10th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators and Launch of the 2009 Global Monitoring Report

4-7 May 2009
Bangkok, Thailand

Meeting Terms of Reference

I. Background
In January 2000, the Asia-Pacific Conference on the EFA 2000 Assessment was held in Bangkok, Thailand. At the Conference, country representatives adopted a regional framework for action which eventually contributed to the Dakar Framework for Action adopted by the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000. The regional framework called for a collective commitment to the achievement of the EFA goals.

Part of the recommendations from the Dakar World Education Forum was for countries to prepare and/or strengthen existing National EFA Action plans building on existing national education sector development strategies. These plans should be integrated into a wider poverty reduction and development framework, and should be developed through more transparent and democratic processes, involving stakeholders, especially peoples' representatives, community leaders, parents, learners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society.

As the preparation of National Action Plans progressed, it was agreed that draft EFA plans could be shared with National EFA Coordinators from other countries, EFA partner agencies and experts in order to learn from the experiences of others and receive suggestions for possible improvement. A regional network was formed around the desire to share experiences and to simultaneously build capacities in EFA implementation. Thus came about the EFA Coordinators' Network, which covers the Asia and Pacific region (based on UNESCO's grouping).

Following the World Education Forum, UNESCO Bangkok continued to support the Asia-Pacific Member States by conducting regular meetings of National EFA Coordinators under the auspices of the Sub-Regional Forum (SRF) for East and Southeast Asia, which became the Thematic Working Group on EFA under the Regional Coordination Mechanism of ESCAP.

Since 2000, UNESCO Bangkok has organized nine EFA Coordinators' Meetings initially covering East and South-East Asia and later expanding to cover South Asia, the Pacific and to some extent Central Asia.

EFA Mid-Decade Assessment (MDA) and Mid-Term Policy Review
With EFA National Action Plans in place, the National EFA Coordinators' meeting shifted its focus to provide support and assistance in EFA implementation, monitoring, evaluation and assessment as well as in the continuing process of plan revision. In October 2005, the UNESCO Bangkok's Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (AIMS) Unit, which is the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) Regional Office in cooperation with the APPEAL Unit, UNESCO Headquarters and the UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, organized a regional planning meeting on the Mid-Decade Assessment of EFA. The meeting brought together national EFA coordinators, education planners and statisticians and EFA partners from 21 countries from South, South-East and East Asia to discuss the direction forward for national and regional assessment.
Annual EFA Coordinators Meetings since 2005 have focused on the MDA and sharing of progress and good practices in EFA among the countries. In January 2006, the inter-agency Regional Thematic Working Group on EFA agreed to become the advisory and coordinating body for the Asia-Pacific EFA Mid-Decade Assessment. TWG Members also committed to take part in the MDA and work with countries at the regional, sub-regional and national levels.

As of the end of 2008, majority of countries that participated in the MDA process have completed their national reports which have been used, as envisioned, for education planning purposes and has been a catalyst for more focus and action aimed at reaching the unreached and disadvantaged groups in education. Sub-regional policy review conferences were also conducted in Southeast Asia, South Asia and Central Asia in 2008 leading to specific policy recommendations on how to address the challenges faced by unreached groups and meet the EFA goals by 2015.

Building on this momentum, the UIS-AIMS Unit and the UNESCO Bangkok Education Sector, in collaboration with the Regional TWG on EFA which is co-chaired by UNICEF will organize on 4-7 May 2009 the 10th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators. The meeting will focus on strategic planning for the next steps for countries and the region as a whole to ensure the EFA goals are met by 2015 and unreached and disadvantaged groups are not left out. A regional and sub-regional strategy towards this end is expected to be endorsed at the end of the meeting.

II. Objectives

This meeting will centre on the theme: Strategic Planning towards Reaching the Unreached in Education and Meeting the EFA Goals by 2015. The meeting is aimed at ensuring that policy recommendations made as part of the Asia-Pacific EFA MDA and Mid-Term Policy Review are converted into action /action plans for Asia-Pacific and for countries in the region. The meeting will also be a venue to encourage countries to improve their EFA monitoring and evaluation systems with emphasis on collecting data on unreached and disadvantaged groups and using this information for evidence-based planning.

Findings from the national and sub-regional EFA MDA national reports, Progress Notes on specific EFA goals, and policy recommendations from the sub-regional EFA Mid-Term Policy Review Conferences, as well as results of the 2009 EFA Global Monitoring Report will be used as basis for participants to prepare sub-regional and a regional strategy towards Reaching the Unreached in Education and Meeting the EFA Goals by 2015 focusing on regional coordination, regional support and capacity development, institutionalizing EFA monitoring and evaluation, and country processes.

The Regional and Sub-Regional Strategies will also include milestones for the region, sub-regions and countries leading to 2015. This strategy will provide the way forward following the MDA with the goal of meeting the EFA goals with no one left behind by 2015. The consultative process of preparing the sub-regional and regional strategy is also aimed at ensuring that all concerned: governments and EFA partners are working together towards meeting the EFA goals, with a focus on the unreached and hard-to-reach groups in education.

