

Nine most populous countries meet in Bangladesh to align plans to the Education 2030 Agenda

5-7 February 2017, Dhaka, Bangladesh



L-R – UNESCO Director General, Irina Bokova, Minister of Education of Bangladesh, Nurul Islam Nahid, and Bangladesh Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, at the E-9 meeting in Dhaka.

Leadership from the E-9 group of high population countries can catalyse educational progress for the world, affirmed UNESCO Director-General, Irina Bokova, at the opening of the [E-9 Ministerial Meeting on Education 2030](#) with Bangladesh Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina.

The event, hosted by the Government of Bangladesh, is the first E-9 Ministerial meeting since the adoption of the SDGs and the Education 2030 Framework of Action. Participants of the meeting adopted the [Dhaka Declaration](#).

“Every E-9 country has a powerful story to tell, a story of development, a story of action, which is essential for the success of the new agenda,” said Ms. Bokova. Noting that the 2030 Agenda embodies a new vision of education for the 21st century, she stated that *“we need a radical break in how we work, how we cooperate and how we partner.”* She encouraged E-9 countries to build equity into education policy and financing, carry out joint advocacy and actions, work across sectors for a holistic approach, and place attention on new skills for green citizenship, peace, and intercultural dialogue in curricula.

Placing education in the global context, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stated that *“we live in a world where we depend on each other, despite our diversity... Education places a bridging role in promoting mutual understanding, tolerance, and friendship. Education supports inclusion, decreases violence against women, and promotes empowerment.”* She stated that the E-9 meeting represents a ‘historic opportunity’ to deliver new orientations based on SDG4-Education 2030, through sharing best practices and action plans, promoting new modes of partnerships together with regional and international dialogue.

During the opening ceremony, Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman, Minister of Federal Education and Professional Training, Pakistan, handed over the E-9 Chairmanship to Bangladesh. He noted that as Chair, Pakistan had conducted joint advocacy for education, with emphasis on literacy, primary education, and increased development assistance. Stating that the *“E9 is a historic commitment of Member States,”* he stressed the need to “leapfrog” ahead through “smart and more collaborative” efforts.

Assuming the Chairmanship, Nurul Islam Nahid, Minister of Education, Bangladesh, outlined the challenges ahead and underscored the political and social responsibility to create momentum around the E-9 network to push forward on SDG4-Education 2030.

Rasheda Choudhury, Executive Director of CAMPE, Bangladesh, and Vice Chair of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), one of the three NGOs who participated in the event as part of the official delegation from Bangladesh underscored the value of civil society involvement in advancing

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SDG 4- Education 2030. She reminded that the Framework for Action Education 2030 underscores that "Civil society organisations...need to be engaged and involved at all stages, from planning through to monitoring and evaluation, with their participation institutionalised and guaranteed." The E-9 initiative would benefit from strong civil society participation in meeting its education goals.

The E-9 countries - Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan – are home to over half of the world's population, two-thirds of the world's illiterate adults, and nearly one-half of the world's out-of-school children and youth.



Assuming the Chairmanship of E-9 from Pakistan, Bangladesh Education Minister, Nurul Islam Nahid, outlined the challenges ahead and underscored the political and social responsibility to create momentum around the E-9 network to push forward on SDG4- Education 2030.

Launched in 1993, the E-9 Initiative is a networking platform to share experiences in educational policy, exchange best practices, and monitor progress. UNESCO is the Secretariat for this initiative and supports the coordination of the network, which has a rotating two-year chairmanship.

This write-up contains excerpts of an article appearing in the [UNESCO website](#).

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