Reports from the Regional Dialogue on EFA and Beyond

General Rapporteur
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Opening Session

Ms. Suthasri Wongsamarn, Acting Minister of Education, Thailand opened the Conference

Mr. Sato, Director for Overseas Cooperation, MEXT
  o UNESCO’s vital role in post-2015 ED, in drafting the GEM joint proposal and by advancing the work of EFA Steering Committee.
  o ESD is critical for quality education, included in Muscat Agreement & OWG draft targets.
  o This November, Japan hosts World Conference on ESD in Nagoya with UNESCO.
  o APREC as a model for other regional conferences in the run up to the WEF in Incheon.

Mr. Gwang-Jo Kim, Director UNESCO Bangkok
  o APREC to set the tone for ED post-2015. EFA review with participation from all countries.
  o EFA and MDGs unlikely to be achieved by 2015.
  o Education is no longer a national agenda, but rather a transnational agenda – our collective responsibility. Reflect on a future goal and targets including Muscat Agreement and taking into consideration the SDGs proposed by OWG.
Plenary 1: Regional EFA Review Synthesis Report (by GJ)

- AP has made progresses above the world average on EFA Goals between 2000 and 2012.
- But the progress is uneven across different sub-regions of AP region.
- Remaining gaps and issues – disparities in ECCE, quality of education, “250 million children are failing to learn the basics in reading”, literacy targets, teachers shortages.
- Key to success – Policy and legal frameworks, sector management, school/classroom factors, coordination and partnership.
- Emerging development challenges from the region – means that population dynamics, training, transversal skills and competencies, ICT, Education for Peace, sustainable development and global citizenship, preserving cultures, values and traditions to become part of education policies.

Discussions between the floor
- Importance of building institutional capacity, attention to non-cognitive aspects to link education to work
Parallel Session 1: Sub-regional Discussions on Key Lessons from EFA

Achievements

- Overall, EFA Goals 2 (UPE) and 5 (Gender Equality) have made the most gains.

- Good progresses are made but more efforts are required for EFA Goals 1 (ECCE), 3 (Skills), 4 (Adult Literacy) and 6 (Quality). More children transition to lower-secondary education.

- Strong political commitment, legislation and national strategies have been developed throughout the region.
Ensuring equitable and inclusive education and safe learning environment

Remaining Issues/Gaps in EFA
- the most marginalized groups, including children in outer islands, rural area, families with low income, children with disabilities.
- Access to, and retention in, education (ECCE and secondary education, remaining 5-10% children for primary education)
- Multilingual education
- Ensuring equal educational opportunities and security at school for girls and women
- Efficiency: late entry, High repetition, High drop out, Low transition rate
- Gender inequality in society and in political arenas

Lesson Learnt from EFA/Recommendation for Post-2015
- Further improving access to, and retention in, education and ensuring gender equality
- more attention to marginalized groups
- Recognition of diverse languages as resources to learning
- Access to, and use of, ICTs
Quality of Education

Remaining Issues/Gaps in EFA
• Quality of teachers – how to attract, train, certify, retain, and reward good teachers
• Small schools and lack of teachers
• Poor learning outcomes/achievements in literacy and numeracy
• Need to improve school assessment

Lessons learnt from EFA
• Introduction of minimum quality standards
• Improvement of curriculum
• Provision of in-service teacher training

Recommendations for Post-2015
• Professional development and credential system for teachers
• Curriculum reform (incl integration of climate change/Disaster Risk Reduction)
• Conducive learning environments and teaching/learning tools/materials
• Education relevant for labor market
Governance and Financing

Remaining Issues/Gaps in EFA
• identify and efficiently mobilize and allocate alternative funding sources
• better strategies to merge small schools
• data availability and data quality

Lessons learnt from EFA
• Legislation (compulsory education, review of education act, development of specific sub-sector policy (e.g. ECCE policy, NFE)
• Abolition of school fees, provision of free textbooks, free transportation
• Provision of school grants
• Sector Wide Approach

Recommendations for Post-2015
• Invest more on innovation and research
• Demand-side and targeted financing
• Increase and enhance in public investment
Data, M&E, Statistics, EMIS

