Sub-regional EFA Forum (SRF) / Thematic Working Group (TWG) on EFA

11th Meeting Minutes, 16 June 2003, Bangkok, UNESCAP

Participants

1. Mr. Sheldon Shaeffer, UNESCO Bangkok
2. Mr. Apichai Sunchindah, UN Resident Coordinator’s Office
3. Ms. Vibeke Jensen, UNESCO Bangkok
4. Ms. Kay Nagata, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
5. Mr. Toshiyuki Matsumoto, UNESCO Bangkok
6. Mr. Kiichi Oyasu, UNESCO Bangkok
7. Mr. Abdul Hakeem, UNESCO Bangkok
8. Mr. William Brohier, Christian Blind Mission
10. Ms. Nora Quetulio, The Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO)
11. Ms. Marie-Claire Droz, International Movement ATD Fourth World
12. Mr. Jerrold W. Huguet, UNESCAP
13. Ms. Penelope Price, UNESCAP
14. Mr. Ko-Chih Tung, UNESCO Bangkok
15. Mr. Jon Kapp, UNESCO Bangkok

Apologies

1. Malcolm Hazelman, FAORAP
2. Habte Woldemariam, Plan International
3. Joao Pereira, UNICEF
4. Carmelita Villanueva, UNESCO Bangkok
5. TRAN Phuong Hoa, Plan International
6. Cliff Meyers, UNICEF

Agenda

1. Opening (Sheldon Shaeffer)
   Mr. Shaeffer opened the meeting with announcements and an overview of the agenda and the theme of the flagship programmes.

   Participants introduced themselves and their roles and responsibilities related to the Thematic Working Group (TWG).

   Documentation: 11th SRF/TWG Meeting Agenda

2. Adoption of minutes
   Mr. Shaeffer presented the 10th SRF/TWG meeting minutes and tabled an amendment submitted in absentia by Mr. Hazelman. Minutes and amendment were adopted as presented with no further discussion
3. Presentation of Final Terms of Reference (TOR) for SRF/TWG (Sheldon Shaeffer)

Mr. Shaeffer presented a brief history of the Sub Regional Forum (SRF) and its function leading up to the Dakar meeting and within the Framework for Action. Following Dakar, sub-regional fora were continued. At the same time, thematic working groups were established to promote and facilitate interagency collaboration. In Bangkok, SRF and TWG met together with an initial primary focus of developing EFA plans.

Mr. Shaeffer presented the Final Draft TOR, suggesting focus be initially placed on the flagship programmes for EFA. Mr. Shaeffer called for suggestions for a new working group name to take into account the finalisation of the unification.

Mr. Huguet noted the thematic working group was not an United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) working group, but an interagency working group. Because of this, a single name is appropriate, while reporting continues through the UNESCO mechanisms as well as heads of agency in BKK. TWG is appropriate for ESCAP but it is understood that there may be a potential need to represent SRF in the name.

Mr. Tung raised the issue of area of coverage. As TWG seems broader in geographic coverage than SRF, when the union is finalised, Mr. Tung questioned how this area of coverage be will reconciled. Mr. Shaeffer asked for input regarding the geographic coverage and practices from other TWG. Mr. Apichai answered stating that as far as he understood, there was no hard and fast rule. Coverage could extend through Asia and the Pacific.

Mr. Shaeffer explained that this SRF focussed on South East and East Asia because other regional offices (South Asia particularly) had created their own sub-regional fora. Central Asia and Pacific also have forums. The issue is, are we/should we be speaking for more than Southeast and East Asia?

Ms. Jensen added that the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) had had similar conversations. It was decided that focused intervention remain in Southeast Asia but with flexibility to draw on experience and best practices throughout the region. Mr. Huguet noted that other working groups have similar approaches.

Mr. Huguet proposed the group be renamed, the Bangkok Thematic Working Group.

Mr. Tung said that regardless of the name, the TOR must explain role and relationship of this group with other SRF to avoid overlap and to create interagency/intergroup cooperation and inter-subregional coordination.

Mr. Shaeffer concurred noting that activities of this group should be presented to other fora. He concluded the discussion by suggesting that a line be added in the TOR to insure links to other SRF. He suggested ‘providing assistance to other SRF in the broader region.’