Policy recommendations from the Southeast Asia, South Asia and Central Asia sub-regions will also be presented with the aim of coming up with a set of regional policy recommendations to reach the unreached and hard-to-reach groups in education.

Countries and EFA partners will also discuss lessons learned from the EFA Mid-Decade Assessment along with a proposal to evaluate the whole EFA MDA process to ensure that the next assessments will gain from the lessons and good practices of the MDA.
In summary, the following are the expected outputs of the meeting:

- Sub-Regional and Regional Strategy towards Reaching the Unreached in Education and Meeting the EFA Goals by 2015 focusing on regional coordination, regional support and capacity development, monitoring and evaluation, and country processes
- Regional Policy Recommendations on reaching the unreached in Asia-Pacific (based on recommendations made at the sub-regional EFA mid-term policy conferences in South-East Asia, South Asia and Central Asia)
- Compilation of Lessons Learned from the Asia-Pacific EFA Mid-Decade Assessment and Mid-Term Policy Review process and endorsement of the proposal to undertake an evaluation of the whole MDA process

III. Format

The workshop will be carried out mainly in two formats:

- Plenary Sessions
- Group Discussions

The medium for communication at the meeting will be English.

IV. Conference Organizer

The UIS-AIMS Unit, which is the UIS Regional Office, on behalf of the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education is primarily responsible for organizing this conference, in close collaboration with the Regional TWG on EFA which is co-chaired by UNICEF.

This conference is made possible with funding support from the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for UNESCO (JFIT), UNESCO Bangkok and the EFA Global Monitoring Report. Additional support to participants from specific countries will also be provided by the UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Office.

V. Participants

The main participants to the workshop will be the **designated National EFA / EFA MDA Coordinators** from the following countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, Viet Nam, China, Mongolia, DPR Korea, South Korea (observer), Japan (observer), Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Iran, Fiji, Samoa, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Representatives from Central Asia have also been invited.

It is highly recommended that countries nominate a **National EFA / EFA Mid-Decade Assessment Coordinator/Manager** who has been involved in the EFA MDA process and the preparation of the national EFA MDA report and who would be capable of carrying follow-up country work after this Meeting.

The **Gender focal point (GFP)** in the ministries of education in selected countries who are directly involved in the Gender in Education Network (GENIA) or who has been responsible for implementing gender mainstreaming policies in the education sector and preferably involved in the EFA MDA process will also be invited. Separate invitations will be sent to these GFPs.

Also participating in the meeting are the EFA partners, mainly members of the TWG on EFA, regional bodies (such as the Southeast Asian Education Ministers Organization, and South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation), INGO and civil society partners, and UNESCO and UNICEF Education staff.
VI. Preparatory Work by Participants

National representatives are expected to be familiar with the findings of their national EFA MDA reports and key policy recommendations included in the reports for sharing at the Meeting proper. A one-page questionnaire on the lessons learned from the MDA process will also be sent out to nominated country representatives, which should be submitted to the Meeting organizer a week before the start of the meeting. Based on the responses to this questionnaire, selected countries representing each sub-region will be asked to make a presentation during the plenary session.

After receiving the official nominations, the meeting organizer will contact the country representatives directly to request for presentations during plenary on specific topics. Among the topics covered will be: country/sub-regional responses to the 2009 EFA Global Monitoring Report findings, lessons learned from the MDA process, and sub-regional issues, challenges and good practices in reaching the unreached in education.

Participants are also requested to read the Summary of Sub-Regional Policy Recommendations on Reaching the Unreached in Education to ensure full participation during the group discussions and plenary sessions. The documents will be sent directly to the nominated representatives.

Country representatives will also be approached to chair or moderate specific sessions during the meeting.

National representatives are also requested to bring hard and soft copies of national EFA MDA reports to share with other participants at the Meeting. Countries that have not finalized their national EFA MDA reports are requested to submit the latest draft of the report and information on when it will be completed to the UIS-AIMS Unit at bkk.efa@unesco.org and l.lugheolin@unesco.org not later than 10 April 2009 for consolidation prior to the conference.

VII. Date and Venue

4-7 May 2009
Novotel Lotus Bangkok Hotel
1 Soi Daeng Udom, Sukhumvit Soi 33,
Bangkok, Thailand
www.novotel.com/asia

VIII. Workshop Programme / Agenda

The workshop will cover the following agenda items, among others: launch of 2009 EFA Global Monitoring Report; discussion on lessons learned from the MDA and the proposal to evaluate the whole MDA process; presentation of the Sub-Regional Policy Recommendations on Reaching the Unreached in Education and drafting of regional set of recommendations; presentation and discussions on institutionalizing EFA monitoring and evaluation; the link between global, regional and national data; group discussions focusing on drafting sub-regional and a regional Strategy on Reaching the Unreached in Education and Meeting the EFA Goals by 2015 focusing on regional coordination, regional support and capacity development, monitoring and evaluation, and country processes.

For more details, please see the attached tentative agenda.
For further information and to confirm your participation, please contact:

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