

# Education and Human Rights



UNESCO advocates mainstreaming a human rights-based approach into programmes and activities aimed at achieving education for all in the Asia-Pacific region, by utilizing relevant standards contained in international human rights law to assist duty-bearers to meet their obligations and to increase the capacity of rights-holders to claim their right to education.

## Our Activities

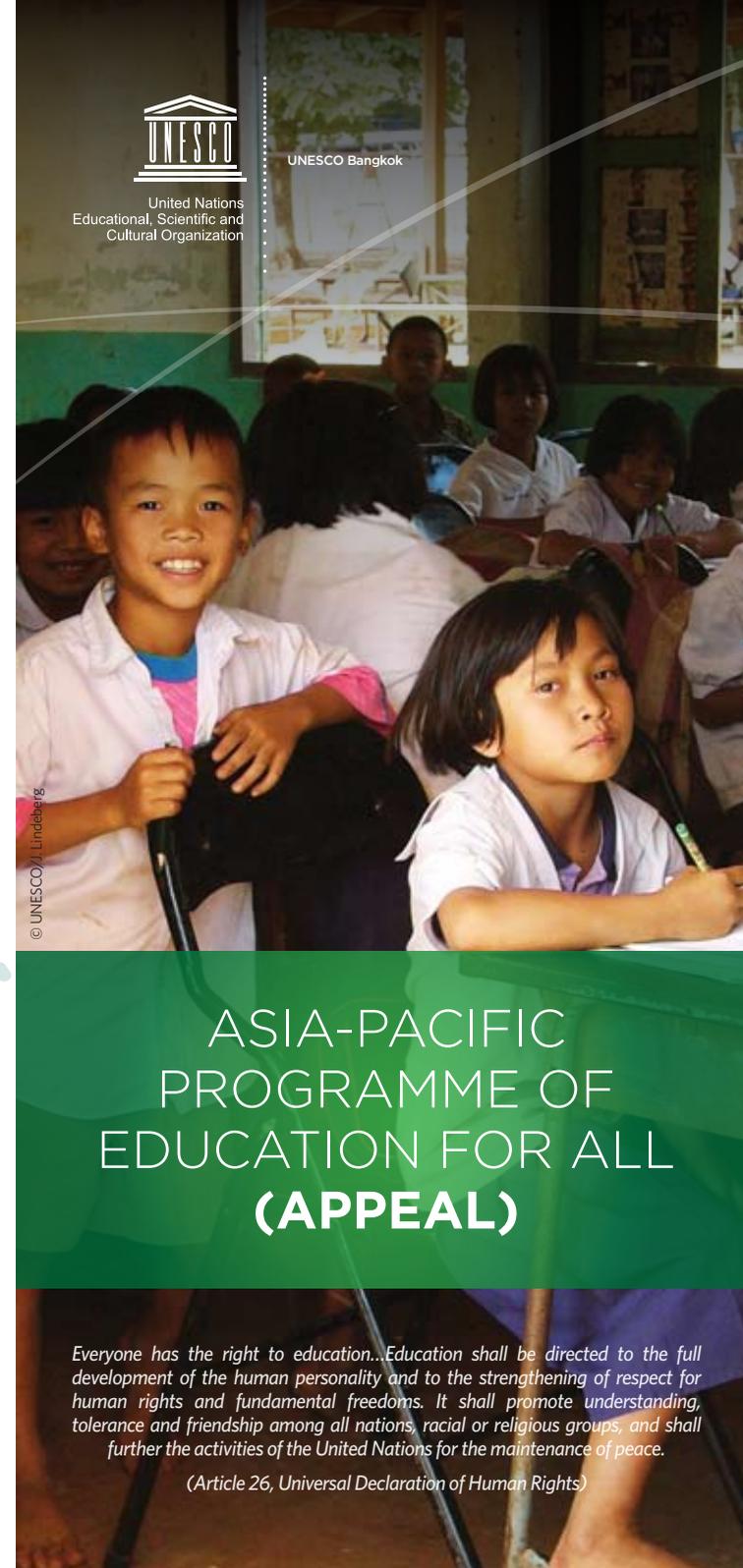
- Supporting the implementation of rights-based education in the region
- Organizing seminars, meetings and conferences for capacity building and sharing experience
- Participating in the design and implementation of the UN Inter-Agency Asia-Pacific Lessons Learned Project (LLP): a joint initiative of UNESCO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and other agencies, including the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the New Zealand Aid Agency (NZAID)
- Promoting human rights education
- Publishing manuals and other materials

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*Everyone has the right to education...Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.*

*(Article 26, Universal Declaration of Human Rights)*

# APPEAL's Areas of Focus



The Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) is a regional co-operative programme designed to promote literacy, early childhood care and education (ECCE), primary education and continuing education as integrated components of basic education and lifelong learning under the guiding principle of a human rights-based approach to education. APPEAL was launched in 1987, having originated from a recommendation by the fifth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education in 1985 and its subsequent adoption by UNESCO's General Conference.