Ms. Quetulio asked that the word ‘sustainability’ be added to the bullet point ‘Dissemination of best practices.’

Mr. Tung stressed the point that the group remain as a regional technical advisory group.

Mr. Shaeffer agreed, suggesting the addition within the TOR of ‘exchange information with, disseminate innovative practices with, and provide technical assistance to, other EFA coordinating mechanisms in Asia and the Pacific.’

Mr. Zhou, in recalling past meetings, suggested that the differences between the SRF and TWG remain explicit within the TORs, although overlap is apparent throughout. He went on
to ask if the group wanted to seek representation from member countries as the TWG was an interagency working group and the SRF historically had included NGOs.

Mr. Shaeffer responded, saying that it was the purpose in part of the unified TOR to eliminate differences between the two groups. He went on to say that most TWGs have representatives from national, international agencies, bilateral donors, and NGOs. National representatives from Thailand have participated in the SRF/TWG meetings in the past. Mr. Shaeffer would be happy to have regular participation from bilateral organisations.

Mr. Tung suggested this group be linked with others through the invitation for participation in this forum by an elected representative from other SRF. Mr. Tung also asked that the word ‘evaluation’ or ‘assessment’ be inserted in the bullet point on Monitoring and Implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs) for EFA.

Mr. Shaeffer noted that it would be difficult to get regular Central Asia representation, though he proposed the dissemination of reports and minutes from this group to other SRF within the region.

Mr. Oyasu pointed out that in the past a discussion of coordination with other SRF had taken place, but that subsequently there was difficulty making contact and establishing links.

Mr. Shaeffer said that both Central and South Asia SRF are more organised than in the past, and therefore new attempts should be made.

Mr. Shaeffer concluded the discussion by announcing that the TOR would be redrafted and disseminated for final comment. A unified name also will be suggested.¹

Documentation: Final Draft Terms of Reference

4. EFA Monitoring and Assessment (Ko-Chih Tung)

Mr. Shaeffer announced that an annual and independent EFA global monitoring report would be released later this year. The focus of this report is gender as it is the first Dakar target (2005). Regional launches are planned in conjunction with sub-regional and national launches. Media kits, a sub-regional, comparative and an executive summary could be translated within this region into Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, Indonesian, and Khmer. The report provides the goal-by-goal status of each country allowing for focus on those areas which are not performing.

Mr. Tung opened his presentation by stressing the fact that capacity building at country level cannot be done by a single agency; joint and coordinated activities are necessary. Although heads of agencies are discussing collaboration, in terms of monitoring and assessing EFA goals, the country level is key. Without mechanisms in place, monitoring and assessment are impossible. Therefore, capacity building activities are necessary.

For the upcoming mid-decade review, assessment should begin immediately as it often takes 2-3 years to collect relevant data. Therefore the realignment of this group is timely. Overall, the National Action Plans (NAPs) have sometimes been disappointing, with countries typically asking for support through more of the same: money and quantity (schools, teachers, etc), without addressing essential problems. Particularly, the NAPs do not adequately address the neglected and marginalised groups.

In terms of building capacity for monitoring and assessment targets of six goals, comments and suggestions from the group are welcomed. Input and contributions from TWG are essential to put in place more effective monitoring and assessment. Discussion of flagship

¹ From Mr. Shaeffer: It has since been decided that the group be renamed the ‘Thematic Working Group on EFA’. Henceforth, TWG on EFA will be used for all references to this working group
programmes is also timely as they address the fundamental issues - the remaining gaps. These gaps cannot be filled through quantitative means only.

Mr. Shaeffer endorsed the exchange of expertise, noting that to reach good monitoring, issues and concerns of members of this forum must be heard and adopted. For example: in establishing enrolment rates, many children do not get counted – so reported figures are skewed, often looking better than they actually are. With input from the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) and the Thematic Working Group for Disabled Children (TWGDC), these gaps can be avoided.

Mr. Zhou noted that the key action was monitoring and assessment at the regional level. He suggested that monitoring and assessment might be done in regards to the 6 goals, but also disaggregated by level of education, further dividing secondary into lower and upper levels.

