes that are needed to achieve this right of quality education for all. The task of applying political pressure complements our educational work, for it extends beyond our educational centres and our students, channeling our concerns and our solidarity toward those who are marginalized and denied the right to quality education. We are convinced that we can develop this work of political advocacy effectively if we draw on the potential of our existing resources and make networking a universal practice. Decree 3.43 notes: "In this global context it is important to highlight the extraordinary potential we possess as an international and multicultural body. Acting consistently with this character can not only

¹ GC 35, d. 3, n. 28.

enhance the apostolic effectiveness of our work, but in a fragmented and divided world it can bear witness to the reconciliation in solidarity of all the children of God.”²

1. Education and human dignity

1. When we view the world, we are confronted with the extreme poverty of more than one billion people. Among the many causes and negative effects of poverty we find the denial of the right to good, life-long education for all persons.³ In a globalized world described as a “knowledge society,” this lack of education perpetuates poverty and marginalizes those deprived of it to mere subsistence levels, and denies them opportunities to live with dignity. In contrast, where the right to education is guaranteed, people have greater access to the enjoyment of other rights.

2. In the area of formal education from early childhood through secondary school, there have been considerable advances in recent times, but there are still 67 million children and adolescents today who are denied the right to education. If the present trend continues, in the year 2015 there will still be 56 million children without access to schooling. Providing schooling for all of them would require an investment equivalent to what the rich countries spend on their military in six days, nothing more.

3. Access to education is the first step, but the rate of dropouts is very high. According to the data of UNESCO for 2010, for example, in Nicaragua only 27 of every 100 children finish primary school. Even though access to secondary school and technical training has improved modestly, and even though many countries consider at least the first cycle of secondary school to be mandatory, only 4% of poor girls in Sub-Saharan Africa finish that level. Some 774 million adults have been denied the right to education and can neither read nor write. They represent 17% of all the adults in the world, and two-thirds of them are women.

4. This reality affects the most vulnerable sections of the population: rural communities, indigenous peoples, refugees and displaced persons, the elderly, girls and women.

5. The quality of education continues to be a tremendous challenge, given the inefficient educational systems, poorly paid teachers, dilapidated infrastructure, content that is irrelevant for large sections of the population, top down pedagogical practices, and extremely high levels of school dropouts. Millions of students finish primary school without even the minimum skills needed to survive in a globalized world. UNESCO calculates that it would need to train and hire 18 million more teachers in order to guarantee adequate basic education for all persons.

6. This reality challenges those of us who identify with Ignatian spirituality and work in diverse forms of education in more than 70 countries. As we enter into dialogue with this unacceptable reality of our world, we commit ourselves to doing our utmost to influence public policies so as to make life-long, quality education a guaranteed right for all persons, especially those now deprived of that right. We commit ourselves to uniting our efforts and our contributions to the many other movements that are working to transform national education policies. Our experience in using education to transform the quality of life of the poorest and most marginalized of our countries is a key element in this work of mobilization

² GC 35, d. 3, n. 43.

³ Here we refer to all education: obligatory basic education for everybody, higher education, and education for adults; we also refer to the various modalities: formal (classroom) and non-formal.

and advocacy. Through this we can influence national education policies that will make this fundamental right a reality.

2. Jesus and the dignity of the excluded

7. God does not bless any form of exclusion of his children. Jesus tells us, "Whoever sees me see my Father," and we truly see him by seeking out the excluded people of our time so that we may free them with the embrace of God who loves them, receives them, cures them, pardons them.... They have the incredible experience that God is love and does not exclude them. God does not begin by asking them to account for themselves, but he places them in the centre of his love and tells them, "Rise up and walk." When the disciples of John asked Jesus if he was the one sent by God, he told his apostles to look at the works he did and to draw their own conclusion (Luke 7,18-23).

8. The mission of Jesus' disciples today is to comprehend the eloquent signs of God's presence and to respond to the call to conversion and change presented to us by the excluded. Our mission today is to do what we can to help restore to them their dignity and the opportunity for a decent life that has been denied them; our mission is to meet God in our brothers and sisters and take stock of the ways in which we are complicit with the system that excludes them.

