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EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA)

PART I

STRATEGIC VISION AND PLAN FOR UNESCO'S ADVOCACY EFFORTS FOR EFA

SUMMARY

In accordance with 186 EX/Decision 40, the Director-General submits to the Executive Board a strategic vision and plan for UNESCO's advocacy efforts for EFA at the global, regional and subregional levels.

The financial or administrative implications of the reported activities fall within the parameters of the approved document 36 C/5. However, due to reductions in the budgetary allocation because of the current financial situation, the activities would require extrabudgetary funding.

Action expected of the Executive Board: proposed decision in paragraph 24.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In the countdown to 2015, UNESCO's advocacy efforts for Education for All (EFA) will be guided by three strategic aims: generating one last big push to achieve the education goals; strengthening accountability for past commitments; and reaffirming the human rights and development case for investing in education, with a sharp focus on influencing the post-2015 discussions. The overarching aim is to secure the political will needed to reach EFA and to increase UNESCO's visibility as the global voice and conscience of education. These advocacy efforts will address primarily national governments, as top-level political leadership is decisive for achieving EFA. Special attention will be given to reaching beyond education ministries and convincing heads of state/government and finance ministries of the need to prioritize education within development strategies. In addition, UNESCO will continue to work with partners to galvanize broader public engagement behind education and generate demand for change.

2. UNESCO will draw upon two core institutional strengths. The first is its strong evidence base, which ensures that UNESCO's messaging is built upon quality data, an understanding of global trends and a sound analysis of which policies do and do not work in countries. The *EFA Global Monitoring Report* (GMR) and UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) will continue to play a central role in establishing this evidence base, as will the research and monitoring carried out by the Education Sector, including its institutes. The planned national EFA assessments will also provide a valuable advocacy resource and the importance of communicating national stories in a compelling way will be built into the assessment process.

3. UNESCO's second main asset is its strong networks and partnerships. They enable the Organization to get its messages out to the different stakeholder groups whose actions influence EFA progress, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), parliamentarians, teachers, academics and the private sector. UNESCO will provide access to the information and data the stakeholders need to influence national policy-making and generate stronger grassroots support for EFA.

4. UNESCO also has a vital role to play in coordinating advocacy efforts so that the education community speaks with one voice and is organized to impact on important decision-making processes with strong and coherent messages. The newly-constituted EFA Steering Committee, at its first meeting in June 2012, has mandated UNESCO as its Secretariat to develop a communications and advocacy plan to guide the work of all EFA partners in the run-up to 2015. It will also be an important item on the agenda of the first Global EFA Meeting (GEM; 21-23 November, 2012).

UNESCO's advocacy goals

A. Generating one "last big collective push" before 2015 to achieve the education goals

5. EFA is an unfinished agenda. Despite significant advances over the past 10 years, in particular in increasing enrolments and reducing gender disparities in primary schooling, many challenges remain. There are deep and persistent inequalities both between and within countries. Furthermore, advances in access have often masked shortfalls in other areas, notably the quality and relevance of education. In the years to 2015, UNESCO's advocacy will focus resolutely on addressing these equity and quality gaps. Special emphasis will be given to mobilizing renewed commitment for Africa and for gender equality. UNESCO will make the need for a "big push" before 2015 its key message in all communications and EFA meetings in 2012 and 2013 in order to reinforce political commitment to the goals and keep education issues in the spotlight.

6. Supporting these efforts, UNESCO will build up its evidence base on good policies to unlock progress. The redevelopment of UNESCO's website will help to consolidate the policy papers and briefs developed by the Education Sector and its institutes. UIS is also revamping its data centre to

make it more interactive and accessible, and developing new tools to better visualize data and trends. Through such innovations, UNESCO will focus international resources and attention on interventions that really make a difference.

B. Enhancing accountability for commitments made in 2015

7. Governments and other stakeholders must be held accountable for the promises they make on education. Drawing on the GMR and other key resources, UNESCO will put the spotlight on those areas where global commitments have not been met. In particular, UNESCO will reinforce its advocacy for increased funding and more efficient spending to education, arguing in favour of the rewards of such investment and urging the need for greater international solidarity.

8. The reform of the EFA architecture will promote greater accountability at the national level by showcasing where there has been progress, but also using more disaggregated data to highlight issues where renewed efforts are needed. Participants at the GEM will report on action taken to implement commitments, which will be made public in an accessible form.

