

## From the MDGs to the SDGs: Looking Back and Looking Ahead at Progress toward **Gender Equality in the EAP region**

### Reflections from the Chair

*Chemba Raghavan, Chair, East Asia and Pacific Regional UNGEI*

As I reflect on the MDGs and look ahead to a world of the SDGs, it is heartening to note that the EAP UNGEI has focused on strengthening of partnerships at regional and country level, believing that each member brings comparative advantages. The partnerships within the EAP UNGEI enable the network to provide more sustainable contributions in achieving gender equality in education. The EAP UNGEI has been particularly instrumental in addressing issues around School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) and marginalization including issues pertaining to child labour, migration and disabilities. In this context, I wish to share excerpts from a paper that the regional Secretariat prepared and presented at the UKFIET International Conference on Education and Development held at Oxford, United Kingdom:

*As the eighth Millennium Development Goal (MDG), “partnership for development” demonstrates, partnership has become one of the major strategies to address the complex and multifaceted issues in international development. UN agencies, CSOs, NGOs, governments, and donors form partnerships to increase the impact of their technical cooperation in addressing common goals.*

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*In education, global commitments were made by 164 governments to Education for All (EFA) goals during the World Education Forum (WEF) at Dakar in April 2000, where the UNGEI partnership - the first in education – was launched. The East Asia and Pacific UNGEI (EAP UNGEI) was launched in May 2002.*

*The EAP region encompasses one-third of the world's population and more than one-quarter of the world's children. The region possesses a stunning variety in geography, culture and political and economic systems and significant diversity can be seen within countries in terms of wealth, ethnicity and language, and diversity in provision of education. Although there is a notable progress in narrowing the gender gap, disaggregated data reveal that each country faces different types of challenges.*

*As the international community prepares for the post-2015, the landscape of global agenda and partnerships is changing. Continuing impact of the UNGEI network on achievement of the SDGs is foreseen, especially given that UNGEI has already served as an effective flagship for girls' education under the EFA goals that are closely linked to the MDGs. The EAP UNGEI is well equipped to contribute to discussions on emerging issues in the region and aims to continue to build effective partnerships for gender equality in education, tackling complex issues that may arise in the post-2015 context.*

In this final Newsletter of a significant year, the EAP UNGEI pledges its commitment to continue to strengthen gender equality and in education and beyond. So we build the strong partnership especially for the most marginalized. As the Chair of the EAP UNGEI Secretariat, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation and congratulations to all EAP UNGEI members, who have endeavored to achieve gender equality in education in the region in

partnership. Here at the EAP UNGEI secretariat, I am thankful for the amazing work done by our colleagues Eunwoo Kim and Laura Devos. We are very sorry that they will not continue to be part of our secretariat, but know that they will continue to contribute to our network wherever their journeys take them. We wish them all the best as they continue on their next phase of their lives. It has been a great honour and pleasure to work with such wonderful colleagues in the region and I look forward to continuing to promote gender equality in education together in East Asia and Pacific.



## The Role of Gender in Education 2030: Views from Asia-Pacific

Noel Boivin, UNESCO Bangkok Media and Communications Officer



*Schoolgirls in Darjeeling, India. For girls living in remote areas in Asia-Pacific, the walk to and from school can carry the threat of school-related gender-based violence. © PavelSvoboda / Shutterstock.com*

Gender is “not only a girl/boy issue”, says Chempa Raghavan, chair of the East Asia and Pacific United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (EAP UNGEI). As Asia-Pacific countries pursue the Education 2030 agenda, they must analyse

and respond to the issue of gender in all of its dimensions. “It’s about a power structure. It’s about relationships. It’s about discrimination,” Dr Raghavan said.

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**“Gender is not only a girl/boy issue - It’s about a power structure, relationships and discrimination.”**

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Sustainable Development Goal 4, “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, and SDG 5, “achieve equality and empower all women and girls” are deeply interdependent, she said. Dr Raghavan was speaking on the sidelines of the recent Asia-Pacific Meeting for Education 2030 (APMED2030) held in Bangkok. APMED2030 brought more than 200 delegates from education ministries, UN agencies, civil society organizations, development partners, donors and researchers together to unpack the Education 2030 agenda in Asia-Pacific and set priority actions for its implementation.