Mr. Hakeem furthered Mr. Tung’s presentation, noting that based on Dakar findings, there is a need to develop a better ‘net’ to capture what countries have done, particularly in the area of non-formal education, which typically doesn’t lend itself well to standard indicators.

Mr. Shaeffer explained that the entire exercise was to make the invisible, visible; the uncounted, counted. This is the purpose and function of regular and continued revisions of NAPs. In this way, the MDG report is also important.

**Documentation: Capacity Building Project Summary**

5. Update on EFA programming (Flagships)

Mr. Shaeffer introduced the flagship programmes, highlighting a definition of the concept and an outline of the 9 flagship programmes taken as an excerpt from the 2002 EFA Global Monitoring report.

**Documentation: Flagship definition; Table outline of flagship programmes.**

a. Report of the Task Force on EFA of the Thematic Working Group in Gender Concerns (UNGEI) (Vibeke Jensen)

Ms. Jensen reported that UNGEI had just celebrated its first birthday, meeting monthly over the last 13 months. The group consists of UN agencies and NGOs. The function of the group has been to share materials and compile lists of meetings which have themes in which girls’ education is the focus, or where it could be raised. Because of missions, travel, and scheduling conflicts, regular attendance by members has been sporadic, discussions duplicated, and action slow in coming. However, Ms. Jensen noted that this can be expected and therefore accommodated in this type of group.

Recently, UNGEI has developed guidelines for CCA processes in the Philippines. These guidelines are generic and could serve as a model for other countries.

The UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) doesn’t want new structures at the country level, but the challenges are to put girls’ education on or higher up on agenda.

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2 From Mr. Brohier: The Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, UNESCO, convened an Expert Meeting, the object of which was the development of a concept paper: "ICTs in the service of persons with disabilities" and a set of Recommendations (UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France, 20 – 21 May 2003) There were 18 invited participants and a number of UNESCO Sector representatives. Asia was represented by Mr Monthian Buntan (Thailand), Mr Hiroshi Kawamura (Japan), Mrs Anuradha Mohit (India), who prepared the draft Concept Paper, and Mr William G Brohier (Malaysia). The Recommendations are in the process of being approved internally and finalised. As soon as they are available, Bill Brohier will circulate them to the SRF/TWG members. The group also discussed briefly the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) and a Sub-group crafted a short Recommendation, which had to be submitted by May 24\(^\text{2}\). (Please see [Appendix I](http://www.webworldforum.unesco.org/6/ubb.x7a?cm=5360002961). It also touches on gender issues, so it would be relevant to make reference to it in any presentation/discussion in the forthcoming ICT Conference in Malaysia, as well as other appropriate fora, of course.
Ms. Jensen stressed the fact that countries must realise that NAPs are ‘rolling plans’ which can and should be revised and updated regularly. Indonesia has incorporated gender well in its NAP, and gender data is collected at the sub-national level. The chapter on gender from the Indonesian plan will be posted on the UNESCO Bangkok website as a model for others.

Mr. Shaeffer noted that many countries in the region consistently take the position that there is no gender problem in their country, basing this assumption on published data on net enrolments, etc. Myanmar is an example of this. UNGEI can focus on numerical disparities through goal 5. The longer term goal – 2015 – is meant to eliminate more qualitative and more system-wide aspects of inequality.

Ms. Jensen acknowledged this, but noted that in regards to indicators for 2015 goal, nothing has been developed to date.

Ms. Price suggested collaboration between UNGEI and the Disabilities group (TWGDC). Ms. Jensen concurred and will add Ms. Price to the mailing list and announce the next meeting dates/times as it is confirmed.

Mr. Apichai added that Thailand is publishing its own MDG report by ‘cluster’ (goals). Thailand will soon have a cluster meeting on gender goals. A UNESCO representative should be there to assist and analyse statistics (net vs. gross enrolment, quality).

With reference to UNICEF’s commitment to UNGEI, the response from the Executive Director of UNICEF, regarding the grave concerns expressed about the closure of its Focal Point on Disability which is to be subsumed under the Focal Point on Children at Risk with effect from 1st July, was circulated prior to the Meeting by Bill Brohier. The concerns expressed by various recipients of the letter were noted and it is recommended that serious efforts be made in order to demand greater UNICEF support and involvement in the context of EFA and children with disabilities from its Regional Offices.