C. Reaffirming the human rights and development case for investing in education

9. UNESCO will put front and centre of its advocacy efforts the human rights case for education. The fundamental right to education is enshrined in a number of international normative frameworks, starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 26 affirms that “everyone has the right to education” and that “education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages”. An estimated 90 per cent of countries have legally-binding regulations that require children to attend school. The focus of UNESCO’s advocacy will be to make sure that such normative commitments are translated into meaningful actions that expand educational opportunity. In particular, UNESCO will continue to speak up for the right to education of the poorest and most vulnerable groups, notably women and girls, minorities and children and youth living in conflict-affected areas.

10. In addition, UNESCO will make a strong evidence-based case for the multiplier effect of education. In recent years, UNESCO has done much to raise awareness of the central role of education in development and to demonstrate the positive links between education and other areas such as health, poverty eradication and social cohesion. UNESCO will use this strong evidence of the link as a key entry point to influence the post-2015 agenda. The Organization will make it clear that no new agenda for sustainable development can succeed without a clear commitment to education.

Promoting these goals at the global, regional and subregional levels

A. Advocacy at the global level

11. UNESCO will use a series of high-level events in 2012 to kick off a renewed advocacy effort for EFA. UNESCO’s contribution to the Rio+20 Summit has helped to reaffirm the importance of education to sustainable development. The launch of the United Nations Secretary-General’s new global initiative on education, which seeks to raise the profile of education and generate additional funding for the sector, will enhance the momentum (September 2012). UNESCO’s Director-General will be the Executive Secretary of the high-level steering committee guiding the initiative.

12. The 2012 edition of the GMR, focused on skills development, will be a major outreach opportunity. A special version of the report developed by and targeted at young people will be released in November. Two further editions of the GMR – on learning and teaching for sustainable development (2013), and on assessing overall progress since Dakar (2014/2015) – will provide opportunities for influencing global discussions on education and development.

13. The first GEM will accelerate this renewed advocacy drive by setting the collective agenda for accelerating progress on EFA up to 2015 and by agreeing on a strategy for shaping the post-2015 agenda on education.

14. The closure of the United Nations Literacy Decade (2012) and of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2014) will provide additional pivots for advocacy by putting the spotlight on two key EFA issues. The solid evidence base built up during these Decades will forge strong messages on what countries can do to move forward in these important areas.

15. UNESCO will continue to draw attention to EFA at other major global education fora, such as the World Innovation Summit on Education and the Education World Forum, in an effort to ensure that, while keeping up with new trends, the education community does not lose sight of fundamental basic commitments that have yet to be met. UNESCO will also sustain its efforts to put education on the agenda of major global events and convene EFA high-level fora in conjunction with summits such as the United Nations General Assembly, the G-8, G-20 and key thematic summits, such as the International Conference on Population and Development (2014).

16. UNESCO will look at ways to better leverage its networks and partnerships in order to create a stronger multiplier effect in its advocacy. The forthcoming meeting (24-26 October 2012) of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA (CCNGO/EFA) will be an excellent occasion to engage civil society in the acceleration of efforts to reach the EFA goals and in the discussion on the post-2015 agenda. The Organization will also engage the private sector in a more structured way and better harness the latter's communication resources for EFA.

17. The hallmark of UNESCO's global advocacy will be its intellectual rigour and its access. Beyond the GMR, important publications are scheduled to reinforce UNESCO's messaging, such as the forthcoming report on girls' secondary education and women's literacy. UNESCO is also strengthening its foresight function, and, through the review of the Delors report and other initiatives, will reinvigorate the global discussion on where education is and should be heading. The Organization is in a unique position to bridge the worlds of research and policy, and to ensure that education interventions are better informed by evidence and experience.

18. UNESCO will also continue to look for creative ways to generate broader interest and enthusiasm around education, building on the success of the EFA crowdsourcing initiative. This is an area where UNESCO will seek to partner with other actors with strong capacity in using new media, including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).

B. Advocacy at the regional and subregional level

19. UNESCO's advocacy at regional and subregional level will be structured around five main areas. The first is sensitizing national and regional stakeholders on key EFA issues. Through its regional overviews, national country sheets, policy reviews and other materials, UNESCO produces a wealth of valuable information on EFA and useful tools for focusing attention on common challenges and solutions. Efforts will be made to revive national and regional EFA fora as important platforms for policy dialogue and advocacy. Greater use will also be made of regional parliamentary fora. The overarching aim is to make sure that EFA remains a government priority and that policy discussions are focused on the right issues.