Remaining Issues/Gaps in EFA

• Existing data do not fully capture the total accomplishments of this region

• Lack of indicators to measure skills

• Need to develop an indicator to measure non-cognitive

Lessons learnt from EFA/Recommendation

• Improve EMIS

• Better process of data/information collection and use
Coordination and Partnership

Remaining Issues/Gaps in EFA
• Coordination among stakeholders (ECCE, TVET, non-formal education)

Lessons learnt from EFA
• Engagement of stakeholders in policy and planning
• Partnership of ECD/ECCE
• Community engagement

Recommendations for Post-2015
• Roles of the government and the private sector (PPP and CSR)
• collaboration with teacher organizations and their involvement in decisions
• Overall, EFA Goals 2 (UPE) and 5 (Gender Equality) have made the most gains.

• Good progresses are made but more efforts are required for EFA Goals 1 (ECCE), 3 (Skills), 4 (Adult Literacy) and 6 (Quality). More children transition to lower-secondary education.

• Strong political commitment, legislation and national strategies have been developed throughout the region.

• Emerging common issues: equitable and inclusive education, quality of education, financing and governance including data, coordination and partnership will continue focus of further discussions.
Plenary 2: Presentation on Development of the Post – 2015 Education Agenda

Mr. Tang, ADG(Education) UNESCO presented:

• Education must remain a stand alone goal with clear targets in the Post-2015 agenda

• Member states maintain flexibility and opportunity in adapting targets to local conditions and contexts
  • Post-2015 education agenda is aspirational

• Governments and Ministries of Education are urged to mobilize and influence respective diplomats in NY to ensure education goals are included in the post 2015 agenda
Thematic Session I: Basic Education for All Children

• Endorsed the Target 1 and 2 of the Muscat Consensus

• Basic education to be regarded more comprehensively in a holistic manner, with emphasis both on equity and quality.
  • Some country in the region would pursue universal secondary education

• Cognitive and non-cognitive are equally important

• NFE, second chance education, etc., are vital in terms of both ensuring equity and life-long learning

• Data should capture not only equity in access but also of learning outcomes and resource inputs.
Thematic Session II: Skills and Competencies

• Three skill domains: foundational, specialized, and transferable skill
• Meta-skill: learning to learn!

• The training and education system to be flexible across countries to accommodate the changing demands for skills and competences
• Skill trainings to be customized to equip skills and competencies to marginalized groups
• Use of ICT is a key theme continuously
Thematic Session III: ESD & GCE

• There are many linkages and mutually reinforcing aspects between GCE and ESD, including a common emphasis on the non-cognitive aspects of learning.

• Asia-Pacific countries have for many years been working to integrate key concepts emphasized in ESD and GCE into their education policies, curricula, and practice.

• There is a growing confidence to measure GCE/ESD-related skills, values and competencies with assessment including existing cross-national measurement efforts (e.g. ICCS, PISA).
Thematic Session IV: Teachers for the Future We Want

• Enhance the social status of teachers as profession by refining teacher human resource management policies (e.g., salary, fringe benefits, qualification requirement, career ladder, etc.)

• Improve professional development system (e.g., induction, need-based INSET, performance assessment, etc.)

• Strengthen teacher support system (e.g., teacher educator, ICT support for senior teachers, reduce workload, etc.)

• Target the disadvantaged schools and groups (e.g., ethnic minority teacher recruit, assign performing teachers, provide teacher training on educating disabled children, etc.)
Thematic Session V: Finance and Governance

• Finance (Domestic, Private, and External)
  • Strengthen general taxation and innovative taxiation for education (D)
  • Equity: differentiated (affirmative) budgeting norms for the marginalized (D)
  • Reach the most marginalized (not driven by private interests) (P)
  • Avoid diminishing existing funding (e.g. government, ODA, etc.) (P)
  • Collaborate with emerging donors and S-S cooperation (E)

• Governance
  • Transparency and accountability framework – Regain Trust of schools and teachers
  • Decentralization (and redressing decentralization)
  • Data to inform differentiated treatment for the most marginalized
Plenary III: Reports from Thematic Discussions

• The concept of basic education needs to be expanded to include ECCE, non-formal, post-primary and beyond, and cognitive/non-cognitive for its outcomes, with attention to equality and quality.

• Skills have emerged as new and more pronounced challenges leading to better life and work.

