Background

In assisting progress towards the EFA goals, UNESCO always gave full support to initiatives that focus on particular goals. These include the EFA flagships programmes such as the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI). UNESCO has also been designated as lead agency for both the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) and United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD).

The cluster countries (Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and Turkmenistan) and UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office are signatories to the Dakar Framework for Action. In this context, besides a strong political will, these countries need to devote serious efforts towards sound planning, financial allocations, and efficient management to achieve the EFA goals.

In December 2003, UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office in cooperation with UNESCO offices in Islamabad and Kabul successfully organized the 1st EFA Cluster Experts and Ministerial Meetings. The meeting discussed and agreed on ways and means to confront the challenges of educational development and achievement of EFA short-term (2 years) objectives at the level of the cluster through mutual cooperation benefiting the cluster countries and exchanging their respective success stories. It was also agreed to convene such meeting biannually rotationally among the four countries of the cluster.

Objectives

- To review EFA situation and status of preparation of NPA for Dakar goals of EFA in the form of country reports by the EFA experts;
- To exchange ideas and experiences of best practices in the fields of EFA short and mid-term planning and implementation;
- To enhance capacity building in planning and implementation of national EFA plans.
- To improve cluster cooperation.
2nd EFA Cluster Experts’ Meeting 2005

Prior to the Ministerial Meeting, a meeting of EFA Focal points or educational planners/experts will be convened. The experts are invited to:
- evaluate the last biannual EFA actions in each Cluster Country,
- assess the achievement of the recommendations made in the 1st EFA Cluster Ministerial Meetings, and,
- provide recommendations for next biennium 2006-2007, including EFA Action Plans and priorities for the Ministerial meeting consideration and approval.

2nd EFA Cluster Ministerial Meeting 2005

The Ministerial Meeting following the Expert Meeting, aims at evaluating the achieved and constraints related to the last biennium and discussing recommendations proposed by Experts for future activity Meetings and to specifically address the followings:

- To exchange information on the biannual EFA challenges, implementation constraints, strategies and approaches adapted by each Cluster Country and to review the shortcomings and to strengthen areas of cooperation;
- To review experts’ recommendations to finalize a concrete biannual Action Plan for all cluster countries and to develop and maintain an EFA network within the countries and the cluster;
- To adapt short term EFA implementing methods to achieve EFA goals set by UN till 2015;
- To adopt a joint EFA plan of Actions at the end of the Ministerial Meeting, specifying cluster countries commitments for the short term plans,
- To propose the venue and the dates for the next biannual Meeting;

Participants

There will be 20 participants from the four Countries of the Cluster (Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and Turkmenistan). Their excellencies Ministers of Education of the Cluster Countries and 16 EFA Experts from the Ministries of Education, will be invited.

Host

The meeting is hosted by the Iranian Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the National commission for UNESCO.

Venue & Date

Experts Meeting : Tehran, 16-17 July 2005.

Language

English