20. The second area is related to reinforcing partnerships. The potential for stronger outreach through collaboration with civil society organizations will be tapped. EFA Global Action Week is an excellent example of how joint communication campaigns can focus public attention on key education issues, and UNESCO will pursue its cooperation with GCE and other partners in this regard. It will also foster more proactive knowledge exchange, providing information to local

organizations to support their advocacy efforts, but also using the compelling human stories of grassroots activism to fire public interest in education.

21. Thirdly, UNESCO will ensure a more outcome-oriented approach to regional and subregional meetings on education. UNESCO will communicate much more systematically in the lead-up to such meetings, what it thinks should be addressed and why.

22. The fourth area is about strengthening the link between EFA and the broader development agenda, through targeted advocacy in the lead-up to regional summits and meetings of regional development banks, in particular by reaching beyond education ministries and convincing heads of state and finance ministries of the need to prioritize education within national budgets and development strategies. Demonstrating, on the basis of hard data, the multiple ways in which education drives development will be essential to generating greater political will and funding for EFA.

23. The fifth focus of UNESCO's advocacy efforts will be on helping Member States define their future priorities in education. An integral part of the EFA 2015 assessments will be promoting greater awareness and debate on what has been achieved in education since 2000, on what challenges remain, and on what should be the national, regional and global goals for education going forward.

Proposed decision

24. The Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 190 EX/7 Part I,
2. Welcomes the EFA Steering Committee's recognition of the importance of advocacy as one of the key strategic issues for EFA;
3. Takes note of the strategic vision and plan for UNESCO's advocacy for EFA;
4. Expresses its appreciation to the Director-General for her ongoing efforts to advocate for EFA and encourages her to continue to do so on the basis of the strategic vision and plan;
5. Calls upon the Member States to make extrabudgetary contributions for the implementation of advocacy activities for EFA;
6. Requests the Director-General to report on the progress made on advocacy for EFA in her statutory reports (EX/4) during the present biennium.



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EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA)

PART II

FRAMEWORK FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE PLAYED BY UNESCO AS THE GLOBAL COORDINATOR AND LEADER OF EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA) DURING THE PERIOD 2012-2015

SUMMARY

In accordance with 187 EX/Decision 8 (I), the Director-General submits a framework for the assessment of the role played by UNESCO as the global coordinator and leader of Education for All (EFA) during the period 2012-2015.

The financial or administrative implications of the reported activities fall within the parameters of the C/5 document.

Action expected of the Executive Board: proposed decision in paragraph 11.

I. Background

1. At the World Education Forum (Dakar, April 2000), UNESCO was mandated to continue its role to “coordinate EFA partners and maintain their collaborative momentum” and to “serve as the Secretariat”. The Director-General of UNESCO was asked to “convene annually a high-level, small and flexible group to serve as a lever for political commitment and technical and financial resource mobilization”. In order to fulfil this role, the High-Level Group (HLG), the Working Group (WG), and the International Advisory Panel (IAP) on EFA were convened every year by UNESCO until 2011 to review the EFA progress, based on the *EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR)* as a monitoring tool.

2. Since September 2011, UNESCO carries out this role through the new mechanism for EFA coordination as approved by 187 EX/Decision 8 (I). UNESCO’s EFA coordination aims at supporting governments to build effective and inclusive education systems through facilitating policy dialogue, monitoring, advocacy and mobilization of funding as outlined in the approved Programme and Budget 2012-2013 (36 C/5).

Implementation of the reformed EFA coordination mechanism

3. The reform of the global EFA coordination mechanism (document 187 EX/8 Part I) foresees that more efforts will be made to take into account and build on national and regional EFA activities. Systematic communication channels between UNESCO’s regional and global EFA coordination teams and mechanisms are being established. Intra-regional communication among UNESCO offices around EFA coordination issues is also being improved. Information-sharing across regions has become more frequent and effective, and mailing lists, e.g. of national EFA coordinators in the African and Arab regions, or of E-9 country focal points, are being updated.

4. The GMR continues to be the key instrument for monitoring progress towards the EFA goals. It is complemented by regional reports, prepared each year through the four UNESCO education regional bureaux in collaboration with countries and partners in order to better document and communicate developments at the national and regional level. The field reform will open up for more subregional reporting by the regional offices.