**Documentation:** April Meeting Minutes (UNGEI); Draft guidelines to integrate gender and education in CCA.

b. Presentation on Teachers and Quality of Education (Zhou Nan-Zhao)

Mr. Zhou presented a flagship programme proposed by UNESCO, ILO and Education International in order to address issues of quality education. UNESCO BKK launched the pilot project in Southeast Asia to address advocacy, research and capacity building in regards to teacher status. The result of this pilot will be a set of policy guidelines and action plans.

Eight countries in Southeast Asia will be used for case studies and a conference will be held in August to share lessons learned from the study. The regional ILO will be involved as will headquarters. Additionally there are hopes for collaboration with other agencies. Based on the pilot, Mr. Zhou expressed hope that flagship program could be implemented in other regions. Currently he is trying to mobilize other resources.

Mr. Shaeffer raised two points from the presentation: First, a major criticism of the Dakar framework for action was that there is no target focussing on teachers (numbers, training, %). Secondly, Education International considers teachers rights, teachers’ participation in NAPs. A meeting scheduled in August will look at teachers’ status and standing.

Ms. Price said she was not aware this flagship existed, but felt it was critical to children with disabilities. The World Bank is carrying out a study on teachers’ ability, specifically to teach students with disabilities within regular schools. There was no mention of teacher training for addressing teaching children with disabilities in the Teachers and Quality Education proposal. Can it be included here? Or does it need to be addressed in another proposal?
Mr. Zhou agreed that this issue could be addressed here.

Mr. Brohier concurred with Ms. Price stating that the situation/needs analysis must include teachers of children with disabilities and that teacher status and professional competence of teachers of children with disabilities should be addressed too.

Ms. Jensen announced that UNESCO BKK has been developing a tool kit to make the learning environment more inclusive for all. This practical kit will help teachers reach children with diverse needs. A draft will be distributed for critical comment and then pilot tested. Mr. Shaeffer suggested that Ms. Price be a reader in the review of the tool kit.

Mr. Brohier reiterated Ms. Price’s point on needs analysis of teacher training. The fundamental question must be: are needs of children with disabilities part of this analysis? This group must be included in any comprehensive assessment. ³

Documentation: Project Proposal: Teachers and Quality Education

c. Report on FRESH: Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (Sheldon Shaeffer)

FRESH was launched in Dakar, though discussion of the program preceded it. WHO and UNICEF each had its own school health projects, but with their own indicators, etc. FRESH provides a ‘comprehensive package of school health’. A FRESH meeting was held in Chiang Mai. This conference was preceded by study visits from Japan. Activities proposed for 2003 include: the enrichment of work and experience with a study visit to Japan, national workshops, and improvement of quality in child friendly schools by including comprehensive school health input.

Partnerships are being sought as a means of ensuring results at the country level.

Mr. Brohier suggested that the concept of access must be broadened to include access to information and access to the ability to communicate. Within the educational context, these kinds of access are as important as being able to climb stairs. Mr. Brohier recommended that prevention of the causes of disabilities must be included as one of the modules of the programme. ⁴

Mr. Tung noted that the FRESH initiative could be extended beyond health focus. This Flagship could be considered as a pilot to lead to best practices in education. The proposal is skills oriented and practical.

Mr. Shaeffer suggested that there were many entry points for expansion within this program. Through expansion (into food issues, malaria, etc.), it is possible to develop comprehensiveness.

Documentation: FRESH Project Proposal
d. Presentation on the special initiative to establish a Partner Forum on HIV/AIDS and Education (Jan Wijngaarden)

Mr. Shaeffer presented the HIV/AIDS proposal for a partner forum on behalf of Jan Wijngaarden, the UNESCO Bangkok focal point for HIV/AIDS. He began the discussion by

³ From Mr. Brohier: In this context of competence and capacity building, ICEVI and the Hadley School for the Blind have initiated a Distance Education Programme, which is free to all who register: ICEVI-Hadley GLOBE ALL (Growth and Learning Opportunities Benefiting Educators - Achievement through Lifelong Learning). This is a first step of a 3-phase initiative. A copy of the press release was circulated in May through the SRF/TWG Secretariat to all members.

