

Session 15: Panel Discussion

The role of regional/sub-regional bodies in
implementing Education 2030 in Asia-Pacific

Pacific

APMED 2030

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Three Questions to discuss:

1. In what ways has your organization supported the implementation of EFA and MDGs? What lessons, if any, can you share?
2. What priorities and strategies, if any, has your organisation developed in response to the new education agenda?
3. What new partnerships or coordination in mechanisms do you recommend for effective synergies to support countries in their implementation of Education 2030?

Pacific Regionalism

Pacific Islands Forum Leaders embrace Pacific regionalism as:

“The expression of common sense of identity and purpose, leading progressively to the sharing of institutions, resources and markets, with the purpose of complementing national efforts, overcoming common constraints, and enhancing sustainable and inclusive development within Pacific countries and territories and for the Pacific region as a whole.” (The Pacific Plan)

Pacific Regionalism (cont)

- We in the Pacific believe in regional cooperation and collaboration in tackling our common challenges such as in the education sector. We do understand that sharing our meager resources and establishing common institutional arrangement is much cost-effective rather than working alone in certain areas of our educational needs.
- The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) the inter-governmental organization with membership of 16 Pacific island states (including Australia and New Zealand) has been leading the coordination of regional education in the Pacific. It has developed the regional architecture for education in the Pacific bringing together the countries and development partners to dialogue and work together to implement and support national/regional and international education priorities.

Forum Education Ministers

- Education ministers from Forum island countries have been mandated by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders to meet and discuss the results of some work commissioned by Forum Economic Ministers in the area of human resource development. This has led to the convening of the Forum Education Ministers Meeting (FEEdMM) since 2001.
- FEEdMM has become the peak forum in the Pacific to lead and guide regional education development and provide the mandate for regional education initiatives to be implemented by development partners, regional and international organizations in Pacific island states.
- FEEdMM will continue to discuss and guide the inclusion of the 2030 global education agenda within the regional education framework in the Pacific which is hoped to be considered at the 2016 FEEdMM.

Regional education plans

- Currently the regional education framework in the Pacific, the Pacific Education Development Framework (PEDF) is up for review this year which should lead to the development of a new regional education plan or framework.
- The PEDF reflects the Pacific concept of regionalism as discussed earlier (above), where countries work together for their joint and individual benefit.
- Regional aspects of the PEDF are designed to support and complement national programmes, not inhibit them. The justification for any regional strategies advocated in the PEDF is that they add value to national efforts.
- The PEDF identifies key priorities in each of the sub-sectors of education and training and also for each of a number of cross-cutting themes. These priorities which arise from international commitments such as the MDGs and EFA goals and the national education sector strategic frameworks have been documented in the review of the first regional education plan called the Forum Basic Education Action Plan (FBEAP) conducted in 2008.

Regional education plans (cont)

- Accordingly the PEDF embraces a ‘bottom up’ approach to education sector development and planning, complemented by a ‘top down’ perspective based on global commitments and the regional Pacific Plan endorsed by the Forum Leaders and which has replaced the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FPR).
- The PEDF addresses the special needs of Small Island States (SISs) which have been prioritised in the Pacific Plan and also the MDGs.
- In the Pacific region, as we move into implementing the newly endorsed ***Incheon Declaration – Education 2030***, we shall be looking at integrating its priorities and strategies into the new regional education framework for the consideration by ministers in 2016.
- This similar process will follow the inclusion of the EFA and MDGs into the PEDF to ensure that as countries work towards their national education targets within their strategic education development plans, at the same time, they are meeting the global and regional education goals.

Support towards the EFA and MDGs

- The Pacific region through the FEdMM processes managed to secure funding support from EU and NZAID to fund the implementation of the FBEAP.
- The project called the Pacific Regional Initiative for the Delivery of basic Education (PRIDE) supported countries to implement various activities in support of their education sector plans.
- The funding support has been negotiated through PIFS and implemented by the University of the South Pacific (USP).
- It is hoped a similar mechanism could be negotiated through a regional approach towards supporting countries implement the Incheon Declaration – education 2030 and the SDGs especially SDG 4

Monitoring and evaluation

- The Pacific region has developed a regional monitoring mechanism through the regional education management information system (EMIS), a facility funded by the Australian government and within the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).
- This facility captures a total of 62 indicators which will be used to report on the status of education in the Pacific states and would cover reporting on indicators under the new SDGs and the education goals.

Regional education architecture

- The Pacific region has developed a strong regional education architecture that involves all stakeholders in the consultations and discussions on regional education development.
- The peak body is the FEEdMM with two other structures below, which are, the Pacific Heads of Education Systems (PHES) a forum for heads of education systems representing each of the country's education systems and the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) Human Resource Development Working Group, a forum for development partners, regional and international organizations in the Pacific.
- The architecture ensures the involvement of all stakeholders in the dialogue relating to education development discussions especially before any new regional initiative is tabled to ministers.