“Gender equity, lifelong learning and inclusiveness – these are cross-cutting issues for the 2030 agenda,” said delegate Jinhee Kim, a research fellow with the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI). “Gender equity is one of the most significant issues. Empowerment through education is crucial and international society must respond together.” “SDG 4 brings a strong gender equality perspective. Gender equality is integrated into

each of the 10 targets, including 3 means of implementation targets. In addition, target 4.5 calls for eliminating gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training,” said Min Bista, Chief of Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) at UNESCO Bangkok.

#### Progress, and diverse challenges ahead

Asia-Pacific made tremendous strides related to gender in education over the past 15 years. South and West Asia, for example, saw the greatest progress in the world towards achieving parity in primary enrolment. However, disparities remain stark between and within countries; again using primary enrolment as an example, only four of eight South and West Asian countries with data achieved parity and in Nepal the gender gap had been reversed, with more girls than boys enrolled in primary education.

The complexity of the gender issue in Asia-Pacific was apparent in discussions with APMED delegates, from those who told of girls’ basic safety needs going unmet to others from countries where gender parity in education has brought increased opportunities.

Tungalag Dondogdulam, from Mongolian NGO All for Education, said that in rural parts of her country inhabited by large nomadic populations, children often stay in school dormitories for nine months of the year. “These dormitories are not conducive to girls’ safety. Toilets are outside. It’s dark. It’s cold. It’s dangerous for girls to use the toilet outside.”

Such threats, taking place in and around schools, are indicative of the wider problem of school-related gender-based violence. Dr Raghavan said SRGBV remains a major obstacle to equitable education, particularly in remote

areas where distances to schools are great. “The issue of safety is important in this region,” she said. “We should be looking at SRGBV particularly in marginalized communities. We should broaden what we mean by gender in education to include these ideas.”

“Another key component to Education 2030’s success in the area of gender will be ensuring that girls receive a strong foundation from which they can build empowered lives,” said Rokhsareh Fazli, Director General of the Pre-primary Bureau of the Iran’s Ministry of Education.

Quality early childhood education teaches girls about their rights and gives them the voice they need to express them. “The quality of early education is not good enough for them,” Dr Fazli said of Iran. “So many of our girls drop out of school or don’t complete their schooling. They are so talented, so active, but the boys have a better foundation in early childhood,” she said.

Dr Kim from KEDI agrees that education has the potential to transform the lives of girls and women throughout the region, addressing such issues as early marriage and keeping girls and women from being vulnerable to exploitation. “If their circumstances are not supportive, they may feel reluctant to pursue their education and keep moving on career paths,” she said.

“Educating a girl has multiplier effects and it brings the potential to catalyse success for many other goals and targets of the sustainable development agenda,” argues Min Bista from UNESCO Bangkok who earlier served as UNGEI co-chair. Therefore, gender equality should be at the heart of all SDGs. The education agenda must address this not only by focusing on changing rigid societal mind-sets around gender norms, but also by doing more to

connect girls’ education with the workplace. “Without specialized skill sets, maybe their lives will be just in a supportive role for men,” Dr Kim said.

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**“Educating a girl has multiplier effects and it brings the potential to catalyse success for many other goals and targets of the sustainable development agenda”**

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#### Going Beyond ‘Girl/Boy’ Issues

In Samoa, the complexities of gender issues are addressed in the inclusive education plan that the country is ready to implement. The policy answers SDG 4’s call for more “inclusive and equitable” education for all and reflects the immense scope of the gender issue in the education agenda.

Maina Field, Assistant CEO of Policy, Planning and Research from the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture, says the plan will focus in part on those whose sexual orientation and gender identity or expression differ from societal norms, particularly the *fa’afafine*, a Samoan term that broadly encompasses those born male who do not conform to societal expectations of men.

“*Fa'afafine* do have a lot of contributions towards education and towards Samoan society. There's a lot of evidence of how *fa'afafine* work and effort goes into improving Samoan society,” she said. “There's a lot of work to be done to promote awareness.”

Several delegates at the conference spoke of a “reverse gender gap” where opportunities are increasingly abundant for girls, while boys are falling behind.

Ms Rubkwan Tharmmapornphilas, policy and planning analyst with Thailand's Ministry of Education's Bureau of Policy and Strategy said that women are now in demand in previously male dominated fields in the country. “There's more understanding now about gender equality. For example, before only men would be able to join the police, but now we're seeing many more women join and an increased demand for them.”

