I. Background

The Education for All (EFA) initiative was first launched in March 1990 at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand. Participants from 155 countries and representatives of 160 governmental and non-governmental organizations adopted the World Declaration on EFA which reaffirmed that education is a fundamental human right and urged countries to intensify efforts to address the basic learning needs of all.

At the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000, National Governments and the international community re-affirmed its vision of Education for All through the drafting and signing of The Dakar Framework for Action. This framework committed signatories to the attainment of six goals with focus on early childhood care and education, universal primary education, life-long learning, adult literacy, and gender equity and equality, and quality education. The Framework also foresaw the need for national monitoring of EFA progress. It was assumed that, along with carrying out education reforms to fulfill their commitments to the EFA goals, National Governments, as a matter of good governance, will monitor the implementation and assess the outcomes of their policies. The EFA goals were further linked to national and international development frameworks in September 2000 when 189 nations came together at the United Nations Millennium Summit and endorsed the Millennium Declaration identifying the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Following the Dakar Forum, UNESCO Bangkok continued to support regional Member States by conducting regular regional meetings of National EFA Coordinators, with direct links to the Regional Thematic Working Group (TWG) on EFA in order to support planning and implementation of EFA through information sharing and technical advice.

Since its creation in 2003, the Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (AIMS) Unit which is the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) Regional Office, UNESCO Bangkok, in collaboration with EFA partners in the region, has been assisting countries in the development of national statistical capacity to collect, monitor and evaluate EFA progress for evidence-based policy making. Learning from the lessons of the 1995 and 2000 EFA assessments, countries in Asia and Pacific conducted the EFA Mid-Decade Assessment (MDA) using 2005 data, which is the mid-point of the current decade. The assessment also encouraged countries to identify and collect data on the unreached and marginalized groups in order to develop targeted policies and actions.

Globally, there is also a growing emphasis on the importance of addressing the issue of marginalization and reaching the unreached in education if the EFA goals are to be met by 2015. The
2010 EFA Global Monitoring Report focused on “reaching the marginalized” aside from tracking EFA progress in countries.

The Addis Ababa Declaration of the 9th Meeting of the High Level Group on EFA in February 2010 also explicitly recommended “that National Governments ensure that their education policies and strategic planning include all children, youth and adults, and that these policies are linked to broader development strategies. Such policies will enable marginalized populations to enter school and to complete and benefit from meaningful learning.”

To further move forward the momentum in this area, the 11th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators to be held in Bangkok on 18-20 November 2010 will focus on identifying specific policies and good practices undertaken by countries to address the issue of marginalization in education.

II. Objectives

This meeting is aimed at facilitating information exchange among countries on EFA progress, in particular reaching the unreachd and marginalized in education as a way of ensuring success in meeting the EFA goals. The meeting will also be a venue to identify the major challenges the region is facing towards achieving the EFA goals and reflect on challenges beyond 2015.

The meeting will also be a forum to discuss and prepare countries and EFA partners in the region on planning an assessment of EFA progress and gaps by 2015 through the sharing of findings from the evaluation of the EFA Mid-Decade Assessment and the EFA Mid-Term Review process. Through this meeting, UNESCO Bangkok/UIS and UNICEF will also update countries on the preparation of End-of-Decade Notes on EFA Progress and get possible contributions to the content of the Notes from participating countries. More information about the End-of-Decade Notes will be shared to countries via the meeting website.

III. Outcomes

Based on the above objectives, the following are the expected outcomes of the meeting:
1) Identification of good practices carried out in countries in the region towards meeting the EFA goals, particularly in reaching the marginalized and unreachd groups
2) Inputs into the End-of-Decade Notes on EFA Progress
3) Identification of capacity needs for the end-of-EFA (2015) assessment
4) Identification of priorities in the region post EFA 2015
5) Statement containing key messages from the meeting that will be shared at the EFA Working Group meeting and possibly the EFA High Level Group Meeting in 2011.