⁴ From Mr. Brohier: Adoption of the WHO Resolution WHA56.26 on Elimination of Avoidable Blindness by the World Health Assembly on May 28, 2003 expresses strong commitment of WHO member countries to pursue elimination of avoidable blindness worldwide. This document was circulated, prior to the Meeting, by Bill Brohier to members of the SRF/TWG on EFA and the UNESCAP TWGDC, with a request that it be used to promote regional and national programmes on "VISION 2020: The Right to Sight".
noting that the flagship title is not necessarily appropriate. The HIV/AIDS flagship actually focuses on preventive education, by helping ministries develop strategic plans. In this way, the Partner Forum can be a means of disseminating information through a network of HIV/AIDS focal points from within the region. Mr. Shaeffer presented the draft TOR for the Partner Forum.

This forum is particularly timely as countries such as Thailand feel that the HIV/AIDS problem has largely been solved. Other issues, drugs in particular, are now considered to be the major problem. Additionally, any discussion of HIV/AIDS in the MOE is redirected towards the MOH and/or NGOs. Father Michael Kelly met with AIDS focal points on a recent trip to the region and found them misinformed. Therefore, significant questions include: how to enhance ministry responses, and how to increase effectiveness. General strategies for comprehensive HIV/AIDS strategic planning include collaboration and information sharing with interagency task teams at the global level. This is a regional and country level initiative.

UNAIDS co-sponsors quarterly heads of agency meetings. The partner forum will be presented at the next meeting.5

**Documentation: Partner Forum TOR; PowerPoint Slides**

**e. Presentation on the Inter-agency Initiative on Education for People in Rural Areas (Abdul Hakeem)**

Mr. Hakeem referred to documents distributed via email by Mr. Hazelman as a good introduction to the flagship on education for people in rural areas. The overall aim of the flagship is to address specific obstacles for people working and living in rural areas by placing issues of rural people at the core of EFA plans. One initiative is the Informal ERP newsletter with a membership of 57, from four international organisations and ten NGOs.

The Informal Education for Rural People (ERP) newsletter is currently soliciting contributions for information on good practices. Submissions of articles (~1,500 words) will be posted on a website. The newsletter also provides info on other sources of information relating to education in rural areas.

Recent publications include an IIEP/FAO book which has been distributed amongst UNESCO staff and which is available upon request to anyone interested.

Mr. Shaeffer noted that the needs of rural peoples, or more specifically, education for rural transformation, were neglected in Dakar and EFA plans. In this instance, the combination of disadvantages can be particularly disabling.

Mr. Tung reiterated the need for a more comprehensive and inclusive policy on education in rural areas, basing his comments on assessments from Africa. Typically, urbanites, serving as policy makers, plan and implement educational services nationwide according to urban practices for education delivery. This is because not enough information is available for delivery, structure and services in the rural environment. In Asia, attention also must be given to these oversights.

Ms. Nagata asked if this initiative was restricted to formal education. Mr. Hakeem responded by saying that it incorporates all forms of education.

5 From Mr. Brohier: The Office of the Advisor on Disability and Development and The Global HIV/AIDS Program of the World Bank are sponsoring a Global Survey on HIV/AIDS and Disability in conjunction with the Yale University School of Public Health. Co-ordinator: Dr Nora Groce, Associate Professor, Global Health Division of Yale School of Public Health, 60 College Street New Haven, Connecticut 06520, USA Phone: + 203-785-2666/ FAX: + 203-785-6193 e-mail: Nora.Groce@yale.edu. The objective is to learn how the HIV/AIDS epidemic is affecting the global disabled population. Although the deadline for the return of the survey form was June 16, those who are interested can visit their website at: http://globalsurvey.med.yale.edu. Copies of the survey can be found there, and new information will be posted when received from survey responses and information gathered concerning HIV/AIDS and Disability.
Mr. Brohier noted that poverty eradication must be addressed. As disability is intertwined with poverty, persons with disabilities must be included in all programmes. In attempting to do so, efforts should be made to identify Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programmes for persons with disabilities for the purpose of linkages and networking in order to reach more persons with disabilities.6