9. As educators who share Ignatian spirituality, we want to work in such a way that we are seen as followers of Jesus and as clear signs of God's Love; we want that identity to shape all our work in the field of education. We are called to defend quality education, not only for the small numbers whom we attend to directly in our works, but for all those who are in need of education. We know that quality education "for all persons" means the poor and the marginalized must be included, and we speak therefore from the perspective of the poor who have been deprived of good education. We declare ourselves in solidarity with them and their future. Today, being illiterate is like being blind in the time of Jesus. Having access only to poor- quality education perpetuates hereditary poverty. Centuries ago such a lack was not offensive since the majority of people had no schooling and felt no need for it, but education today has become a fundamental right, an absolutely necessity for human dignity and success in modern life.

10. Both, discrimination in access to education and poor school quality, put the poor at a disadvantage and play a key role in the perpetuation of poverty. In contrast, quality education with advancement in schooling helps people escape from poverty. Poor-quality education hurts not only individuals, but entire social sections and classes. The best springboard for human development, personal dignity, and political and economic participation in the poorest nations is high quality education for the whole population. That is why we speak of this as a national and a global task, a special challenge to our Ignatian identity and our educational mission.

3. The Mission and the educational identity of the Society of Jesus

11. The Society of Jesus is known historically as a religious order that imparts quality education. At the present time the number of students in the Society's different institutions is close to three million world-wide.

12. Even though the Formula of the Institute approved in 1540 by Pope Paul III at the birth of the Society of Jesus makes no mention of school education, the first Jesuits soon realized

the importance of good education as a way to “help their neighbors.” Discernment of the needs of the time moved Jesuits to dedicate themselves to education by adapting to “diverse places and times.” Before Saint Ignatius died in 1556, more than 40 colleges had been founded in different countries.

13. At that time, however, the great majority of people were illiterate. They received a basic social education in their homes and learned their skills and trades without going to school. School education was for only a minority of people; the rest felt no need for it in their lives.

14. Today anyone without a good education of at least twelve years is today effectively denied the possibility of developing as a person and of gaining access to what is important for a dignified life in our society. Such a person is condemned to poverty, unemployment, and discrimination.

15. The dignity of persons and of societies and the quality of national and international cooperation depend on the improvement of education for all men and women. Quality education is essential in a world that recognizes the equality and the dignity of all persons; it is essential for establishing cultural dialogue among peoples who are equal but diverse; it is essential if we wish to live together as a human community that is differentiated and not uniform. We are immersed in a new context and faced with new realities that oblige us to reinterpret the educational mission of the Society of Jesus.

16. In the 16th century Fr. Diego de Ledesma, professor at the Roman College, proposed four reasons for Jesuits to work in education. The first reason was that the schools “*provide people with many advantages for practical living.*” Even though most people learned useful trades outside of school, the usefulness of education for the successful carrying out of certain professions was clear. In our own days the great difference is that a good education is not just useful but essential for anyone to be useful and productive; only with a good education can their labour provide them with what they need for a decent life. It is therefore a tragedy that hundreds of millions of people are not adequately prepared for useful employment and for that reason miss the chance to get productive, well-paying jobs.

17. At the same time, there is the danger that stressing only the utilitarian aspect of education may lead us to disregard education in values. Practical, instrumental knowledge may be pursued almost exclusively, and in that process, preparing students to apply their knowledge to the construction of a society of justice and peace may be neglected. Ignatian education requires the formation of persons who are **competent** and at the same time **conscientious**.

18. The second reason Fr. Ledesma gave for Jesuits to be involved in schools was that educators “*contribute to the proper governing of public affairs and the appropriate formulation of laws.*” At that time government was the province of kings and princes who needed a competent bureaucracy. As monarchies gave way to democracies, the governing of public affairs required citizens to be well trained for public responsibility; they had to develop participative forms of organization that would prevent aristocratic or dictatorial impositions favoring the interests of rulers over the common good of the nation. In our modern world, the old logic of political and economic domination needs to be replaced by forms of participative democracy that are instruments of life for everybody, and this requires **education in citizenship**.

19. Nowadays in Ignatian education we insist on formation for life and work “for others” and “with others,” and we stress a humanism and spirituality that can help our students recognize the dignity of others and nourish a sense of responsibility for public affairs.

Solidarity is found in persons who recognize themselves as men and women “*for others*” and “*with others,*” who seek to organize society in such a way that affirmation of themselves is at the same time affirmation of others. A **compassionate** spirituality “loves the other as oneself” and contributes to an anthropology of solidarity, which joins with a spirituality of solidarity. This solidarity forms the basis for our **commitment** to the mutual recognition of all persons in all the diversity of political organizations which do not depend on the exclusion and the oppression of others, especially those who are weakest.

