

International Task Force on Teachers for EFA



Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting

New Delhi, India

28 May 2012

Introduction

The meeting of the Steering Committee of the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA took place at New Delhi, India, on 28 May 2012. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Steve Passingham, European Commission. The main focus of the meeting was the response to the evaluation on the Task Force done by the evaluator Prof. Tony Townsend.

The Meeting

1. Opening

1.1 Adoption of the agenda

- The agenda was adopted by all the SC members.

1.2 Adoption of the minutes of the 6th February 2012 SC meeting

- The minutes of the 6th February 2012 SC meeting was adopted.

1.3 Adoption of the minutes of the 30th March SC meeting

- The minutes of the 30th March 2012 SC meeting was adopted.

2. Overview of the Task Force work

Status of the secretariat and progress on work plan

- The head of the Secretariat of the Task Force, Mr. Edem Adubra presented and elaborated the progress of the 2012 work plan.

3. Evaluation of the International Task Force and Principal Recommendations, Conclusions and Decisions

In their meeting of 6th February 2012, the members of the Steering Committee decided that the draft report on the external evaluation of the Task Force (included in the original TORs of the Task Force initiative) should be presented to them during a special meeting on 30th March 2012 before its finalization. Following the presentation made by the evaluator, Prof. Tony Townsend in the March meeting, a task team of four people was created to prepare proposals addressing the main recommendations coming out of the evaluation report. The team comprises: Alessandro Ricoveri (European Commission); Winsome Gordon (Jamaica), Purna Shrestha (VSO) and Edem Adubra (Secretariat of the Task Force).

The team submitted the proposals to this Steering Committee meeting, and the following decisions concerning the six major recommendations made in the evaluation report were adopted.

Recommendation 1: Continued Funding Support

Decision 1:

The Steering committee mandates the Secretariat to engage in negotiations, in consultation with UNESCO, where necessary, with current and new donors to secure contributions for supporting the staffing of the secretariat and programme implementation in 2013-2015. The aim will be for the funds to be available for use by the Secretariat by 1st January 2013 in order to avoid any disruption.

Decision 2:

On the basis of a draft three-year strategic plan to be presented by the Secretariat to the Task Force and Steering Committee meetings in the Fall of 2012, the Secretariat should be mandated to initiate action, in consultation with UNESCO, where necessary to identify innovative sources of funding for the period of 2013-2015, and beyond.

Recommendation 2: Structures of the Task Force

Decision 1: Foundation document and membership

Based on general consensus, it was decided that the foundation document be renamed “Memorandum of Understanding” (MoU).

Each member will endorse the MoU clearly articulating:

- the roles and responsibilities of the member and the focal point, including but not limited to: the establishment of a reference group (national for countries, institutional for organizations), participation in Task Force activities and dissemination of Task Force materials;
- the roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee members, to be revised in the new MoU.

Governance

Decision 2: On the Steering Committee

Membership: 17 members

- 2 members from each region (8)
- 2 Intergovernmental organizations (IGO)
- 2 International Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs)
- 3 donors

- UNESCO
- 1 regional IGO

It was suggested that rotations of various sub-regions be proposed to take the two seats allotted for the whole region.

- The term of service will be for a maximum of 2 years, renewable.

Decision 3: On the co-chairs

The profile should be revised to allow two co-chairs, one representing the donor constituency and the other, a developing country.

Roles and responsibilities will be revised and streamlined to facilitate efficiency of the Secretariat of the Task Force.

The candidacy of India presented for approval starting from 28th May 2012 for the next two years was approved, while the European Commission (EC) will continue for one more year.

Decision 4: On the Secretariat

The TORs of the Secretariat will be revised according to the mandate as it will be in the new MoU.

Recommendation 3: Relationships with UNESCO

Decision 1: On the meaning of “autonomy”

"Autonomy" should be seen as relating to:

- the Secretariat vis-à-vis UNESCO : primarily in relation to the staff working in the Secretariat, especially the Head of the Secretariat (HoS), how he (or she) should be able to respond directly to the Steering Committee and Task Force members;
- the process of “autonomy”: It should initially focus on defining the roles and responsibilities of the HoS and its staff; how these reflect the expectations of the Task Force and the accountability vis-à-vis their formal employer (UNESCO) on behalf of the Task Force;
- the visibility of the Task Force, ensuring that the “hosting “ of the secretariat by UNESCO does not overshadow the identity of the Task Force as a “ multiple-partner initiative”

Decision 2:

The TOR of the HoS be developed and agreed by the SC and UNESCO Education Sector as soon as possible (June 2012).

This should include the mode of recruitment monitoring and evaluation criteria jointly agreed by the Task Force, SC and UNESCO. Contractual issues will be reviewed through consultation between the Task Force, SC and UNESCO Education Sector.

An evaluation framework will be proposed by UNESCO to the SC for approval.

Recommendation 4: Partnerships with UNESCO

Decision 1: On programme planning and delivery

Synergy and complementarities must be further developed between the Task Force and UNESCO. The Secretariat must initiate and maintain continuous consultation with all relevant UNESCO units both at HQs and in the field, and with UNESCO Institutes implementing teacher-related programmes. Areas of collaboration will include research, advocacy and publication, innovation and capacity development programmes targeting policy-makers, teacher educators, teacher education institutions, teacher Unions etc.

Decision 2: On support on financial management from UNESCO

UNESCO's support of financial management of Task Force funds needs to be maintained to allow for sufficient flexibility to the Secretariat to access and commit the funds on activities endorsed by the SC, and prepare for the Secretariat necessary reports to submit to SC.

Recommendation 5: Task Force objectives

Decision:

The three objectives related to policy, capacity and finance gaps should be revised or modified according to the adopted mandate of the TF (Recommendation 6). Such objectives should also be based on measurable outcomes.

The task team that worked on the proposed decisions, was enlarged with UNESCO focal point and mandated to prepare a revised text on the three objectives, and submit it to the Task Force meeting to be held in the Fall 2012 for adoption and inclusion in the new "Terms of Agreement".

The task team will be composed of :

- Focal point for the Latin America and Caribbean region
- Focal point for Voluntary services overseas (CSO)
- Focal point for EC
- Focal point for UNESCO
- Head of the Secretariat

Recommendation 6: Task Force Mandate

Decision 1:

The coordination and advocacy mandate of the Task Force must be maintained and reinforced through more visible actions.

Decision 2:

Encourage the Secretariat to engage in on-going debates on post 2015 EFA agenda, and invite Task Force members to participate in this debate at country, regional and

global levels for drawing lessons to inform future Task Force activities on teacher issues.

Decision 3:

Teacher education and research institutions will be invited for technical meetings through co-optation when required.