• The values and thinking on ESD and GCE are held essential in achieving the Post 2015 Education Agenda, esp. in this region.

• Teachers play crucial roles in promoting quality education, but strengthened support for their professional development is essential.

• Need to strengthen financing and governance consistently been emphasized.
Plenary IV – Regional perspectives on the post-2015 education framework for action

- UNESCO HQs gave a general overview of the framework for action, emphasized the need to focus at multiple levels (global, regional and national) and to consider the overall vision, guiding principles and clear goals and targets, monitoring and coordination.
- Given diversity among sub-regions, coordination/monitoring mechanisms and adaptation of targets/indicators at sub-regional and national levels are needed.
- The lifelong learning perspective needs coordination and partnership between different Ministries (Education, Labour, Women, etc.)
- Active engagement of civil society is a mechanism for this exists at global level, similar systems needed at regional, sub-regional and national levels.
• In articulating education within the broader development goals, a human rights perspective (e.g. the right to learn) as well as to emphasize the human aspect of sustainable development.

• Education is a national priority. Governments need to make a sustained commitment to ensuring and mobilizing domestic resources and ensuring the prioritization of education amongst other development concerns.

• Discussions benefited from other regional perspectives (SSA), and contributions from CSO, international network and other panelists.
Parallel Sessions III Regional perspectives on the post-2015 education framework for action – Central & East Asia

1) Policy and Planning:
• GEM targets are well underway but more discussion needed in some areas, esp in pre-school (free), and financing (budget/GDP). Ministerial and inter-ministerial discussions by involving Cabinet and PM level.
• Non-state actors to be involved, and new forms of education (online) needs quality assurance.

2) Coordination and partnership:
• Need to be improved at global and regional/sub-regional levels. Possibilities were discussed to learn from E9 countries monitoring, extending APCEIU activities

3) Financing
• The minimum (not optimum) level of GDP. Target the most marginalized.

4) Monitoring and accountability
• Data collection from grassroots level, institutional, financial and HR
Session III: Sub-regional discussion – South & West Asia

1) Policy and Planning:
   • Dire need to formulate national plans of action for the post-2015 agenda
   • Revitalize national coordinator for EFA and EFA forum

2) Coordination and Partnerships
   • Propose a regional ministerial forum using existing platforms (ASEAN, SAAC, etc.)
   • Roles of CSOs and private sector

3) Financing
   • 6% of GDP and 20% of the expenditures: need strong advocacy
   • Innovative financing and prioritize resources for the underserved

4) Monitoring and Accountability
   • EMIS with accurate and verifiable data
   • Formative monitoring of learning
Session III: Sub-regional discussion – South East Asia

1) Policy and Planning:
   • AEC 2015 to be taken into account
   • Regional planning roles of UNESCO, UNICEF and SEAMEO
   • More sector-wide approach

2) Coordination and Partnerships
   • Better cooperation among gov., CSOs, private sector, universities

3) Financing
   • Government mainly responsible, also non-state financiers
   • Roles of international community and private sector

4) Monitoring and Accountability
   • Strengthen community-school relationships
   • Disaggregate data for equity, make data more accessible
Session III: Sub-regional discussion – The Pacific

1) Policy and Planning:
   • Commitment exists to prioritize education

2) Coordination and Partnerships
   • MOE to lead coordination, but data should be shared widely
   • CSOs and private sector to be involved and aligned with MOE program

3) Financing
   • Consider legislating the minimum level of budget (6% GDP, 20% budget)
   • Better data to target the needed

4) Monitoring and Accountability
   • Consider needs of different stakeholders and schools
   • Strengthen data collection and HR
Plenary V: Reports from Sub-Regional Group Discussions

• National Plan of Action to operationalize the Post 2015 Education Agenda, considering the new global/regional context.

• Building on existing global/regional mechanisms, coordination and partnerships open to wider education stakeholders be pursued.

• Vigorously seek for stronger financial commitments primarily at country level, and internationally, including non-public and innovative sources.

• Data collection and use be strengthened to respond to expanded scope of Post 2015 Ed. Agenda for better effectiveness.
Plenary VI: Debate on the Substantive Elements of the Draft Outcome Documents

End of Day 2 discussions