However, she notes secondary and post-secondary enrolment rates are higher among girls than boys, part of a wider trend that Dr Raghavan reflects “a boy issue in the region.” “Boys are underperforming in education,” she said, however, she said it is important to recognize that “boy disadvantage does not mean girl advantage.”

“It's not tit for tat at all. We should be looking at how do we engage men and boys and how does the education sector respond to socialization patterns right from early childhood through to adolescence,” she said.



For more information on APMED 2030, please visit: <http://www.unescobkk.org/news/article/apmed2030-puts-asia-pacific-on-road-to-education-2030/>

## The Role of NGOs for Achieving Gender Equality in China

### *Aide et Action China*

Gender equality is a crucial goal to achieve for many developing societies, as recognised in the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) launched in 1995 at the 4<sup>th</sup> United Nations World Conference on Women. In 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were launched by the United Nations. The goal 2 of the MDGs calls for promoting gender equality and empowering women. To adhere to the Beijing Declaration and achieve the MDGs, China has put a lot of efforts on gender equality, providing generous resources for empowerment of women. Besides the government and the private sector, third parties, especially international NGOs, have become a leading force to promote gender equality in China. In the past 20 years, NGOs made excellent contributions in the field. Achieving gender equality is not a simple and straight forward task; it is combatted on several fronts such as healthcare, economic status, political participation as well as extensive research and advocacy, to name but a few. Aide et Action China focuses on particular areas to achieve and advocate for gender equality in our target locations.

### Gender and Health

Protecting a women's right to health care often is the first priority for NGOs promoting gender equality. The China Women's Development Foundation, the largest domestic foundation addressing women's issues, started a project called “Express for Mothers' Health” in 2003 to provide women with medical treatment by mobile medical vans in rural areas.

Currently, 39 million women have benefited from this program. Besides physical health, NGOs also focused on women’s physiological health. For example, the Beijing Maple Women’s Psychological Counselling Centre has been assisting women to solve their psychological problems for more than 20 years. One of their programs, the Maple Hotline, nationally received 69,000 calls from women seeking support from a counsellor.

### Gender and Economic Status



Women in rural area of China are receiving training in baking ©Aide et Action China

Improving women’s livelihood skills and increasing their chances for employment is the main focus for some NGOs because it empowers women with economic rights. The Aide et Action China’s Homemakers project aims at equipping rural women with livelihoods skills such as, sewing, bamboo weaving, cooking, household management, computer skills, and small business training. These important skills can help them get a job or start their own business. Besides vocational training, micro financing is another way for NGOs to support women to increase their incomes. The China Association of Microfinance cooperates with the Shan’xi Women’s Federation and Action Aide, to provide micro financing to rural women in Shan’xi province and assist them to develop their own small business. After many

years of pilot programs there are now 3 counties providing support to women to open small businesses based on the micro financing program. Micro financing gives women a chance to pursue their dreams and raise their confidence through economic empowerment.

### Gender and Political Participation

Raising the rate of women’s political participation is an important goal for China as they pursue gender equality. This has recently become a higher priority as the Chinese government allocated more positions for women at different levels. To enable women to participate in political and public affairs effectively, some NGOs focus on enhancing the capacities of female government officers at the community level. For example, the LI KA SHING Foundation collaborated with the Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People’s Republic of China to start a program called Zhanpu Planning, which aims to train female officers in rural villages to enable them to improve local community development. The 3 year project successfully trained more than 4,500 female officers and approximately 8,000 villages benefited. A sustainable education model for female officers not only let their voice heard in the political system, but also promoted their villages’ development.

### Homosexuality and Transgender

In China, gay, lesbian, or transgender people are becoming more confident to be open about their sexual orientation, although it is still challenging for them to be accepted in the Chinese Society where traditional culture and values are highly regarded. Numerous NGOs were established to protect gay, lesbian, and transgender groups and build bridges between them and other people, most of them being launched by members of the gay, lesbian, and

transgender community themselves. One of oldest local NGOs focusing on gay and lesbian rights in China is the *Ai Bai* Culture and Education Centre, providing peer activities and information platforms to the group with social support, as well as organizing advocacy events to promote public understanding of gay and lesbian people. Because of the hard work put in by NGOs and social media development, the public and society as a whole are more educated on the rights of gay and lesbian people.

