

Meeting with CBCI Education Experts

The CBCI Office for Education and Culture organised an online meeting with the CBCI Education Experts on the 2nd of May 2023, which was presided over by the Chairperson of the CBCI Office for Education and Culture, Most Rev. Elias Gonsalves. The meeting started with a short prayer by Fr. Maria Charles.

Fr. Maria Charles put up the agendas of the meeting and explained them to the participants. He then informed everyone that there was a letter from the Dicastery of Culture and Education from Rome asking for a report on the status of our carrying out of the Global Compact on Education in India. He insisted all the Regional and Diocesan Secretaries to respond to the questionnaire sent by the Dicastery of Culture and Education. Next screen that he showed were the commitments of the Global Compact on Education. The commitments were to be made into posters and sent to all the schools and institutions. He said that he would like to get the feedback from all the schools and management about this so that we can show this to Church at the world level. He asked for suggestions from the participants as to how they can promote this Global Compact on Education to the institutions.

The Chairperson of the CBCI Office for Education and Culture said to involve the Dicastery from Rome in the process of introducing the Global Compact on Education to the Institutions, we have to organize a preparatory programme to spread awareness and for the schools to get involved in the process and it should coincide with NEP 2020. A participant added that we should spread awareness about the global compact on education when we are holding programs for the diocesan and regional levels. He said each diocese and regions should make a pledge to work towards it that is why it is known as a as a compact on education. Fr. Charles said that we can also get a report from all the institutions and schools from the diocesan level about how many schools and institutions have taken this pledge. He also said that we need suggestions on how do we get the feedback from all the schools and institutions about this pledge.

A participant said that We should sensitise about this topic so that the pledge becomes more meaningful. Another participant said that unless you spread awareness about the Global Compact on Education there is no point in taking a pledge. He asked the other participants that how is it going to affect education in India. We can tie it up with NEP 2020 and create a kind of framework that can be used for this purpose. Another participant said that the background paper has to be prepared and reach the Church and the institutions to spread awareness. Another participant joined in saying that we should redefine the global compact on education in the Indian context.

A participant said that one animation programme is required for all the associations there are, then only they will grasp the Global Compact on Education. He said at various levels, the animation programme should be held and at the local level, it should be put into practice. The

Chairman said that the upcoming meetings going to be held for the Regional and Diocesan Secretaries, we need to have trainers to train them so that they can conscientize and implement the Global Compact on Education. He said that we need to have a programme planned with the strategies. Another participant gave a suggestion that we should have some people appointed whom the schools can contact for the information and implementation of the Global Compact on Education so that it can start moving forward.

Fr. Charles then introduced the next agenda to the participants. A participant shared that he attended the meeting of the NCCI and got to know that the news articles in the newspapers shows only one side of the story. He also talked about how he met the Chairman of the Minority Commission and he spoke about how the Minority Certificate can be obtained easily. The Chairman thanked him for this help to the group because of the hectic process of obtaining the Minority Certificate. Another participant said that we have see that there is convergence among us because of different opinions and suggestions. We need to see because of that the process cannot be abandoned. Fr. Charles said that we have to move forward without hurting each other and without disrespecting each other and a type of mature relationship ensures. We need to take this slowly, steadily and do it properly.

A participant said that each program can be different, and each person can be different, we should not have a uniform thing. If there is a long list of topics, then people will not be interested, and schools will not be interested in participating in the programme. Another participant said that it is good to have some more clarity and understanding of NEP 2020 and NCF 2023. We should try to understand the nuances of NCF 2022 and NCF 2023 pre-draft. Fr. Charles said that we can go to the States and the Regions to conduct the programmes. Fr. Charles informed everyone that the commitments of the Global Compact on Education have suggestions for the Higher Education as well.

Fr. Charles then moved on to the next agenda which were the Catholic Education Policy and the CBCI Child Protection Policy. He gave a brief about the topics of both the Policies and all that were added into the new Policy that was not there in the old Policies. He said that the Catholic Education Policy would be discussed in the Standing Committee meeting and a version of it has been sent to the Bishops for reading beforehand so that they can give their suggestions from their observations that can be included in the Policy.

The Chairman then gave some concluding words to the meeting. He then concluded the meeting with a prayer and by giving his blessing. Fr. Charles thanked everyone for joining the meeting.