

## Brief Report from IRN on Health Literacy, Life Skills and Social Inclusion

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This brief report covers the consultations, conceptual development, recruitment and fund-raising done for the IRN to date.

1. It should be noted that the WERA [IRN on Health Literacy, Life Skills and Social Inclusion](#) is working in parallel with a global [Working Group](#) established by the [FRESH Partnership](#), a committee and collaboration among several UN agencies, donors and international organizations such as Education International, Save the Children and others.

The goal of the IRN and the FRESH WG are to inform the deliberations among UN agencies about the monitoring of Target 4.7 (defining a high-quality education) of Goal #4 (Education of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals). The goal is to develop workable criteria and indicators for measuring and monitoring the delivery of core Health, Personal and Social Development (HPSD) education in classroom and informal education activities. The FRESH WG is to develop the policy and research questions that need to be addressed and the IRN is to develop the research to answer these questions.

As part of the work, we are also examining Teacher Education and Development as well as the preparation of other professionals that work with and within schools to deliver informal or “extended education” activities as well as support services to students and educators. This has led to on-going contact with the [Education Workforce Initiative](#) (EWI) of the [Education Commission](#) (chaired by Gordon Brown, UN Envoy on Education). Once again, the FRESH WG will develop the policy and program questions needed to strengthen HPSD teachers and other worker readiness. We have identified the need to create another initiative (Global Consortium of Education & Other Faculties-GCEOF) to follow up on the workforce development questions with the EWI and other agencies such as UNESCO. We have approached several national and regional associations of Deans of education with a request that they participate in and possibly take the lead on this consortium.

2. Consultations and draft scoping papers have been developed on [HPSD education](#) and on Teacher/Other Professional [Workforce Development](#). These have been submitted to the FRESH Partnership members (over 40 organizations) and reviewed by the members of the FRESH Working Group (approximately 60 experts). These papers are being presented at the 2018 WERA conference. (Copies are attached)
3. A coordinated work plan for the IRN, the FRESH WG and the GCEOF has been developed over the next two years.
4. Funding is being sought for different specific aspects of the work plan. To date, we have:
  - a) Secured \$55,000 (CAD) from Public Safety Canada to develop a research agenda on Preventing Violent Extremism (one topic in the scoping paper). It is hoped that the resulting

research agenda will be subsequently funded so that a social inclusion approach to PVE can be better developed and applied. (UNESCO and others have recommended the approach, it needs to be developed and tested regarding the use of specific inclusion and social development strategies and programs impact on violent extremism).

b) A proposal to conduct a basic fact-finding/document retrieval survey of all countries and states/provinces on their HPSD curricula and related school health/development policies and services is being discussed with two joint funders. The members of the IRN will be invited to participate in and analyze the results of this survey and to subsequently do various content analysis on the HPSD curriculum and policy documents. This analysis work will be linked to the UNESCO Clearinghouse on HIV/Health Education, where the documents will be stored.

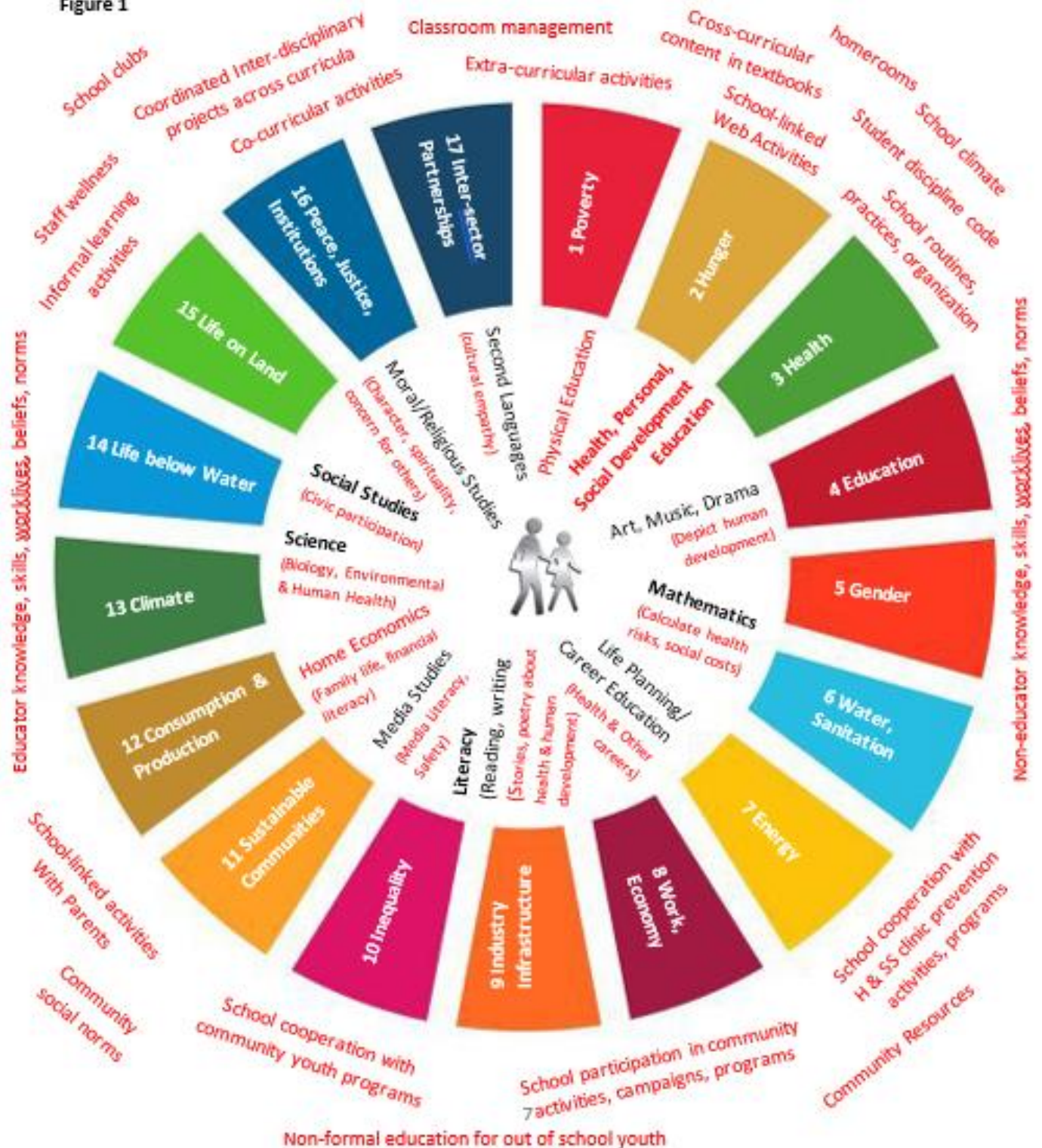
5. Once the scoping papers and consultations with policy and practitioner organizations has been completed, the IRN will step up its recruitment activities to engage with more experts. We have already engaged several experts through these consultations but will be more actively focused in the next phase to enable us to build on the work that is being done by these experts and to bring that into the IRN activities. An example of this is the group of experts who are already working on social & emotional learning. Another is a similar group already working on health literacy.
6. A series of webinars will be started in September 2018. These events and the finalized papers should be posted on the WERA web site. We request information and guidance on the process to do that.