On the other hand, according to the National Center for AIDS/STD Control and Prevention, Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (NCAIDS), 97,000 HIV infections were newly reported between January and October 2015, among which heterosexual transmissions accounted for 66.6% and Men Having Sex with Men (MSM) 27.2%. Newly reported HIV infections among students, over the same period, was 2,662, an increase of 27.8% over the same period of last year. To educate the people in the gay and lesbian community infected by HIV, some NGOs are teaching safe sex practices. They also provide quick HIV testing, medical assistance, and counselling as well as advocacy for public education in the hopes of providing a friendlier environment for people infected with HIV.

#### Academic research and policy advocacy

Academic research and policy advocacy are one of the key strategies to promote gender equality. The Women and Gender Research Institution of *Zhongshan* University conducts gender research and provides legal services for female workers in factories and improve local policies by combining practice and study. Another institution strong on gender issues in China is the *Shan'xi* Women & Family Research Association. The Association conducted

programmes and action-research on rural women development, legal aid, domestic violence, and gender trainings. Capitalizing on fruitful gender work guidelines, the organisation helped lots of other NGOs to promote gender equality.

The Global Gender Gap Report of 2014 launched by the World Economic Forum shows that China ranked at 87th, a substantial improvement compared to previous years. This was a huge achievement that could not have been accomplished without the hard work provided by the NGOs in China, although there still is a long way to go. Only a limited number of NGOs work on gender equality, and Chinese Society as a whole is still very sensitive to gender equality in politics and gay and lesbian rights.

The UN and its members promised to achieve the MDGs by 2015, but obviously there still exist gaps. With the guidance of Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals on Gender Equality, NGOs in China will continue to work with the government and the private sector to achieve this goal. 

## Getting the Evidence: Asia Child Marriage Initiative

#### *Plan International in Asia*

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by 193 Heads of State and Government at the UN Summit in September 2015. The agenda sets 17 sustainable development goals which are expected to impact significantly on the actions of international development stakeholders for the next 15 years.

The 5th Goal, which states the intention of governments to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls, specifically targets Child Early and Forced Marriage as a significant barrier which needs to be overcome in order to ensure women and girls reach their full potential as valued members of society with equal status with men and boys.

Overall, the research revealed that females marry significantly younger than males in all three countries and that this pattern is rooted in rigid gender norms, including a highly gendered division of labour according to which men are the primary income earners, and women are assigned to household work and childcare. The research findings also confirmed that child marriage often occurs as a response of income poverty, which creates powerful and rational financial incentives for the early marriage of girls, particularly in contexts where there is the institution of dowry.

**ASIA CHILD MARRIAGE INITIATIVE**

**WHY DO GIRLS GET MARRIED AS CHILDREN?**

- BECAUSE OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION**  
 \*WOMEN ARE PREFERRED BECAUSE THEY ARE RESPECTFUL OF THEIR HUSBANDS.\*  
 IN PAKISTAN, 73.8% of respondents agreed that gender inequalities between girls and boys are a reason why the younger a girl is, the better her husband will be.  
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- BECAUSE OF MALE SEXUAL VIOLENCE**  
 Girls marry early because their families believe this PROTECTS GIRLS FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE and protects the family from stigma.  
 IN PAKISTAN, 49% of married daughters did not see any form of contraception.
- FOR ECONOMIC REASONS**  
 Parents can't afford to keep their daughters at home: MARRIAGES PROVIDE ECONOMIC SECURITY.  
 The older a girl is when she marries, the higher their dowry is to the parents.  
 IN INDONESIA, 48.5% of respondents agreed that there are challenges for girls to marrying under 18 years.
- BECAUSE OF THE LIMITS OF THE LAW**  
 Laws that protect girls from early marriage ARE NOT ENFORCED.  
 IN PAKISTAN, 78.8% of participants did not know the legal age for marriage.

