Draft

Islamabad Joint Declaration on Education for All (EFA) Plan of Actions to be achieved in 2004-05

Adopted By
The Ministerial Meeting of Cluster Countries

4-5 December 2003
Islamabad, Pakistan
We, the Ministers and Deputy Ministers of cluster countries: Afghanistan, Islamic Republic of Iran, and Islamic Republic of Pakistan decided to promote peace and mutual understanding; further strengthen friendly and cooperative relations, resolve the issues and meet the challenges confronting the educational development of the Sub-Region through mutual cooperation, collaboration and joint efforts.

Part I: Challenges

We note with concern that the sub-region faces many issues and challenges which interalia include:

a) Illiteracy, inequality and Poverty;

b) Geographical and cultural disparities and imbalances in gender;

c) Inadequate quality of education;

d) Challenges relating to Refugees and displaced persons;

e) Capacity building for EFA planning, implementation management and monitoring/evaluation; and

f) Shortage of resources, both human and financial and inadequate funding for EFA from Government and other domestic resources as well as from the International Development Partners and community;

Part II: Commitments

Taking note of the above issues and challenges, we therefore, collectively and unanimously affirm our will for:

A) Collaboration and sharing experiences in EFA in Cluster Countries:

We:

1) Commit to create networks within the cluster countries for collaboration, discussion and establishing common working groups.

2) Commit to hold regular regional meetings of EFA experts, policy makers, planners and implementers in cluster countries on rotational basis.

3) Ensure participation of representatives of the member states in the National level EFA activities.

4) Undertake to prepare joint action plans on common issues, such as: increasing girls’ enrolment rate at all levels.
5) Shall identify best practices or successful experiences and
develop practical plans for possible replication.

6) Shall develop uniform parameters for monitoring and
evaluation systems for the follow up of EFA related issues
i.e. learning standards etc.

7) Undertake to define and standardizing minimum acceptable
quality parameters using relevant global models.

8) Make all efforts to give specific attention to Afghan needs
particularly in the following prioritized areas through strong
and effective technical and financial support:
   a) Development of EFA Plan of Action
   b) Creation of EFA unit in the Ministry of Education with
      full function.
   c) Training of trainers.
   d) Capacity building.
   e) Strengthening of cooperation on refugee education
      in the cluster countries.

B) CAPACITY BUILDING IN EFA IN 2004-2005

We:

9) Commit to provide financial and technical support
   needed for each action, which is highlighted as vital.

10) Urge to obtain the UNESCO support and involvement in
    each of the activities.

11) Shall make use of ICTs for awareness among the
    people in the country for capacity building in Education
    for All and creating an EFA networking.
C) SUPPORT FROM UNESCO

We urge UNESCO to:

  12) Provide EFA expertise to member states for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, when requested.

  13) Enhance technical support and expertise at workshops, conferences and meetings.

  14) Establish a sub-regional forum to facilitate and coordinate funding by EFA partners for implementation of EFA National Plan of Action.

  15) Assist member states in accelerating result based progress towards achieving goal number 5 of Dakar Frame Work of Action.

  16) Assist member states to collect and transform the best practices and models especially in EFA from all over the world.

Part III: Concluding Statement

We:

Commit to allocate maximum national resources to achieve the above mentioned EFA goals and in addition to that we invite the International Development Partners, UN Agencies, ISESCO, ECO, INGOs and G-8 countries to provide suitable assistance. The EFA progress reports will be submitted to the Ministers who will send it to UNESCO field offices of the cluster countries and will be considered and discussed in the next meeting of the Cluster Forum.

The next meeting of the Forum will be held in Kabul, Afghanistan in the year 2005.
This joint declaration is approved and signed on December 5, 2003 by the Ministers/Deputy Ministers for Education of the countries present in the meeting. We wish firmly that the Education Minister of Turkmenistan shall accede to this Joint Declaration.

**Afghanistan**  
H.E. Mr. Husain Ishraq Husaini  
Deputy Minister for Education

**Islamic Republic of Iran**  
H.E. Mr. Morteza Haji  
Minister for Education

**Islamic Republic of Pakistan**  
H.E. Ms. Zobaida Jalal  
Minister for Education

**In the presence of:**

For UNESCO Islamabad Office  
Ms. Ingeborg Breines,  
Representative & Director

For UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office  
Mr. Abdin Salih,  
Representative & Director
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