Documentation: Rural Peoples Education Newsletter, Mr. Hazelman’s submissions in absentia

f. The International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) Review Meeting and the United Nations Literary Decade (UNLD) Regional Launch, and proposal on Literacy sub-working group (Kiichi Oyasu)

Mr. Oyasu tabled a proposal for a sub-group focused around the literacy flagship. While he understood that specific TOR would be defined outside of the general meeting, he envisioned the sub-group to have two functions: 1) to promote and collaborate on interagency activities to promote literacy; and 2) to assess national plans and policies relating to literacy and assist in the elaboration of literacy activities.

In response to questions regarding EFA and the literacy decade, UNESCO headquarters stresses that literacy is at the heart of EFA. Mr. Oyasu invited all participants and their respective agencies to collaborate in the formulation of a set of TOR relating to literacy.

Mr. Oyasu continued by announcing scheduled events and activities in the region. September activities include:

The Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) review and United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) regional launch with a proposal for a SRF/TWG regional coordinators meeting to be run subsequently or simultaneously.

Following the Thai national launch of the UNLD in April, the Asia and Pacific regional launch is scheduled for 8 September, National Literacy Day. The CONFINTEA V review will follow from 9-11 September. Mr. Oyasu made a brief presentation of the tentative schedule of activities.

Mr. Hakeem noted that the CONFINTEA V review intends to reassess the implementation of the Hamburg documents, adopted at the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education in Hamburg, Germany in 1997. Countries have been asked to prepare country reviews and special interest groups, NGOs and civil society groups have been asked to prepare reports. UNESCO Institute of Education (UIE) is coordinating these activities with 10 themes around adult learning; however, there is a need to identify new and emerging themes.

Mr. Oyasu anticipated between 250-300 people for the CONFINTEA review conference with 400-500 people for UNLD. All participating members of the SRF/TWG are welcome to set up exhibitions. Invitations will be sent to all agencies for participation.

An EFA national coordinators SRF/TWG meeting has been proposed for September to discuss literacy in relation to EFA plans. This meeting will be organised in parallel if possible, and will focus, but not exclusively, on literacy in EFA plans.

6 From Mr. Brohier: An ‘International Consultation on Reviewing Community-Based Rehabilitation’ was organized by WHO in cooperation with the Government of Finland in Helsinki, from 25 – 28 May 2003. When the final Report is received, it is recommended that note should be taken of the points raised.
Mr. Huguet asked if the UNLD focused at all on the literacies of sign languages and Braille. Mr. Oyasu confirmed that it would, noting that UNESCO Bangkok had contacted Ms. Price in this regard.

Mr. Brohier recommended that within program, efforts should be made to give a role to persons with disabilities in the Programme for the International Literacy Day Event and related activities in order to ensure that they are given visibility so as to emphasise their inclusion and their abilities.

Mr. Tung said that at the country level, there have always been different assessments regarding literacies. However, at the global level, the standard measurement of literacy is a gross estimate based on indirect methods. Usually this is done by asking a family how many members can read and write - yes or no. When census data is not available, 4 years of schooling equates to literacy. Now, new methods are being discussed to revise APPEAL’s measurements. Therefore, the question is, will there be sessions on measuring literacy?

Mr. Hakeem answered saying that UIS has been asked to prepare sessions and that APPEAL’s work in this area will be included.

Mr. Hakeem added that the adult education meeting will consider real case life situations; therefore, any recommendations Mr. Brohier could make in identifying a disabled person for a presentation would be appreciated.

Ms. Nagata suggested that deaf people be represented in the program as a linguistic minority group.

Mr. Shaeffer added that the bilingual education and mother tongue education discussion could possibly include Braille. The TWG can and should provide inputs.