**GET INVOLVED AND ACT NOW!**

- Increase communities' AWARENESS OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS
- Increase access to SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
- Support girls to get an EDUCATION and earn their own income
- DEMAND THAT GOVERNMENTS keep the age of legal marriage at 18 years and enforce laws that PROTECT CHILDREN

plan-international.org/acmi-report  
 ©Plan International

On the 10th of November 2015, Plan International in Asia launched its report on child marriage entitled *Getting the Evidence: Asia Child Marriage Initiative* which was conducted in 2014-2015 in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Indonesia. The research focused on exploring social attitudes, values and norms concerning child marriage, and identifying the structural and environmental factors which can influence them. In addition, the research informed the development of an index for measuring environmental factors associated with the acceptability of Child marriage which will be used to track progress and improve the effectiveness of our child marriage programming globally.

The research found that the number of years a girl spends in education is associated with her age of first marriage; girls who stay in school longer tend to marry later. Furthermore, male sexual violence and control of female sexuality underlie the practice of child marriage, whilst improved access to sexual and reproductive health rights reduce the child marriage acceptability.

The research found rates of child marriage of girls to be high across all 3 countries, particularly in Bangladesh; rates of marriage of boys were found to be highest in Pakistan.

In addition to providing in depth analysis of these structural factors, the report also provides detailed programmatic recommendations to be actioned at individual, family, community and institutional levels in order to address poverty and lack of opportunity, improve access to educations, promote community safety and address impunity for violence against women and girls, increase access to sexual reproductive rights and services, and strengthen laws and institutional frameworks to respond to child marriage. Finally the report provides suggestion for improved approaches to sensitization and messaging conducted by advocates campaigning against child marriage.



A summary of the research findings can be accessed through the link hereunder: <https://plan-international.org/getting-evidence-asia-child-marriage-initiative>

More comprehensive full report that includes detailed country profiles and primary data can be accessed through this link: <https://plan-international.org/asia-child-marriage-initiative-full-report>.

### Quotes from Research Participants

*"If a girl doesn't get married people will start to gossip about her. She will lose her reputation, and people will think she is having affairs. For a man it is less of an issue. He can remain single."*  
- 17 year-old girl, Bangladesh

*"Boys marry for young girl, sex, dowry and partner. Girls marry for shelter."*  
- Focus group/ participative group activity for children 12-14 years old, Bangladesh

*"I must choose a bride who is younger than me so that I can control her. Moreover, she will be able to satisfy my demands. If I marry an older woman, she will try to have authority over me, and might not satisfy me sexually."*  
- 17 year-old boy, Bangladesh

*"Marriages without the consent of the parents mostly happen when the girl and boy run away. But most of the time they either end up being captured by the police - and the girl handed over to the parents - or the girl is killed by the parents in the name of honour."*  
- Boys focus group discussion, 12-15 years of age, Pakistan

*"Better for the girl to marry the old man, because there is no guarantee she can survive or get a better life by leaving home"*  
- Focus group discussion, boys aged 15-18 years old, Indonesia.

*"There is a law on this matter, but there is no consequence for violating this law."*  
- Health worker, Indonesia

## How Girls' Enrolment in Preschools Paves the Future for Gender Equality

*Aide et Action Cambodia*



*Three preschool students from Toul Krang Preschool enjoying breakfast at school ©Aide et Action Cambodia*

As more children enrol in primary school, narrowing the gender gap, preschools play an increasingly vital role in preparing students for their education. iLEAD Preschools facilitate the transition of children into primary school and promote gender equality in rural Cambodian communities through a child-centred approach to early-childhood education.

Millennium Development Goal 3: "Promote gender equality and empower women" aimed to eliminate gender disparity in schools around the world by 2015. Education is considered as basic human right and also a cost-effective investment to boost a nation's economic growth. The social and economic benefits of education are well documented worldwide. Moreover, the education of girls and women is proven to have additional social benefits including reduced fertility and infant mortality rates, and increased awareness of nutrition and hygiene.

Within Cambodia there are 951,712 children aged 3-5 years old, the age at which children should be enrolled in Preschool (UNESCO Institute for Statistics). However, only 157,288 students are currently enrolled. “Parents are starting to become more aware on the importance of preschool for their child’s education.

They can see the improvement in the child over the weeks, and how it enables an easier transition into primary school. Students with preschool education are familiar with being in a class room environment and can make the transition between preschool and primary school much easier. Children without preschool education often struggle when they enter primary school because it is their first time stepping into a classroom,” stated Peter Downey, Aide et Action Programme Officer.

