

Terms of reference for policy-supporting research (PSR)

Preparatory work for the actualization of the strategic note for global citizenship education

1. Context

Since 2012, Belgian cooperation has had a [strategic note on development education](#) (DE). Its general objective is worded as follows: "*Belgium wants to contribute to forming responsible citizens, capable of taking informed positions on major global issues and international solidarity, but also aware of their ability to influence change towards a fairer world. Belgian Development Cooperation wants to support citizen, individual and collective mobilisations in favour of equitable North/South relations*". This note was written by DGD on the basis of [consensus notes](#) drawn up with NGO federations and the programme Annoncer la couleur-Kleur Bekennen. These consensus notes covered the definition of DE, the different types of actors in DE, what was meant by effectiveness in DE, etc.

The defined mandate and several of the working methods and priorities remain relevant today and continue to be references for the work of DGD. Nevertheless, the note was drafted before the establishment of the 2030 agenda and in a Belgian and international context that has evolved. In particular, the term "development education" is increasingly being replaced by the term "global citizenship education" (GCE).

DGD therefore wishes to update the strategic note. The following elements should be taken into account in the reflection on the revision of the note:

- **The adoption of the 17 "Sustainable Development Goals"** in 2015, which follow on from the "Millennium Development Goals" (MDGs). In addition to the greater number of goals, the principle of interdependence between the goals and the principle of "leave no one behind", the innovation of this agenda which has the greatest impact on the DE/GCE is that it has emphasized the universal responsibilities of countries and peoples to achieve the SDGs. Belgium's sole responsibility is not only to support the implementation of this agenda in the countries of the South, but also to reach the SDGs at the local level in a spirit of interdependence. The importance of ECM is explicitly recognized in target 4.7 of the MDG on education.
- In an increasingly globalized world whose issues and regions are interdependent, people here and elsewhere are, at varying levels of responsibility and consequences, confronted with numerous challenges: unequal distribution of wealth, climate change, loss of biodiversity, violation of human rights, dominant discourses favouring an unsustainable lifestyle, inward-looking attitudes, stereotypes of all kinds, South/South and South/North migration flows, etc. **The world as we know it today can be seen even less dichotomously than before:** North/South, East/West dualities, richer/poorer countries, etc. have given way to much more complex interdependencies, making our world increasingly globalized and interconnected. The questions facing us are global and it is necessary, through DE/GCE, to understand this complex world, in order to make responsible, conscious and thoughtful

choices here and elsewhere, individually and together, to live in it with respect for all. The terms "North" and "South" can also be revisited.

- The **choice of the term DE or GCE**: The term (sustainable) development education emerged from a first initiative in 2002 in Johannesburg, on the occasion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. This summit marked the launch of the decade for DE (2005-2014), with the aim of rethinking the educational approach as a whole. The term GCE is derived from the Global Education Initiative for 2012-2017. The initiative was launched by then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to accelerate progress towards the Education for All goals and other education-related Millennium Development Goals. The terminology DE are no longer adapted to the mission of Belgian Development Cooperation and to the vocabulary used in the Belgian and international solidarity sector. It is not only a question of "raising the awareness of the Belgian citizen through information and education about the issues, problems and objectives of development cooperation and international relations". DE is now in the field of social change towards an ideal to be built collectively. Awareness raising, a change of mentality, mobilization for sustainable development, here and elsewhere, are at the center of the stage.
- **Political priorities** such as the integration of gender in GCE and those driven by recent developments such as the decolonization of GCE and of development cooperation in general.

2. Defining the problem and identifying fields of activity

The PSR will aim to prepare the ground for the updating of the strategic note:

- To identify the elements that deserve to be updated;
- Identify new elements/challenges that would deserve to be taken into consideration in the note;
- Propose a draft note that integrates these different elements;
- Propose a roadmap for the elaboration of this strategic note.

This draft would be presented to DGD and could serve as a basis for further consultation with stakeholders in the GCE sector.

In order to achieve this objective, the drafting will have to :

- Draw on a variety of resources (policy documents, evaluation reports and academic research) in order to establish a solid and sustainable conceptual basis. e.g. UN, UNESCO, European Congress on Education for Global Citizenship, GENE, EU DEAR, SES evaluation, NGO guidelines, Enabel, etc.);
- Take into account the dated but fixed definitions of the law on development cooperation ;
- Take into account the variety of target audiences, as mentioned in the law, the Common Contextual Analysis (CCA) Belgium, and the Common Strategic Frameworks (CSC) Belgium (2017-2021 and 2022-2026) ;
- Clarify the relationship between the different definitions of DE/GCE and the variations of actors and activities included therein. This in law, policy texts, ministerial declarations (e.g. Parl.St. 53 2923/003, p. 15) and in practice ;
- Take into account the variety of actors in GCE ;
- Take into account the diversity of strategic and/or operational objectives, pedagogical approaches, channels and tools, themes, etc.;

In particular, the proposal must take into consideration the developments noticed in recent years in GCE in the practices and types of actors involved, for example:

- A strong willingness to articulate the reflection and practices of DE with the actors of the South and from the diasporas, taking care to develop a partnership relationship of reciprocity;
- The taking into account of gender in GCE;
- An increasing number of *IPsIs/4de pijler organisaties*, popular education and youth associations that invest in reflection on international solidarity and development. In general, the links to be forged with the Belgian associative sector outside of international cooperation;
- A consolidation of national awareness and citizen mobilization campaigns carried out by various collectives;
- Synergies and complementarities between actors;
- The deployment of digital technology in DE/GCE;
- The link between GCE and policy coherence for development;
- The trend towards greater societal responsibility of economic actors who export to and/or invest in the countries of the 'Global South';
- The link between GCE and communication, public relations and, if appropriate, fund-raising;
- The evolution of the regulatory frameworks within compulsory education in Belgium (philosophy and citizenship courses, excellence pact, reform of the *eindtermen*).

3. Expected results of policy support for Belgian Development Cooperation

PSR is expected to contribute to the drafting of an actualized version of the Global Citizenship Education strategy for Belgian Development cooperation through the production of:

- a proposal to update the global citizenship education (GCE) strategy note which takes into account the challenges identified above and which, in particular, insists on the fact that GCE is a crucial lever for the achievement of the SDGs, introducing a single definition of GCE objectives and activities, compatible with the law;
- a report that explains the changes and develops the conceptual framework. This paper explains the choices made in the first document on the basis of academic literature on WBE, policy documents and practice.

This research should be carried out through qualitative desk study research and have a maximum duration of 50 man-days from March 2021. Only at a later stage would the outputs of this PSR be submitted for internal as well as external review, and eventually, for political validation. The main objective of this PSR is to provide a sound conceptual basis for GCE in Belgium and to be a first step towards a broadly-supported updated GCE strategy.