A couple of slides below provide a glimpse of the scoping papers and the work to date.

## A HPSD Curriculum with Links Across Other Subjects and Other Learning in the School Day & Community

This diagram depicts the connections between HPSD education as a separate subject, how HPSD can be covered in other subjects as well as other parts of the school day. The 17 UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals are shown as a backdrop and the development of "whole child" is the central focus. The impact of the knowledge, skills, work lives, beliefs and norms of educators and others that work with or in schools is also noted.

Figure 1



# FRESH Working Group & Ed Paradigms

The [FRESH Working Group on Health Literacy, Life Skills and Social Inclusion](#) will examine this wide breadth of learning opportunities through the examination of several leading paradigms that have been and are being used to guide teaching and learning in health, personal and social development education. It is likely that this list will evolve as the work of the group proceeds. The initial list of paradigms includes:

- **Basic literacy in health and personal safety**, including functional general basic knowledge as well as the ability to access/use reliable information and support from parents, peers, health and other services, protection/police services, trusted adults related to various issues such as child sexual and economic exploitation, hygiene, infectious diseases, abuse & neglect, nutrition, substance abuse, mental health, accidents, environmental hazards, disasters and many others
- **Life skills**, including life/social skills, coping skills related to resilience, conflict resolution skills, social and emotional intelligence, essential family life skills, financial/economic and media/consumer literacy, decision-making, youth development, engagement & empowerment
- **Social inclusion**, including human rights, global citizenship, peace education, gender equity, social responsibility, ethics/morals/faith/spirituality, education to prevent extremism, violence, bullying, and discrimination, education to promote diversity and inclusion of students with disabilities/special needs and alleviating disadvantages caused gross social and economic inequities

## Major Policy, Program, Practical Issues & Pitfalls Have Been Neglected

1. Many excellent and proven education programs on specific topics have been developed, tested and used. Rarely do these programs refer to or are **studied/positioned within an overall, core HPSD curriculum**.
2. The **classroom instructional time** devoted to HPSD education is unknown in almost all national reporting, in global survey instruments, in topic-focused research and in practice.
3. The **curriculum structures** (health, life skills, Health & PE, PSHE etc.) used to deliver HPSD education are unknown and have not been compared for effectiveness or coverage.
4. Some curricula have defined some **general, generic skills** as part of the HPSD program but they are not used to report on or evaluate the effectiveness of HPSD curricula. Most reports (and research studies) are on the coverage of topics or on specific topics but not on HPSD learning overall. (Health literacy is different than health skills)
5. The **“extended education”** opportunities (extra-curricular, co-curricular, school routines, community-based/school-linked, etc.) are sporadic, uncoordinated, not guided by a coherent HPSD scope and sequence
6. **Cross-curricular and competency-based whole curriculum (all subjects) frameworks** are new and a mystery
7. Teacher education and development is usually short term, focused on implementing a topic based instructional program **without a long-term workforce development strategy**.
8. The education and **development of other professionals that work with and within schools** has been ignored. These include school-based and school-linked nurses, social workers, guidance counselors, psychologists, nutritionists, physicians, youth workers, police officers, civil/camp protection workers, humanitarian aid and development workers, teacher aides, allied health professionals, community elders, pastoral counselors, and especially school health/development coordinators. **Inter and intra-professional education** for all is needed.