20. The third reason given by Fr. Ledesma is that a good education gives “*decorum, perfection to our rational nature.*” Beyond the instrumental rationality so evident in the prodigious development of modern science and technology, the humanly reasonable objectives of the human condition revolve around the pivot of a decent life for all persons. At the present time, however, we are faced with the difficult challenge of preventing economic prosperity and the political power of states from becoming ends in themselves instead of instruments and means to achieve the ultimate goal of human dignity and integral development for all.

21. This brings us to “*defence and propagation of faith in God,*” the fourth reason given for Jesuit education by Fr. Ledesma. As persons who believe in the God who is Love, the God who reveals himself to us in the human face of Jesus, we try to live with a religious sense that moves us to love our neighbour as ourselves. We reject the reduction of people to simple instruments; we reject every form of negation, exclusion, and discrimination of other persons. Jesus tells us that to find true life we have to be compassionate towards the wounded persons we meet daily, following the example of the Good Samaritan of the parable (Luke 10, 25-37).

22. Moreover, education which is exclusively instrumental and utilitarian makes us incapable of contemplating and caring for the human habitat out of true love for ourselves and those who will come after us; purely pragmatic formation leads us to destroy nature for the sake of profit and domination.

23. This anthropology and spirituality of solidarity form the basis of our human formation and the religious sense of our Ignatian educational centres of Christian inspiration. That is why we speak of an education which forms persons who are **competent, conscientious, compassionate, and committed.**

24. We understand that to make this kind of education a reality in the whole of our society we need to exercise effective **influence on public policies.** Our educational communities should view themselves as only a small part of the whole educational system – national and global – and they should work to promote and defend the policy of quality education for all persons.

4. Education as a Human Right

25. **Education today is an inalienable right of every human being,** recognized as such in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, in Article 13 of the Charter of Social, Economic, and Political Rights, and in the constitutions of most nations, as well as in other legal instruments. The right to education is not just any right, for it is the right without which it is practically impossible to gain access to other human rights and to enjoy basic human freedoms. Nevertheless, the reality is that hundreds of millions of persons are excluded from education, and most of humankind is not even aware of this right. Recognition of this right produces a public obligation in the family, the society, and the state, and we need to combine forces to guarantee its fulfilment.

26. We cannot remain with proclaiming the right but must commit ourselves to making it a reality for all persons and in all societies. To that end we consider it necessary to create awareness about what needs to be done to ensure that quality, life-long education reaches all persons, especially those who today are deprived of it. Likewise, we must increase social consciousness about what needs to be changed to make sure 1) that children receive as many years of education as will provide them with the learning they need to live decently; 2) that adults become literate and have access to pertinent, ongoing, quality education; 3) that the universities open their doors to the diverse sections of society and to all those interested in pursuing university studies; and 4) that the necessary means be provided so that all this can be achieved.

27. We understand that access to education by itself is not enough to ensure fulfilment of this basic human right. Katerina Tomasevsky, the U.N.'s first relater for the Right to Education, formulated four A's related to this right, and the Global Campaign for Education added a fifth A. The first A is **Availability**. The second is **Accessibility**: the school or educational service may be available but not accessible to all those who require it. The third A is **Adaptability**, that is, the education offered should take into account the linguistic, cultural, contextual, and personal characteristics of the students so that it will be relevant for them. The fourth A is **Acceptability**, meaning that the students accept the education offered them because they appreciate it as quality education, because it uses appropriate methodologies, because it teaches what is meaningful for their lives, and because the students play an active role in the learning process. The fifth A is **Accountability**, which means that the government, as the principal guarantor of the right to education, should be accountable to the citizenry for guaranteeing this right.

28. The right to a quality education belongs **to every person**. The diverse living conditions of different populations requires that the educational starting points of persons and communities be different. It is not possible to offer the same thing to everybody if similar results are desired; it is necessary to apply criteria that go beyond equal opportunity and attempt to reach true equality, which means that more needs to be given to those who have less and so need more. The distribution of financial, material, and human resources assigned to education should give priority to those who live in conditions of greater difficulty in order to achieve the hoped for results of education. In other words, priority should be given to very poor sectors, indigenous people, minorities, girls and women, handicapped people, and those such as refugees and displaced persons who find themselves in extremely difficult conditions. Every educational development goal should be accompanied by a goal of equality that documents the closing of gaps in the educational attainment of different sections. Equality in education derives from the focus on rights and thus contributes to the creation of societies capable of living in peace because they pursue justice.

