

Laying the foundation for SDG 4 monitoring and capacity building in the Asia Pacific

First meeting of the Education 2030 Thematic Working Group

1 March 2016, Bangkok, Thailand



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The Thematic Working Group on Education for All has been reconstituted as the Education 2030 Thematic Working Group (TWG), this time, to guide Member States in the implementation of the new Education 2030 agenda/SDG4 Goal: *Ensuring equitable, inclusive, quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030.*

The first meeting of the Education 2030 TWG was held in the UNESCO Bangkok office with the participation of 44 representatives from UN offices, intergovernmental bodies, multilateral finance institutions, and civil society organisations. The agenda included discussions addressing the following questions - What is the importance of the

TWG and how will its work impact on country and regional level implementation of SDG4? How does it align itself with the SDG mechanism and harmonise its monitoring and capacity building plans with the regional SDG architecture of ESCAP? What are its plans for 2016, building on the agreements in the Asia Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED 2030)?

The Thematic Working Group on EFA played an important role in supporting countries in its implementation of the Education for All commitments in Dakar on three fronts – (1) advocacy on key issues (2) technical support, such as building capacities in data systems, and (3) review and monitoring of EFA progress. Now in the SDG4 era, it has to harmonise its work and monitoring mechanisms within the SDG mechanism in the region. Min Bista, Chief, Section of Inclusive Quality Education of UNESCO Bangkok, shared that the Asia Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism (APRCM) has proposed seven TWGs in the context of SDGs, one of which is on Education for All. The other TWGs (priority areas) are - Statistics, Resource Efficient Growth, Sustainable Societies (Demographic Change), Inclusive Development and Poverty Reduction, Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience, and Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women.



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Learning from the internal reflections and external evaluation of its work, both undertaken in 2015, the TWG for EFA in Asia Pacific will re-think and re-define its Terms of Reference (TOR) in a retreat that will take place mid- May. This rethinking will also be bolstered by suggestions from Member States during the APMED 2030 on possible areas for support such as on indicators/data collection, collaborative intergovernmental efforts, technical support/capacity building and defining milestones for Education 2030 monitoring. Such rethinking/re-defining of the role of the TWG will have to be cognizant

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The South East Asia Ministers of Education (SEAMEO) is developing its Roadmap for Education 2030 which will be discussed together with the Education Agenda 2035 in the Strategic Dialogue of Ministers in April 2016.

of the discussions within the SDGs Regional Coordination Mechanism that have put forward 4 areas to consider in the TORs of the SDG-TWGs namely – (1) stocktaking (2) analysis and publications (3) events and programme planning, and (4) partnerships.

Apart from harmonising the work of the Education 2030 TWG with the RCM, there are inter-governmental mechanisms existing in the Asia-Pacific region that the TWG will have to collaborate with in coordinating the implementation of SDG4. Two opportunities for engaging inter-governmental bodies were shared in the Education 2030 meeting – the South Asia Association Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is in the process of articulating the Education 2030 SAARC Framework for Action and UNICEF ROSA announced the SAARC meeting on the framework to be held from 30-31 March 2016 in Kathmandu, Nepal. Similarly, the South East Asia Ministers of Education (SEAMEO) is developing its Roadmap for Education 2030 which will be discussed together with the Education Agenda 2035 in the Strategic Dialogue of Ministers on 28 April 2016.

Building on the APMED 2030 agreement, the Education 2030 Thematic Working Group envisages to work on the following in 2016 –

April-May	Technical guidelines in monitoring SDG4
May	Retreat of Education 2030 TWG
May-June	SDG4/Education 2030 advocacy messages
May-June	Regional capacity development workshops on education statistics (EAP/SA)
Aug-Sept	Guidelines: Alignment of national plans with SDG4/Education 2030
Sept	Launch of Global Education Monitoring Report: Education Sustainability and the Post 2015 Development Agenda
November	Regional meeting of SDG4 Coordinators

In all of these plans, as stated in the APMED 2030 outcomes document, civil society has a role in informing the guidelines, advocacy messages, data collection, mapping of needs, and in defining the milestones for monitoring SDG4. Based on country contexts and needs, it is important for national education coalitions and education practitioners to start dialogues at the country level to inform ASPBAE's regional positioning.

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