

UNESCO-KEDI 2015 Asia-Pacific Regional Policy Seminar Monitoring and Evaluation Systems, the Data Revolution, and Education 2030

26-28 November 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

Concept Note

I. Background and Rationale

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education For All (EFA) initiatives of the past two decades have brought increased attention on how to better monitor and evaluate education development globally, especially quality of education. With the end of these programs and the adoption of the new Sustainable Development Goals and Education 2030 agenda and targets, new strategies that can properly monitor and evaluate progress will be needed.

There is a strong recognition that robust data, monitoring, and accountability systems can play an important role in improving resource utilization and strengthening education system performance. Governments and development partners have been investing resources in establishing various frameworks and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of education development with varying results. Various M&E systems have been established and used for monitoring and evaluation of education system performance, often serving different dimensions and purposes of education management.

At the same time, rapid development in technology and expansion of its availability, even in the poorest countries in the region, have made it possible for many countries to tap vast amounts of education related data. During the last decade, the data revolution has led to a huge increase in the amount and frequency of data. For education there is a great potential to harness this information to improve the quality of education. This is therefore an important time for countries to develop education M&E frameworks that fully reflect the priorities of the Education 2030 agenda and incorporate the best use of new technology and analyze increasing amounts of data. However, some problems that will need to be addressed are institutional and capacity related. Much of the data that is collected through M&E programs is not used, of poor quality, published too late (or not at all), not linked with other available data, and not analyzed properly. Many countries operate M&E frameworks independently and there is a considerable lack of regional coordination or information sharing.

The 2030 Education agenda, to: *“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all”* will focus more on individual learning achievements with greater emphasis on equity and readiness to contribute to sustainable development as an active global citizen. This will in turn require new input, process, and output indicators on issues like early childhood education, education financing, education for global citizenship and sustainable development, and teacher motivation, salary and training. Further, integration of various sub-components (i.e. education financing vs. school/teacher/student performance) within national M&E systems will be key to improving reporting, policy making and implementation efforts. In addition, regular and reliable national measurement of learning outcomes and other targets of interest will play a critical role in monitoring progress towards the proposed education goals.

In order to meet the Education 2030 goals, robust monitoring, reporting and evaluation policies, systems and tools are essential. Education monitoring and evaluation requires a multi-dimensional approach, covering system design, inputs, content, processes and outcomes. In conjunction with this, improving the use and utilization of *big data* and the *data revolution* will provide nations with enhanced collecting and reporting methods. As the primary responsibility for monitoring lies at the country level, countries need to

build effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms, adapted to national priorities, in consultation with civil society. The 2015 UNESCO-KEDI Regional Policy Seminar will bring together various countries in the region to share experiences and knowledge to enhance M&E systems as well as how to take advantage of the *data revolution* and *big data* for M&E systems as we move towards the Education 2030 agenda.

II. Objectives

The objectives for the 2015 UNESCO – KEDI regional seminar will be to:

1. Through a comparative review of M&E systems in education, understand how countries in the Asia-Pacific region currently monitor and evaluate their education system performance;
2. Examine how the data revolution and big data can be used to effectively and efficiently improve M&E systems; and
3. Provide policy recommendations for Asia-Pacific nations to improve their M&E systems to implement the upcoming 2030 education agenda.

III. Beneficiaries

This research project and regional seminar will impact directly upon national education systems by engaging education professionals and Ministry of Education officials, and indirectly the learners of the Asia-Pacific region.

IV. Timeline

The 2015 UNESCO-KEDI seminar will be held November 2015 in Bangkok, Thailand. Further details will be provided as available.

	Activities	Date
1.	Country study research	September-October 2015
2.	UNESCO-KEDI Regional Policy Seminar	November 2015
3.	Finalization and publication of the regional synthesis report and policy brief	March-May 2016

V. Criteria for Participants

Participants will be selected from Member States in the Asia-Pacific region, with the aim of having each sub-region represented. The Seminar is pleased to invite participants from research institutes, universities, the ministry of education, or related ministries, institutes and organizations. Participants from the relevant Member States should meet one of the following requirements for the Seminar:

1. One **official** or **researcher** who has experience in Monitoring and Evaluation, and policy and planning with the national education system.
2. One **official** or **researcher** who is deeply involved in education statistics, data analysis, etc.
3. Official/researcher who will be able to draft, present, and publish their research findings (based on the Research Framework) as part of a regional synthesis report.

VI. Contact

To indicate your interest in participating in the 2015 UNESCO-KEDI Regional Policy Seminar, please kindly respond to Mark Manns (m.manns@unesco.org) at the UNESCO Bangkok Office by **Friday, 16 October 2015**.