5. Meaning, values, and quality

29. The educational system of every country should exist for all persons, regardless of race, caste, social class, language, culture, religion or gender. Such quality education should be provided as allows maximum personal and national development within a model of society that is democratic, intercultural, harmonious, and inclusive. We aspire to impart an education that seeks to transform countries by instilling a horizon of excellence and forming a population capable of reaching that horizon by its creativity, its talents, its values, and its productivity.

30. Every person and entire nations require quality education with a twofold aspect: (1) *Acquisition of knowledge and skills* (reading, writing, mathematics, languages, information technology, specific trades and professions...). (2) *Human formation that fosters a sense of solidarity and offers a humanistic vision*. Education should cultivate solidarity, intercultural sensitivity, and a civic sense of an inclusive “we” in which personal achievement goes outside self and takes in ‘the other’ –both defence of the rights of others and satisfaction in their achievements. Education should enhance the impulse to contribute – in terms of rights and duties – to the fulfilment of the nation’s constitution and laws and ensure the functioning of the public institutions so indispensable for society’s development. Important also is the development of personal liberty, critical thought, and creativity that are capable of confronting socially produced submission and manipulation. Solidarity, liberty, and social and ecological responsibility move us to participate in the many associations created by civil society to enrich social diversity and make it possible for persons to develop responsibly.

6. Some factors for achieving quality education for all persons

a. Public policies

31. The realization of the right of all persons to quality education requires a labour of advocacy to influence government educational policies in systematic fashion. Such systematic advocacy should seek to replicate successful experiences among the very poor; it should influence public opinion through the mass media to strengthen a growing conviction and public consensus about this basic human right. Only thus can governments feel motivated and pressurized to make the required political decisions. In every country studies should be done of successful programmes and of the measures and policies which will in due course produce the changes needed. Also needed are follow-up studies that measure educational coverage and the quality of education received by those most excluded from the world’s most successful programmes.

32. Awareness of quality education as a human right must be raised and fostered in everybody, including those who most need such education; this can deepen people’s conviction and motivation till it becomes organized and publicly expressed. It calls for commitment on the part of many sectors, governments, and world-wide movements.

b. Education to transform persons and societies

33. The aim of education is to transform persons and help them achieve their full human potential. At the same time, education is a key element in building the society we desire, for only through education can there be the full development of those qualities and abilities that lead to the development of a nation’s social and political institutions and its economic capacity.

34. Every one of our countries is in need of profound transformation if they are to overcome poverty and offer true opportunities for people to develop their freedom. We need to build societies that are democratic, just, diverse, and inclusive. To that end we need not only social policies, but a type of education which, among other things, gives all women and men skills and abilities and equips them to be producers of quality goods and services and builders of societies that are democratic, just, and free. When half of society is excluded from quality education,⁴ it is impossible for individuals to have equal opportunities or for the politics and

⁴ From the viewpoint of integral education we can say that a much larger proportion of persons is being deprived of quality education since, for example, training in values and citizenship is not sufficiently developed even for

economy of a country to be balanced and beneficial. We therefore affirm the right to quality education from the perspective of the poor. A radical transformation of education alone allows poor people to become active agents of social transformation.

c. Family, society, and state as educators. Synergies.

35. The family educates, society and its institutions educate, and given the fact that education is an ongoing process, the state should guarantee, promote, and develop systems of quality education. Students are the key element in their own human development. Beyond formal basic education, the learning process should last a whole lifetime, fed by many forms of learning, both formal and informal. Informal learning includes correspondence courses and various electronic media, the latter being very useful in alleviating the serious educational deficit.

36. Families are the first units responsible for the good education of children; as such, they should endeavour to provide an education for their children that will enable them to live and work with dignity when they are grown. Beyond the level of home and primary school, however, education requires specialized educational bodies and government assistance. Parents should realize that both they and their children have a right to quality education, and efforts must be made to help parents collaborate in their children's education and demand that their own rights be respected.

37. Society also considers quality education to be a priority and a basic right that should be available to all. Without quality education for all the whole of society loses in many ways: in values and in harmonious living, in the social capital needed for internal cohesion and social peace, in the benefits of knowledge, in urgently required practical training, and in the requisite formation for responsible citizen action.

38. At the present time the constitutions of many nations affirm the priority of quality education for all persons. They require compulsory education until the end of secondary school and provide possibilities for studying at higher levels and for continuing formation all during life.