IV. Format

The workshop will be divided into two sessions:
- Plenary Sessions
- Peer Group Sessions

The medium for communication for the meeting will be English.
V. Conference Organizer
The UIS-AIMS and APPEAL Units of UNESCO Bangkok are the main meeting organizers on behalf of the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education. The meeting is also organized in close collaboration with the Regional TWG on EFA which is co-chaired by UNICEF.

VI. Participants
Participants to the workshop will be the designated EFA Coordinators from the following countries:

- Southeast Asia: Brunei Darussalam, Singapore, Timor Leste, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Thailand, Lao PDR, Myanmar;
- East Asia: China, Mongolia, DPR Korea, Japan (observer), Korea (observer);
- South & West Asia: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Iran;
- One country representative each from Central Asia and the Pacific endorsed by the respective sub-regions

Due to the highly specific content, process and expected outputs of this Meeting, we are extending this invitation to official(s) in the Ministry of Education with the responsibility, knowledge, and skills required for effective participation in this conference. Preferably, the national delegate should be the National EFA Coordinator/Focal Point with responsibilities for directing and coordinating EFA follow-up work at the country level after this meeting.

Members of the Thematic Working Group on EFA, UNESCO and UNICEF regional and country education officers, representative(s) from UIS Montreal and UNESCO Paris, and other organizations involved in education are also invited to participate in the meeting.

VII. Preparatory Work by Participants
Countries invited to the meeting are requested to prepare a brief paper on ‘Progress made in reaching the unenreach and marginalized in education towards meeting the EFA Goals, focusing on specific policies and overall efforts undertaken to address the issue of marginalization in education.’ Please see the Country Paper Presentation Guidelines for the suggested outline of the paper and recommended references.

At the meeting, countries will also be requested to make short presentations (maximum 15 minutes) on ‘progress made in reaching the unenreach and marginalized in education towards meeting the EFA Goals, focusing on specific policies and overall efforts undertaken to address the issue of marginalization in education.’ The presentation will be based on the country paper submitted to UNESCO as preparatory work for this meeting.

UNESCO will also use the country papers as reference to prepare a regional summary of efforts being undertaken in the region to reach the unenreach groups in education as well as to identify key remaining challenges to the achievement of the EFA goals by 2015. With the consent of the countries, certain sections of the country paper will also be used as references for text boxes in the regional End-of-Decade (2010) Notes on EFA Progress to be prepared jointly by UNESCO, UNICEF and other Thematic Working Group on EFA members.

VIII. Time and Venue
18-20 November 2010
Bangkok, Thailand (Hotel name to follow)
IX. Tentative Workshop Programme

The workshop will cover the following agenda items, among others: presentation of key highlights of the 2010 EFA Global Monitoring Report focusing on reaching the marginalized, country presentations on EFA progress and policies and efforts undertaken to reach the marginalized in education, discussion on inputs to the End-of-Decade Notes on EFA progress, discussion on priorities for the region post EFA 2015, discussion on capacity needs to carry out an end-of-EFA (2015) assessment, and preparation and endorsement of key messages to be shared the EFA Working Group meeting and possibly the EFA High Level Group meeting in 2011.

A detailed schedule and agenda will be sent out to participants upon confirmation of attendance to the meeting.

X. Contacts

For further information, please contact:
Ms Leotes Lugo Helin
Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (AIMS) Unit
UIS Asia-Pacific Regional Office
UNESCO Bangkok
Mom Luang Pin Malakul Centenary Building
920 Sukhumvit Road
Bangkok 10110 Thailand
l.lugo-helin@unesco.org
tel: +66 2 391 0577 ext.236
fax: +662 391 0866

and

Ms Ann Apiradee Wittayathawornwong
Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (AIMS) Unit
UIS Asia-Pacific Regional Office
UNESCO Bangkok
Mom Luang Pin Malakul Centenary Building
920 Sukhumvit Road
Bangkok 10110 Thailand
a.wittayathawornwong@unesco.org
tel: +66 2 391 0577 ext.230
fax: +662 391 0866

Please check the Meeting website to download documents related to the meeting and other updates: http://www.unescobkk.org/education/efa/