End-of-Decade Notes on EFA Progress

Concept Note

1. Background
From 2006-2009, around 35 countries in Asia-Pacific carried out national assessments of progress and identified problems, issues, policies and strategies related to the Education for All (EFA) goals as part of the EFA Mid-Decade Assessment (MDA) and Mid-Term Policy Review. The theme of the assessment was "reaching the unreached," focusing on quality and equality in access to and participation in basic education and non-formal education.

Aside from national MDA reports, sub-regional synthesis reports were also prepared by the UIS-AIMS Unit, UNESCO Bangkok which initiated the whole MDA process with the support of UNICEF and the Regional Thematic Working Group (TWG) on EFA. A progress note on Gender Equality in Education (EFA goal 5) has also been published covering East Asia and Pacific.

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics – Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (UIS-AIMS) Unit is also undertaking an evaluation of the whole MDA process to identify good practices and learn lessons to better prepare for the next major EFA assessment. The evaluation is being carried in 2010 and results will be known by the end of 2010.

While an end-of-decade assessment looking at EFA progress from 2000 to 2010 is important, it is not practical to carry out an extensive regional End of Decade assessment for two main reasons: 1) it is best practise to wait until the evaluation of the MDA has been completed so that these results can be incorporated into any new assessment process; and 2) the End of Decade falls in 2011/2. Since it took four years to carry out the MDA and the EDA process has not begun this means that EDA would be completed in 2015 effectively making it an end-of-EFA (2015) rather than end-of-decade assessment of EFA. As the assessment of EFA in 2015 is by far the most important date, it is better to concentrate now on planning, raising resources and building up country capacity for an end-of-EFA (2015) assessment.

On the other hand, momentum in countries in EFA monitoring has to be maintained. Thus, while not actively promoting an End of Decade Assessment, UIS-AIMS, UNESCO Bangkok will support any country seeking to carry out this assessment. Secondly, a set of End-of-Decade Notes which will set out the state of progress towards EFA will be published from a largely statistical point of view.
II. The End-of-Decade Notes

It is proposed that the notes will be succinct summaries of progress towards each of the EFA goals. UNICEF, the UIS Regional Office (UIS-AIMS) and UNESCO Bangkok will lead in preparing and publishing the Notes for specific EFA goals while partners – mostly TWG members as well as experts on specific areas – will be requested to propose references and data sources, contribute specific inputs and comment on drafts of the Notes as well as enable linkage to sub-regional fora.

The Notes should be concise (around 50 pages or less) and are meant to:
- Maintain momentum, energy and interest in EFA and the themes of “Reaching the Unreached in Education” and “EFA with Equity” as we approach 2015.
- Serve as an end-decade review not an end decade assessment of EFA
- Point the way to meeting EFA by 2015 by highlighting disparities in education and their causes, and identifying strategic directions to achieve EFA and MDGs with equity.
- Serve as foundation for end-of-EFA (2015) assessment report(s)

III. Timetable for the preparation of the End-of-Decade Notes

Preparation of concept note, outline, etc. – Aug-Oct 2010
Research and data and information collection – Oct 2010 – March 2011
Collection of inputs from countries – Oct 2010 - March 2011
Draft circulation for comments – June 2011
Editing – July-Sept 2011
Publication – Oct-Nov 2011

IV. Proposed Outline of each End-of-Decade Notes by EFA goal

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction (background, rationale for the Notes, etc.)
3. EFA progress in the region (breakdown by sub-region) - highlight positive developments since the EFA MDA
4. The main challenges to meeting the EFA goals (regional summary and breakdown by sub-region) and what can be done to address these challenges
5. Identification of marginalized groups and status of inequities in education - (regional summary and breakdown by sub-region)
6. Conclusion and Recommendations to achieve EFA by 2015
7. Annexes: Statistical Tables of the related indicators (data source: UIS)

Within each section, examples of good practices from countries (and EFA partners) in the region will be highlighted.

V. Regional Coordination for the preparation of the Progress Notes

UNICEF, the UIS Regional Office (UIS-AIMS) and UNESCO Bangkok in collaboration with members of the TWG on EFA will take the lead in preparing the Notes. A core committee composed of representatives from these agencies have been formed to oversee the coordination and the overall preparation of the Notes.
A lead and a co-lead agency have been identified to take charge in preparing the Notes for each EFA goal. Partners will also be identified to contribute to the Notes for the specific EFA goal. Below is the initial list of leads, co-leads and partners who have expressed interest to take part in the preparation of the Notes (as of 18 August 2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFA goal</th>
<th>Lead &amp; Co-Lead</th>
<th>Partners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECCE</td>
<td>ARNEC, UNICEF, UNESCO</td>
<td>Save the Children, potentially SIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPE/UBE</td>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>UNICEF, ILO, SIL, potentially FAO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Skills (Vocational and Technical Skills)</td>
<td>UNICEF, UNESCO</td>
<td>ILO, FAO, EDC, ASPBAE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>UNESCO, ASPBAE</td>
<td>Plan International, potentially SIL, Room to Read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equality</td>
<td>UNICEF, UNESCO, East Asia &amp; Pacific UNGEI</td>
<td>Plan International, Room to Read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Education</td>
<td>UNICEF, UNESCO</td>
<td>ILO</td>
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The UIS-AIMS Unit, UNESCO Bangkok will coordinate with UIS Montreal to provide the latest UIS data related to each EFA goal based on an agreed cut-off date for downloading the data from the UIS online database. The aim in managing the exercise will be to ensure efficient preparation of the Notes and to ensure that all EFA partners, both countries and agencies have the opportunity to contribute, but without creating a significant administrative load that would delay their publication. Thus formal meetings on report preparation are not proposed, neither are there likely to be formal consultations on the text. On the other hand contributions to the reports will be sought widely by the agencies involved, progress will be reported and input solicited at meetings throughout later 2010 and until at least mid-2011.

VI. **Contribution/Input from countries**

Countries throughout the region are encouraged to submit their latest national EFA assessment reports, if available, or submit short papers on specific issues that can be included in the Notes for each EFA goal. Good practices from countries will be highlighted as text boxes in the Notes.

Countries can also submit specific case studies and surveys on unreached groups in education along with the data.