Documentation: CONFINTEA V / UNLD Program Overview; CONFINTEA V background material; Literacy sub-group proposal;

g. Report of the Task Force on EFA of the Thematic Working Group in Disability-related Concerns (TWGDC) and discussion on the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for the Asian and Pacific Decade for Disabled Persons, 2003-2012 (Penny Price)

Ms. Price presented materials which included the education targets of Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF) and a document highlighting possible area for collaborative action towards the implementation of these targets. She reported the outcome of the fifth meeting of the Task Force on Education For All Children with Disabilities (TFEFA) of the Thematic Working Group on Disability-related Concerns (TWGDC held on 5 June 2003.

A review of the task force, at its fifth sessio, resulted in renewed commitment to its advocacy role, and strengthening of its networking and information dissemination function. Membership of SRF/TWG has been helpful in terms of increased awareness of the issues concerning the education of children with disabilities.

The task force is also looking to form links with partners engaged in regional research to provide an accurate picture of the situation of children with disabilities in relation to their access to education in countries of the Asian and Pacific region. WHO is engaged in a study attempting to identify disabled children at an early age. Early intervention is seen as critical. A report to be ready in 1-2 months (from early June), and will be widely disseminated

TWGDC TF EFA would like membership on the Flagship on Education For All and the Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion, in order to ensure
representation of the issues of education for two thirds of the world’s children with disabilities who live in the Asian and Pacific region.

The final goal of the task force is the development of partnerships with UN and other regional agencies to develop specific commitments towards the implementation of the education targets of the BMF. Ms. Price concluded her presentation by outlining potential areas for collaborative action towards the achievement of this goal. (See attached document).

Mr. Tung responded with two points. First, disabilities should be linked with life skills, goal three in the Dakar Framework for Action. Life skills are defined loosely as relevant skills for life, both generic and specific for different target groups. Second, collaboration with the TWGDC very much relates to monitoring and assessment. UNESCO Bangkok should collaborate with the TWGDC to create monitoring and assessment modules appropriate to disabled students.

Ms. Nagata announced that from 23-26 September, Mr. Huguet is organising a training workshop on measurement. The target groups for this workshop are both statisticians and policy makers with a focus on concepts and the technical aspects of measurement and assessment. They are looking for Mr. Tung to make early contributions to the technical input.

Mr. Hakeem noted that there was a need to sensitise EFA national coordinators, and therefore suggested that the output of the workshop include practical policies and strategic guidelines.

Mr. Shaeffer referred to the EFA NAP plan launch in Cambodia in which he recently participated. In Cambodia, the NAP is seen only as a framework. UNICEF has hired a consultant to flesh out the plan and therefore there is an opportunity to strengthen inclusion of disabilities concerns. It would be pertinent to also link with UNESCO Indonesia to reach East Timor in this regard.

In regards to life skills, Ms. Price raised concern relating to the continued marginalisation of disabled students who are denied access (hold rights) to (regular) education. (There is a need to push for life skills, but also focus on getting disabled children into schools. It is a huge challenge to change attitudes, practice and policy in regards to the recognition and respect of disabled persons.) Life skills are important but there is a need to focus on getting children with disabilities accepted into mainstream and inclusive schools. There has been a tendency to provide limited life skills curriculum in separate and non-formal settings and to deny them access to regular schools and the regular school curriculum.

Mr. Shaeffer clarified the point regarding life skills, explaining that these skills could and should be taught in and out of school, through both the formal and non-formal systems.

Mr. Oyasu added that inclusive schools should be placed within the community, using a community-based approach.

Mr. Brohier commented on the fact that community based rehabilitation (CBR) was seen as informal education. There is a need to look at necessary inputs outside of the formal school situation in relation to disabled persons.

Documentation: Report from TWGDC; Biwako Millennium Framework for Action - possible collaborative areas; Biwako excerpts.

6. Final comments
APPENDIX 1

RECOMMENDATION TO WORLD SUMMIT ON INFORMATION SOCIETY (WSIS)

(See above UNGEI. Follow up Action Points from the last meeting: 
#2: ESCAP Ministerial Meeting: para 2)

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Design and development of ICT for all: The way in which ICT is designed and developed will determine its inclusiveness and accessibility if the information society is to become the society for all. Therefore specific needs and requirements of all stakeholders such as those with disabilities must be included at the earliest stage of design, development, production and evaluation of ICTs.