## Strategies

- Promoting a rights-based approach to education
- Gender mainstreaming
- Community participation
- Promoting inclusion
- Utilizing appropriate ICT tools in both formal and non-formal learning to enhance access and quality
- Supporting innovations in formal and non-formal modes of learning especially to address learning needs of least served and unreached groups
- Developing and supporting regional networks to facilitate sharing of experiences

## Regional Networks

- ARTC (APPEAL Resource and Training Consortium in Literacy and Continuing Education)
- GENIA (Gender in Education Network in Asia)

## Also Supports

- EENET (Enabling Education Network in Inclusive Education)
- ARNEC (Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood)
- LRC (Literacy Resource Centre for Girls and Women)

## Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)



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Early childhood care and education (ECCE) is an integral part of basic education and represents the first and essential step in achieving education for all (EFA). ECCE generally covers the age group of 0 to 8 years old. In recognizing the multidimensionality of child development, quality ECCE provisions use a holistic approach, integrating health, nutrition and education in programmes for young children.

The importance of targeting young children prior to primary school age to achieve EFA was recognized in the 1990 World Declaration on EFA, which stated that "Learning begins at birth." The focus on early childhood in EFA, was reconfirmed and strengthened in the Dakar EFA Framework for Action a decade later, as the first goal of EFA: *"Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children."*

### Our Activities

- Developing evidence-based holistic policies and provisions for early childhood through policy dialogues, research and advocacy
- Promoting an inclusive, gender-responsive and rights-based approach to early childhood
- Promoting ECCE programmes that not only prepare for school, but also make schools and teachers ready to welcome young children from diverse backgrounds and needs

## Inclusive Education



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Despite progress in achieving EFA, there is increasing evidence that current strategies and programmes have been largely insufficient or inappropriate in meeting the needs of children, youth and adults who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion, such as minority language speakers, working children etc.

Adopted at the Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994) and restated in the Dakar Framework of Action (paragraph 4), inclusive education is a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners by reducing barriers to, and within, the learning environment. The overall goal of inclusive education, is thus the realization of a school (or any organized educational provision) where all learners are participating and treated equally, and which also proactively seeks and reaches out to any learner who is left behind.

### Our Activities

- Advocating evidence-based policies towards more inclusive education practices including mother tongue-based multilingual education (MLE)
- Building the capacity of policy makers and stakeholders at local, national and regional levels
- Developing training and resource materials such as the Inclusive Learning Friendly Education (ILFE) Toolkit
- Conducting research and organizing expert meetings to share experience, knowledge and information on inclusive education in the region

## Gender in Education



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The Asia-Pacific region has made considerable progress in closing the gender gap in enrolment in primary education. Yet, many countries in the region and beyond have missed the first target of EFA Goal 5: *"...eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005."* Until today, nearly half of the countries in the region are at risk of not achieving parity by 2015 or 2025 in secondary education. Missing the parity target puts countries at greater risk of not meeting the EFA 2015 gender equality target. Mainstreaming gender in education is thus a crucial strategy to achieve EFA.

Education is a right of all. Gender equality is a pre-requisite in realizing this human right. If every child has a right "to", "within" and "through" education, gender equality must also be realized for these three dimensions: "to (access)", "within (process)", and "through (outcome)" education.

### Our Activities

- Building capacity
- Mainstreaming and institutionalizing gender in the ministries of education and related educational institutions
- Developing advocacy materials - the GENIA Toolkit for Promoting Gender Equality in Education
- Conducting research studies on gender issues in education
- Networking
- Collaborating with global initiatives such as the United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI)

## Literacy and Continuing Education



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According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR) 2008, there are 774 million illiterate adults (two-thirds of them women) and 72 million out of school children worldwide. The Asia-Pacific region accounts for 70 percent of the world's illiterate population, most of whom belong to vulnerable groups. Illiteracy rates are higher among ethnic and linguistic minorities and people living in remote areas.

### Our Activities

- Promoting the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD, 2003-2012) in the region
- Supporting regional and country efforts within the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) under the framework of EFA and UNLD. (LIFE aims to increase literacy learning opportunities in 35 countries with a literacy rate of less than 50 percent, or more than 10 million adult illiterates)
- Encouraging the development of community-based delivery mechanisms such as Community Learning Centres (CLCs) for the promotion of literacy and lifelong learning linking to life skills for quality of life improvement, poverty alleviation and community development
- Strengthening synergies between formal and non-formal education through equivalency programmes
- Diversifying and expanding literacy programmes through effective use of ICT
- Promoting mother tongue-based literacy for ethnic minorities while also ensuring the transition to learning in the national language