This year is marking the Sesquicentennial birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi is known in different circles for his different statures. He was a leader, a preacher, a practitioner but most importantly an educator. Gandhi throughout his life has written, spoken and emphasised extensively on the importance of education and learning. On this 150th birth anniversary of Gandhi, UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education in partnership with International Development Research Centre (IDRC), UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office and Association of Indian Universities is hosting an international dialogue on Gandhi and higher education today. Titled “Educating the Mind, Body and Heart”, the dialogue will bring together practitioners, academicians and Gandhian philosophers to explore the relevance, applications and impacts of Mahatma Gandhi’s theory and practice on education, learning and knowledge to higher education in India and the world. Drawing from individual and institutional practices, the dialogue is going to be a unique platform to facilitate cross country dialogue on what Gandhi offers to the world of Higher Education.

Gandhi’s vision on Higher Education has tremendous contemporary relevance today. He spoke about vocational education, skill based training, relevance and integration of indigenous knowledge systems. Most of his views on Higher Education emphasized learning as opposed to mere teaching. For him, a person was made of three constituents-- the body, mind and spirit. In other sense, education must lead to a holistic development of the body, mind and spirit. An education which is combined with skills training is more self-sustainable and this learning in vernacular is considered
appropriate. Gandhi opined that the end of all education should be oriented towards service and students should be given opportunities to render service to society while they are studying. The idea of a service orientation of education took ethics, morality and spiritualism as its important elements. The University of Gandhi’s dream was the building block of a self-reliant and self-sustainable nation which was proud of its indigenous languages, cultures, technology and knowledge.

This dialogue will thus not just be a tribute to the teachings of Gandhi but will also explore its policy and practice relevance at national and international levels.

As part of Education 2030 Agenda, UNESCO is promoting reflections and networking to discuss innovative ideas and practices for the Futures of Education. The New Education Policy (NEP) proposals of Government of India have several critical aspects that resonate with Gandhi’s views. Association of Indian Universities (AIU) in India is convening several consultations in this regard. IDRC (Canada) has launched a new global initiative in collaboration with Global Partnership for Education (GPE) to support scaling up of innovative solutions for securing SDG 4 around the world.

This dialogue will provide inputs to all of these processes.

**Objectives of the Dialogue**

a. Explore contemporary relevance of Gandhi’s perspectives and approaches to higher education today

b. Share innovations in practice, social responsibility and community engagement in Higher Education.

c. Produce insights for Education 2030 under the Futures for Education

d. Mobilise multi-stakeholder partnership network of policy-makers, practitioners, researchers and civil society to promote Education 2030.

**Expected Outputs of the Dialogue**

a. Compiled learnings from Gandhi relevant to higher education

b. Compiled innovative practices in higher education for Agenda 2030

**Participants** will comprise of scholars, teachers, researchers, students and practitioners from India and internationally.