



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Education for All

Global Education for All Meeting

Paris, France
November 21-23, 2012

Concept Note

“We must spare no effort to achieve the MDGs by 2015. We have three years and three months. We must intensify our work. This is our collective responsibility.” UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon¹

“The price societies pay for raising children without basic skills is unacceptably high. This violates individual dignity and human rights. It undermines growth and tills the soil of unrest. Education is the best investment in the societies we want, in the economies we need.” UNESCO’s Director-General Irina Bokova

Introduction

Education for All (EFA) is a global movement and partnership which calls for commitments and efforts by all UNESCO Member States, international organizations, bilateral agencies, civil society and the private sector. The Dakar Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum (Senegal, 26 - 28 April 2000) mandated UNESCO to coordinate the EFA partners while serving as the Secretariat for EFA. UNESCO’s role as the EFA global coordinator has evolved since 2000, influenced by changes in the global context surrounding the EFA movement.

Three years before the foreseen deadline for the achievement of EFA, about 61 million children of primary school age and another 71 million children of lower secondary school age were still out of school and at least 250 million of children cannot read or count even if they have spent four years in school. Such statistics, taken from the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012², have made concrete the need to review the quantity and the quality of the collective efforts to reach the EFA goals and how the EFA movement is coordinated.

Following a major review of the global EFA coordination in 2010 and 2011, a new EFA coordination mechanism has been established. The new mechanism is designed to offer a strategic platform to revitalize the EFA movement by increasing support to EFA by all stakeholders through increased knowledge sharing, consultation, advocacy, resource mobilisation and more coordinated action. Merging the previous EFA High-Level Group and EFA Working Group, the Global EFA Meeting (GEM) is the vital meeting in this new mechanism.

The format of the meeting is designed to enable the participants to share knowledge and experience, in an open and participatory manner, to debate and agree on new strategies for addressing EFA challenges and urgencies and solicit commitments towards and beyond 2015. The GEM will take place at UNESCO’s Headquarters in Paris on 21-23 November 2012.

¹ United Nations. 2012. Retrieved from

http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43041&Cr=education&Cr1=#.UGk_7ZikqYE

² Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002180/218003e.pdf>

Purpose of the Meeting

The purpose of the Global EFA Meeting is to:

1. Critically review progress towards the six EFA goals based on the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012 (GMR), titled *Youth and skills: Putting education to work*, on information and on reports from national and regional levels and from international organisations as well as reports from other key EFA meetings such as recent regional EFA meetings, the Sixth Meeting of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA (CCNGO/EFA) and the Ninth E9 Ministerial Review Meeting.
2. Identify bottlenecks holding back progress as well as strategic and pragmatic initiatives, best practices and successful policies that can be replicated in order to address remaining challenges collectively and, at the level of each country, to accelerate efforts towards achieving EFA by 2015.
3. Agree on concrete actions in a last big push to reach the EFA goals by 2015:
 - increase domestic and international financing for education by exploring new and innovative approaches to education financing
 - commit to an advocacy and communications plan for EFA partners
 - agree on a format to register, monitor and report on the implementation of pledges and commitments
 - discuss how to build on and leverage support from the Secretary-General's Education First Initiative, as a key advocacy opportunity for EFA and as a way of highlighting the prominent role of education in achieving the other MDGs
4. Discuss key steps in the EFA process up to 2015, in particular with regard to how to support countries in preparing robust EFA Reviews and agree on a plan of action up to 2015. This could include, for example, how to mainstream EFA goals into sector plans and processes and strengthening sector monitoring and evaluation to ensure that they include EFA indicators and reporting. Another important issue is how to better utilize innovation and systemic education transformation.

Expected Outcomes

1. Ministerial/leaders' statement on how to accelerate progress towards EFA by 2015, with commitments that can be monitored.
2. Agreement on tangible actions and responsibilities for follow-up in order to prepare for 2015, including preparing national reviews and meetings and setting a calendar for the process up to 2015.

Preparation of the Outcome Statement

A draft Outcome Statement will be prepared by the UNESCO Secretariat in advance of the GEM, in order to allow sufficient time for consultations with EFA partners and invited participants. This will be a transparent process in which the Steering Committee will advise on the priorities and goals of the Statement. The Statement will be informed by the findings of the GMR and the regional reports and by the recommendations of the EFA Steering Committee. The Draft Statement will be discussed and finalised by the Senior Officials' Meeting (Day 1) and adopted during the High-Level Ministerial Meeting (Day 2).

Format

The three-day GEM will consist of: (1) a High-Level Ministerial Meeting for Heads of State, Ministers, Vice-Ministers and heads of other EFA constituencies and (2) a Senior Officials' Meeting.

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Wednesday, 21 November	Thursday, 22 November	Friday, 23 November
Senior Officials' Meeting High-level opening ceremony	High-Level Ministerial Meeting	Senior Officials' follow up Meeting

The working languages are English, French, Spanish and Arabic.

Participation

The GEM will bring together representatives of UNESCO Member States (approximately 50 delegations), the EFA convening agencies, the Global Partnership for Education, bilateral agencies, United Nations and regional organizations, the teaching profession, civil society organizations (CSOs), the private sector, research institutes and foundations.

A participatory process for selecting Member States' representatives has been introduced to increase countries' ownership and accountability. Specifically, each UNESCO regional electoral group has selected eight countries to represent their region at the GEM in 2012 and 2013. The regional groups have been encouraged to select representatives that include countries progressing fast, those lagging behind as well as donor countries and fragile states. It should be underlined that these countries represent not only their countries, but rather their region, and should therefore undertake adequate consultation with all countries within their region before and after the GEM. Representatives of Member States are expected to be high-level: Heads of State or ministers of education, finance or development.

The High-Level Ministerial Meeting will bring together around 80 global leaders (Heads of State/Ministers of Government and Heads or high officials of multilateral, regional and bilateral agencies, NGOs and the private sector). Each leader can be accompanied by 1 person only in the Ministerial meeting room (i.e. 160 persons in total), which will be set up for a round-table discussion so as to facilitate an open exchange among the participants.

The Ministerial Meeting will be preceded and followed by Senior Officials' Meetings, during which Senior Officials accompanying the leaders together with invited resource persons and institutions exchange information to prepare the High-Level Ministerial Meeting as well as discuss follow-up and possibly an initial action plan after the High-Level Ministerial Meeting.

Provisional Agenda for the High-Level Ministerial Meeting

1. Presentation and adoption of the agenda
2. Presentation of GMR and key findings
3. Review findings and recommendations of the GMR and regional reports
4. Identify bottlenecks that are holding back progress and identify successful interventions that can be scaled up
5. Process of defining regional and global actions in the period up to 2015
6. Establish clear commitments and responsibilities for actions that can be monitored
7. Adoption of Statement

Background Documents:

- The 2012 EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR) on *Youth and skills: Putting education to work*
- Regional reports prepared by UNESCO's Regional Bureaux
- Concept note for national EFA reviews
- Discussion paper on the post 2015 MDG agenda (UNESCO Think Piece on Post-2015: *The international education agenda post-2015. Education and Skills for Development*)
- Outcome Document of the Sixth Meeting of the CCNGO/EFA
- Report/outcome statement from the Ninth E9 Ministerial meeting

Working documents

- Concept note
- Provisional programme
- Draft GEM Outcome Statement
- List of meeting participants