



Chinese National
Commission for
UNESCO



International Seminar on Girls' and Women's Education

1-5 September 2015
Beijing, P.R. China

Concept Note

Background

The International Seminar on Girls' and Women's Education is the first activity to be implemented under the framework of the UNESCO-HNA Partnership, which was formed in February 2014. The international seminar marks the official launching of the two complementary projects established under the UNESCO-HNA Funds-in-Trust (HFIT), namely,

- 1) *Enhancing the quality and relevance of education for adolescent girls in Africa and Asia through gender-responsive teaching and learning, and,*
- 2) *Enhancing Girls' and Women's Right to Quality Education through Gender Sensitive Policy Making, Teacher Development and Pedagogy in South, Southeast, and Central Asia.*

The two projects will support African and Asian countries to accelerate their progress in achieving gender equality in education, with particular focus on gender-responsive teacher training and professional development. The projects will be implemented over a period of five year, for a total budget of USD 5 million.

The UNESCO/HNA Partnership was formed in support of UNESCO's *Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education: Better Life, Better Future*, and will therefore contribute to its three overarching objectives:

1. Improve/expand access for girls to all levels of education through targeted policies and interventions, especially for adolescent girls that are hardest to reach;
2. Improve the quality and relevance of basic and secondary education to ensure that girls, especially adolescents, stay and achieve and transition smoothly through the education levels and to the world of work;
3. Eliminate school-related gender-based violence (making learning environments and access to these safe for girls and boys).

The first project will strengthen global and regional advocacy, networking and communication to ensure girls' right to education, and develop national capacities for gender-responsive education in Ethiopia, Ghana and Nepal. It will be coordinated by UNESCO Headquarters.

The second project will develop national capacities for gender-sensitive teacher policy formulation, as well as build the capacities of teacher trainers and trainees, school leaders and teachers to promote gender-sensitive teaching and learning environments and practices, in Cambodia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan. It will be coordinated by UNESCO Regional Bureau in Bangkok.

The two projects together will directly benefit seven countries in total, in Africa (Ethiopia and Ghana) and in Asia (Cambodia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan). Principal institutional partners and beneficiaries of the project will be national ministries of education, teacher training institutes and secondary schools and relevant education centers in the project countries. The ultimate beneficiaries of the project are the adolescent girls in the critical transition period (aged 10-18 years old) transitioning

from primary to lower secondary and in secondary education, as well as their parents, families, and community members.

Both projects pursue the following three overarching strategies of UNESCO's support to girls' and women's education projects and programmes:

1. Ensure a multi-sectoral approach to lay a strong foundation for girls' education at all levels – national, provincial and community;
2. Explore effective use of non-formal and flexible delivery of gender-sensitive education and training;
3. Fully engage community-level stakeholders in the promotion of girls' education.

In order to **create synergy between these two new projects funded under the HFIT, and the UNESCO-Chinese Funds-in-Trust (CFIT) project – Harnessing Technology for Quality Teacher Training in Africa** – being implemented in 8 African countries (i.e. Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Namibia, Tanzania and Uganda), representatives from the latter countries will be invited to participate in the international seminar and share experiences with counterparts in the HFIT countries. The international seminar will therefore be an opportunity to promote inter-regional experience sharing in the areas of girls' and women's education.

Overarching Goal

To strengthen the information and knowledge base on experiences related to the promotion of girls' and women's education, between African and Asian countries participating in the projects under the HFIT and the CFIT.

Objectives

- Build a common understanding on gender issues in education and key gender concepts;
- Discuss progress made in promoting gender equality in education as well as persisting challenges globally, regionally and at national level;
- Discuss how gender in education is addressed in teacher training and the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to develop and implement a gender-responsive pedagogy;
- Discuss the importance of a welcoming and gender-sensitive learning environment to encourage girls' access to and participation in education;
- Investigate the issue of out-of-school girls and the challenges for them to receive alternative education, and explore how skills development can help them improve their livelihood;
- Discuss how to strengthen South-South cooperation for promoting gender-responsive teaching and learning and ultimately advancing gender equality in education
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Expected Outcomes

- Key issues related to gender and gender equality in education discussed, and a common understanding of these issues shared;
- Persisting challenges in promoting gender equality in education, and ways to address them, in particular through teacher training, identified and discussed; the case of out-of-school girls' lack of access to education will be emphasized;
- Ways to strengthen South-South cooperation for promoting gender equality in education identified and discussed.

Participants

The International Seminar on Girls' and Women's Education will gather approximately 45 participants originating from 14 countries in Africa and Asia, where projects under the HFIT and CFIT have been or will be implemented, namely, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Liberia, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Uganda and Uzbekistan.

The participants are representatives of the Ministry of Education in these countries, or of teacher training institutions.

They will be joined by representatives of the Chinese government and of teacher training institutions in China. UNESCO personnel from Headquarters, as well as regional and country offices or institute will also take part in the discussions.

A total number of approximately 65 invited participants are expected.

Format

- 5 days
- Plenary sessions, group discussions and field visits
- Working languages: Chinese, English, French

Contact

Section of Learning and Teachers (ED/TLC/LTR)

Division for Teaching, Learning and Content

Education Sector

UNESCO Headquarters

Ms Maki Hayashikawa, Chief of Section, m.hayashikawa@unesco.org

Mr Adrien Boucher, Associate Expert, aa.boucher@unesco.org

Programme Overview

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Morning	Opening ceremony – Official launching of the UNESCO – HNA Group Funds-in-Trust (HFIT) projects	Session 2: Gender equality in education: Regional perspectives and the context of the post-2015 education agenda	Session 4: Transforming teaching and learning processes to become gender-responsive	High-level forum / Panel on female leadership in education	Cultural visit
	Session 1: Contextualizing the discussion on gender equality in education, with an international overview and the experience of China	Session 3: Gender equality in education: experiences from countries participating in the CFIT and HFIT projects	Session 5: Enhancing gender-responsive learning environments through the use of ICTs		
<i>Lunch break</i>					
Afternoon	Field visit : All China Women’s Federation, Chinese Museum of Women and Children (To be confirmed)	Field visit: Institute of Teacher Education, Smart Learning Institute, School of Continuing Education and Teacher Training, Beijing Normal University	Session 6: Developing gender-responsive learning environments	Session 8: Wrap-up, Strengthening South-South cooperation for advancing gender equality in education	Cultural visit
			Session 7: Skills development for out-of-school girls	Closing ceremony	
			HFIT project country follow-up planning meeting		
Evening	Reception by Chinese National Commission, BNU and INRULED	Dinner and Visit to Exhibition Hall of BNU	Dinner	Reception Hosted by UNESCO	Farewell dinner