13th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators: The Big Push
26-27 February 2013
Bangkok, Thailand

Meeting Terms of Reference

I. Background
The Education for All (EFA) initiative was launched in March 1990 at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand. Participants from 155 countries and representatives of 160 governmental and non-governmental organizations adopted the World Declaration on EFA which reaffirmed that education is a fundamental human right and urged countries to intensify efforts to address the basic learning needs of all.

At the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000, National Governments and the international community re-affirmed its vision of Education for All through the drafting and signing of the Dakar Framework for Action. This Framework committed signatories to the attainment of six goals that focus on early childhood care and education, universal primary education, life skills and life-long learning, adult literacy, gender parity and equality, and quality education. The Framework also foresaw the need for national monitoring of EFA progress. Two of the EFA goals – primary education and gender equality - were further linked to national and international development frameworks in September 2000 when 189 nations came together at the United Nations Millennium Summit and endorsed the Millennium Declaration identifying the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Following the Dakar Forum, UNESCO Bangkok continued to support regional Member States by conducting regular regional meetings of National EFA Coordinators, with direct links to the Regional Thematic Working Group (TWG) on EFA in order to support planning, implementation and monitoring of EFA through information sharing and technical advice. The EFA Coordinators have over the years played an important role in coordinating EFA related activities and in creating a supportive environment for the promotion of EFA at the country level.

II. 13th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators: The Big Push

While countries have made significant progress towards expanding children’s access to primary education, all available indicators suggest that EFA will be an unfinished agenda. The 2012 EFA Global Monitoring Report and the End-of-Decade Notes on EFA in the Asia-Pacific region indicate that progress towards the EFA goals is slowing down and many of the goals will not be met by 2015. Despite this trying situation, many countries are demonstrating how achievements can be made
with the commitment from government, expanded partnerships, innovative thinking and efficient use of resources. Examples of such practices have been documented in the UNESCO-UNICEF joint publication, the End-of-Decade Notes on EFA that were reviewed and endorsed by country participants and EFA partners at the 12th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators in Seoul, Republic of Korea from 25-28 July 2011.

At the last Global EFA Meeting (GEM) in Paris in November 2012, Ministers, heads of delegations, leading officials of multilateral and bilateral organizations, and senior representatives of civil society and private sector organizations, including those from Asia-Pacific, committed to the last “Big Push”. As part of this commitment to speed up progress, stakeholders acknowledged that the current situation calls for urgent action by all partners to select priority actions with clear targets that will contribute to reaching the EFA goals.

To help generate the “Big Push” to speed up EFA progress, the 13th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators: The Big Push will take on a pragmatic and analytical approach, focusing on feasible and prioritized actions to accelerate EFA progress at the country level between now and 2015.

At the same time, it is important to start preparing for the country level EFA 2015 assessment and review since Dakar 2000. In this view, the meeting aims at informing countries about the national EFA review process.

Alongside accelerating progress and preparing for national EFA reviews, there is a need to start looking ahead. Today’s world has evolved greatly since the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar and is facing multi-faceted and rapid changes, challenges and opportunities, which all have implications for education. As international, regional and national consultations have started to discuss the post-2015 development agenda, this meeting will provide an opportunity for countries to voice their reflections and needs for education beyond 2015 and contribute to the shaping of the future of education within the broader development agenda from a regional perspective.

III. Meeting Goals

The overall goals of the meeting are to generate a sense of urgency to make faster progress towards achieving the EFA goals, to revitalize countries to implement feasible and sustainable actions to accelerate EFA progress, and to familiarize and prepare countries for the national EFA review process which will assess progress toward achieving EFA since Dakar.

IV. Objectives

1. Identify key elements for speeding up EFA progress;
2. Share innovative approaches and practices that have shown promising results in terms of attainment of EFA goals at the country level;
3. Develop/update national EFA acceleration outlines by identifying bottlenecks, prioritized actions and feasible interventions;
4. Familiarize with procedures for carrying out national EFA reviews; and
5. Provide inputs on education for the future from a national perspective, thus also contributing to the development of the post-2015 development agenda.
V. Meeting Outcomes

Based on the above objectives, the following are the expected outcomes of the meeting:

1. Country reports clearly stating current status vis-à-vis the EFA goals, key bottlenecks and best practices on EFA acceleration
2. Countries learn from each other and from EFA partners about innovative EFA practices and analytical and practical approaches to accelerate EFA progress
3. Increased understanding of country needs to carry out national EFA reviews for assessing progress toward achieving EFA since Dakar National EFA
4. National Acceleration Outlines to accelerate EFA progress by goal
5. Countries’ inputs on education for the future and key elements to be included in a post-2015 development agenda.

VI. Participants

Participants of the meeting will be the designated National EFA Coordinators from countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The National EFA Coordinator/Focal Point should be someone with responsibilities for directing and coordinating EFA follow-up work at the country level.

The organizers will cover the travel and accommodation costs of one official representative per country. Travel and accommodation costs of additional country representatives should be secured by the participants themselves.

Members of the Thematic Working Group on EFA, UNESCO and UNICEF regional and country education officers, representative(s) from UNESCO Paris and UIS Montreal, and other organizations involved in education are also invited to participate in the meeting at their own cost.

VII. Format

The meeting will be divided into three types of sessions:

a. Working Group Sessions
b. Plenary Sessions
c. Panel Discussion with Q&A

The medium for communication for the meeting will be English.

VIII. Preparatory Work by Participants

Countries invited to the meeting are requested to prepare a Country Report, which should include:

a) Brief “Status of EFA Progress” which will clearly state where the country stands now vis-à-vis the EFA goals;

b) Best practices on accelerating EFA progress; and

c) Identification of key areas for education for the future and within the framework of the post 2015 agenda. The report should also identify support needed related to scaling-up of efforts meet the EFA goals.

Please see the enclosed Country Report Guidelines for the suggested outline of the report and recommended references. UNESCO will use the country reports as reference for country case studies on innovative EFA acceleration practices (EFA Achievers) that will be conducted throughout 2013, in collaboration with the respective countries and UNESCO Field Offices.

Further to the report, countries are requested to complete and send back a quick survey on the capacity and needs of countries prior to the 2015 EFA national review. UNESCO Bangkok will send this survey with relevant instructions two weeks prior to the meeting.
IX. Date and Venue
26-27 February 2013
Bangkok, Thailand

The main meeting venue will be the Imperial Queen’s Park Hotel:
Imperial Queens Park Hotel
199 Sukhumvit Soi 22, Bangkok 10110, Thailand
Telephone: +66 (0) 2261 9000
http://www.imperialhotels.com/imperialqueenspark/contact-en.html

Hotel Venue and Accommodation:
UNESCO has reserved rooms for the participants (inclusive of breakfast buffet) at the following hotel:
Imperial Queen’s Park Hotel
199 Sukhumvit Soi 22, Bangkok 10110, Thailand
Telephone: +66 (0) 2261 9000
http://www.imperialhotels.com/imperialqueenspark/contact-en.html

X. Contacts
For further information, please contact the EFA Regional Coordination Team:

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