5. An action plan for more strategic and forceful advocacy at the global level, but also targeting regional and subregional entities, has been prepared (190 EX/7 Part I). For the purpose of high-level advocacy, an EFA High-Level Forum (HLF) will be held annually and bring together a few world leaders and champions of education. The September 2012 launch of the United Nations Secretary-General’s Global Education Initiative will constitute this year’s HLF.

6. An EFA Steering Committee (SC) has been established, replacing the former IAP, to provide strategic advice to UNESCO on global EFA coordination including, but not limited to, the preparation for and follow-up to the Global EFA Meeting (GEM). The SC has 18 members including one Member State representative from each UNESCO electoral group, one representative from the E-9, from each EFA convening agency, the Global Partnership for Education and the OECD and four representatives from civil society and the private sector. At its first meeting (Paris, 11-12 June), the members agreed on the role and working modalities of the SC, on the further development of a road map towards 2015 and on key outcomes and content of the 2012 GEM (Paris, 21-23 November).

7. The HLG and WG have been streamlined into a single annual meeting, the GEM. The UNESCO electoral groups are invited to select eight countries each to represent their region at the GEM on a biennium rotational basis.

Framework for assessing UNESCO's role and leadership in EFA

8. The framework for assessing the role and leadership of UNESCO in EFA, and hence the success of the reform of the coordination mechanisms, is built around the following roles:

- **Intellectual leadership, normative standard setting and advocacy role:** providing high quality analytical and policy advice to all stakeholders by strengthening the evidence base and monitor progress, and by contributing to the global debate on EFA in a way that leads to scaling up efforts to reach the EFA goals by all partners. This role goes beyond the Organization's role as coordinator in EFA, as it entails the core functions of the Education Sector;
- **Facilitating role:** ensuring better communication and exchange of knowledge and experiences at, and between, the national, regional and global levels;
- **Convening role:** ensuring high-level participation and adequate contributions based on accountability and representation of all partners;
- **Organizational and monitoring role:** strengthening the relevance and follow up of commitments of EFA meetings.

9. Table 1 below sets out the framework of assessing the role and leadership of UNESCO in EFA, outlining objectives, indicators to assess the attainment of the objectives, and activities to be undertaken to fulfil each role. This framework might be complemented by an external independent evaluation or an internal evaluation organized by IOS.

Table 1. Framework for assessment

Role	Objective	Indicators	Activities
Intellectual, normative standard setting and advocacy role	To improve visibility through high-quality analytical work and policy advice, communication pieces in general media	Number of major evidence-based publications and reports Number of articles and/or videos on/from UNESCO in internationally recognized media that will make EFA more visible in the public debate.	Preparation and dissemination of publication and reports Participation in international education fora
Facilitating role	To better share information and knowledge between the country/regional and global level To increase the number of quality country reporting available to regional and global EFA forums	Number of country and regional quality analysis and reports presented to SC and GEM	EFA meetings at country and regional level that inform and influence the global agenda Revitalize national EFA activities and better involvement of ED Regional Bureaus/Offices
Convening role	To have strong representation and active involvement of all EFA partners To have higher level of participation at targeted events	Thematic reports and initiatives presented by EFA partners to SC, GEM meetings and CCNGO/EFA Level of representation at GEM, HLG and E-9 meetings	Better involvement and participation by all EFA partners High quality preparation and arrangement of EFA meetings
Organizational and monitoring role	To have successful EFA meetings with monitor-able outcome documents	Outcome document of GEM with clear recommendations and goals to monitor follow up	Inclusive preparatory process of the outcome documents Participatory process of follow-up of outcome documents

10. As part of the regular monitoring of UNESCO's work within the framework of the C/5 document, the Education Sector will continue to assess the progress of its work as leader and coordinator of EFA based on the framework presented above.

Proposed decision

11. The Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 187 EX/Decision 8 (I) endorsing the new global EFA coordination mechanism,
2. Also recalling the functions of UNESCO in coordinating the EFA framework as outlined in the Approved Programme and Budget for 2012-2013 (36 C/5),
3. Having examined document 190 EX/7 Part II,
4. Expresses its appreciation to the Director-General for putting in place the new global EFA coordination mechanism;
5. Takes note of the framework for the assessment of the role played by UNESCO as the global coordinator and leader of EFA;
6. Requests the Director-General to report on the progress made in coordinating the EFA process on the basis of the framework for assessment in her statutory reports (EX/4) until 2015.