39. To achieve all this it is essential to have an understanding and synergy of the diverse factors: family, communities, educators, government, and business. If education is a basic human right, the state is ultimately responsible for guaranteeing it and therefore must assume direct responsibility for promoting this synergy. The family and civil society should not only demand realization of this right but also collaborate in that realization.

From the viewpoint of integral education we can say that a much larger proportion of persons is being deprived of quality education since, for example, training in values and citizenship is not sufficiently developed even for those who are not disadvantaged. For educators in Jesuit schools this should certainly be a matter of concern. Here, however, we are referring only to those who are not acquiring basic abilities such as reading, writing, basic math, and the essential elements for coping in modern society.

d. Quality education as a human right and a public good

40. Quality education is a public good and a basic right of all persons, a right that produces obligations in the family, in the state, and in civil society. It is a public good to which all

those who are not disadvantaged. For educators in Jesuit schools this should certainly be a matter of concern. Here, however, we are referring only to those who are not learning basic abilities such as reading, writing, basic math, and the essential elements for coping in modern society.

should have effective access; it cannot therefore rest as only a general principle that all give assent to but few act upon or respect. On the contrary, it must be an operative principle which motivates and orients an ambitious programme that allows family, civil society, and government to support and stimulate one another. Only then can this principle become a social human right for one and all, an operative reality with measurable results.

41. The actual denial of this right is a crime which, when committed, has diverse responsibilities and culpabilities. The right to education must be accompanied by the personal responsibility of the student to be educated and to develop his or her potential. Society must respond adequately to this right and this duty of the student; among other things, there is need for a national educational system with adequate organization, personnel, and finances to achieve the established objectives.

42. Education as a public good does not mean that only the government can offer education. Private organizations that contribute to the right to an education are providing a public good. As such they are responsible for the realization of that right, and the state has the obligation to guarantee that they are complying.

43. When provided by the private sector, the public good of education also contributes to the transformation of society to the extent that it explicitly proposes to engage in such transformation and provides the means for achieving that purpose.

44. The lack of sufficient resources to pay for the direct and indirect costs of education, and even the cost of the opportunity for education, should not be an obstacle to the realization of this right. Excluding persons who are not able to pay for the costs of educational services is a way of suppressing this basic right. The government and those providing the public service of education must assume the responsibility for not excluding persons on economic grounds.

45. Consequently, any attempts to privatize education which close off access to persons and communities who cannot pay are initiatives that suppress the right to education.

e. Educational priority and financing

46. Making the right to education effective requires serious changes. One very decisive change involves the financing necessary to achieve three basic objectives: a) quality basic education through schooling of all children and adolescents from early childhood to at least the end of secondary school, b) literacy training for the adult population, and c) professionalization and hiring of teachers.

47. The level of education available to a person should not be determined either quantitatively or qualitatively by the economic resources of the family; in other words, neither the level of schooling nor the quality of education provided for poor students should be inferior to that available for the more affluent. On the contrary, every person has a right to the highest level of education that he or she chooses to pursue beyond the basic level. The government should guarantee forms of financing and educational opportunity so that all citizens reach the highest levels possible, as long as they do what is required on their part.

48. Public financing of education is required if the right to education is not to be frustrated. Since the socio-economic reality of families varies, government financing should pay preferential attention to those with fewer resources.

49. Public financing for investment in education should be an effective priority, just as the effort to provide education for the children should be a priority in every family. To this end public policies should stimulate and reinforce the efforts of families and the contributions of civil society with its businesses, foundations, and various educational initiatives. And as already stated, this financing should be used from the perspective of equality, making sure that the neediest persons receive greater resources to enable them to attain the quality education to which all have a right.

f. Educators

50. If education is a true strategic priority, it is important that the most outstanding sons and daughters of a country become educators. At the same time, in most countries young people are in practice dissuaded and discouraged from pursuing a teaching career and are denigrated if they persist, just as those who are already educators do not get the recognition they deserve. The scant social esteem and low salaries for teachers are at the root of the failure of educational systems. In many countries the tragic result is that there is a severe lack of suitable educators. The key to a good education is the availability of well prepared educators who are vocationally motivated, decently remunerated, and conscious of their social worth.

51. It is essential that priority be given to finding the resources needed to pay decent salaries to teachers. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that accounting of educational costs is efficient and transparent so that civil society can see that funds are being spent effectively in paying teachers well and providing them with good working conditions.

52. Priority should also be given training of the highest quality in order to attract the best candidates to the profession. This training should include at least the following: mastery of the matter to be taught; pedagogical practices most appropriate for attaining the learning objectives in an inclusive and intercultural manner; the ability to create classroom settings that are welcoming, respectful, safe, and suited to learning. Other important skills include: the ability to plan keeping in mind the specific context and the needs of each student; the ability to evaluate student's all-round growth; understanding the social, economic, and cultural factors that affect the learning processes; the ability and attitude for encouraging the family and the community to participate in the educational task; and awareness of the social and ethical responsibility of every educator. To sum up, we want our educators to be competent, conscientious, compassionate, and committed.

g. The educational centre

53. The educational centre constitutes the basic unit of the educational system, which should therefore revolve around the service provided by the centre. The directors of the centres should be carefully chosen and trained to manage them in collaboration with their teaching teams and with community participation. Each centre is a basic unit of planning and evaluation, and it is the duty of the government to provide it with the infrastructure, the finances, and the didactic materials required to function well. At the same time, the government should grant it autonomy to make the decisions which will allow it to adapt the education it gives to its specific context and to resolve its particular educational problematic in the best way possible. The educational system should support the centre's needs, allow it freedom in its processes, and hold it accountable for its results.

54. A national educational system is large, involving millions of persons, but the basic schooling process takes place in a particular school and in a particular classroom where a two-way relation between teacher and student is established. In this regard, each one of the

thousands of schools in a system requires a first-class educational administration in which both the director and the educational team are committed to achieving high-quality education. Such a team communicates its determination to the students and their parents. In order for this to become a reality in all schools, there must be highly qualified management teams, skilled team facilitators, and first-class educational administration. A system must be created to train educators for pedagogical management so that they are capable of administering school budgets, equipping and maintaining the plant, and above all guiding and motivating the educational team towards the attainment of very concrete, measurable objectives.

55. Experience teaches us that behind a good school there is a good administration, one that is able to coordinate and orient the whole team of educators. Naturally, good school administration requires a certain autonomy that allows important decisions to be made at the school level for no one can do that better than the director with his/her team.

56. Being a good teacher does not necessarily mean being a good educational administrator. Given the serious lack of good administrators, it is impossible to transform education without a clear, precise, and ambitious training programme in educational management that reaches every corner of every country. Such a programme should provide training of directors for centres, but should also train public officials at local, regional, and national levels so that they can accompany, support, and orient those working in the school and the classroom. All of this training, however, will serve no purpose unless it is accompanied by better pay for those who have the responsibility for successful school administration.

h. Ends, means, and evaluation

57. We place special value on the development of a culture which trains people to relate the ends desired with the means for achieving them and with the responsibility of each person to dedicate his/her best qualities and abilities to the same end.

58. It is necessary to foster a culture of evaluation which measures the extent of school coverage

and the progress of students to gauge the advances made. It is also necessary to measure the acquisition of knowledge and skills and to evaluate the learning of such values as solidarity, social responsibility, creativity, sensitivity, and openness to pluralism. The last named is difficult to assess. It is therefore appropriate that we explore new ways of evaluating the quality of the liberating education which is our objective; we are convinced that such education cannot be adequately judged by standardized examinations. Perhaps more important than any measurement is the degree of inspiration the student finds in the school system, in the family, and in the larger society, for this alone will advance the cultural productivity of a country.

59. In every nation it is important that a broad variety of institutions, both religious and secular, be invited to contribute to the society's educational and training capacities. Drawing on the depths of their conscience and their deep-rooted spiritual convictions (religious or lay), they should inspire people to embrace a pluralist harmony and a peaceful solidarity that includes highly diverse groups with all their particularities in a unity that is not uniform.

Questions for personal and group reflection among Jesuits and their collaborators in mission:

1. As you read the text, what is there that produces in you feelings of consolation: idealism, hope, light, ...?
2. What is there in the text that produces in you desolation: despair, worry, darkness, ...?
3. Questions to ponder:
 - In your Province/Conference, how is the Society responding to its educational mission with regard to the defence and promotion of the right to education, especially of marginalized populations?
 - What do you think should be the priorities of the Society in the 21st century as regards working for the right to education? How do those priorities relate to the criteria of greater need, greater fruit, and the more universal good?
 - How can the Society grow so that it will function as a true apostolic body in the defence and promotion of the right to education for persons who are now deprived of it?
4. How do you feel called, in your Province or Conference, to collaborate in working for the right to education for all persons, especially those who are most deprived of it?

*Original in Spanish
Translation by Joseph Owens SJ*