Aide et Action Cambodia (AEA) supports over 34 preschools in four provinces in Cambodia through its iLEAD Preschools project. Instructional materials and in-service teacher trainings are provided to teachers of all iLEAD Preschools. Maggie Morrison, Curriculum and Teaching Technical Adviser for AEA explained, “The iLEAD staff provides preschool teachers with training on student-centred instructional methods and classroom management techniques. These trainings give teachers practical tools that make them more confident and effective educators. . The materials they receive help them teach engaging lessons with simple and easy to use materials.”

The constraints imposed by traditional gender roles are deeply ingrained in the Cambodian society, especially in rural communities. It is not uncommon for a girl to have to stay at home and care for younger siblings, while her parents work, sacrificing her education. At the national level, Cambodia has 157,288 preschool

students, 48.1% (75,697) of which are female (MOYES 2013/14). Throughout the iLEAD Preschools 52.9% of the 1,002 students enrolled are female, as well as 33 of the 34 preschool teachers. The focus on enrolling girls and employing women in rural communities, makes iLEAD a source of empowerment through education. Securing the enrolment of children, especially girls, at a young age in schooling has long-term benefits. Students enrolled in early childhood education are more likely to stay in school and have higher academic achievements than students who start school in the first grade.

More girls are now in school compared to 15 years ago, and most regions have reached gender parity in primary education (UNDP). This is an encouraging step forward in the fight for gender equality. The more girls enrolled in school - more importantly, completing school - the better. The social and economic impact will come in time, but having girls enrolled in school is crucial for the development of small communities, like those with iLEAD-supported preschools. Through iLEAD projects, parents in the communities are educated on the importance of education, and especially girls’ education, said Marong Chhoeung, Programme Officer – Education, AEA Cambodia. 



## What's Up in EAP UNGEI?

### Highly Adaptable SRGBV Curriculum Resource Tool Soon To Come Our Way

Laura Devos, EAP UNGEI member

A tool for teachers delivering education programs in early secondary school is in its final stages, aiming to provide age-appropriate learning activities on important themes and concepts relating to the prevention of gender-based violence and the promotion of respectful relationships. Its introductory section serves as a reference tool to assist teachers and school leaders to better understand how to take a whole-school approach to the prevention of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV). Development of the Resource Tool was commissioned by the East Asia and Pacific United Nations Girls Education Initiative (EAP UNGEI), and is the result of a collaborative effort among partners in the regional UNGEI School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) working group. The tool was developed by the University of Melbourne in close collaboration with partners UNESCO, UNICEF, Plan International and UN Women.

Although designed for students between 11 and 14 years of age, the tool can be adapted for use with younger or older students. The resource includes: an introduction and guidance note to assist teachers in implementing the curriculum; and a programme of 31 lesson plans, additional out of class assignments and whole school actions. So far, selected lesson plans have been tested in Thailand, with resulting feedback informing improvements to the resource. Orientation meetings to familiarise key stakeholders to the curriculum resource, have so far been held in Fiji.

Currently the curriculum resource is undergoing final design and layout. The design will be simple, and allow for the tool to be a living document that can be updated in 2016, as it rolls out further in the region.

This is only the first important step in winning the case for education as a public good and making it part of adequately resourced national policies. There is commitment for 12 years of publicly funded primary and secondary education in the Declaration, but there are serious implications for the resources needed to make this a reality. The Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa in July and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Summit in September were crucial for securing the policy, political will and resource commitments that will determine whether education for all will be realized before the deadline of 2030.

## SRGBV tools orientation meeting in Fiji

Karen Humphries-Waa, UNESCO Bangkok

A three day meeting was held in Suva, Fiji, on the 3-5th November 2015, to orient key stakeholders to the UNESCO Global Guidance on SRGBV and the newly developed EAP-UNGEI SRGBV curriculum resource.

The meeting was attended by 35 attendees, including staff from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation; principals and teachers from primary and secondary schools; and representatives from teacher training institutions and the Women's Crisis Centre. Facilitated by Dr Helen Cahill of the University of Melbourne, in conjunction with Justine Sass from the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, the orientation utilized a participatory approach that enabled participants to sample different pedagogical activities and teaching methods outlined in the curriculum package, and to review the local evidence, policy context and curriculum as compared to the good practice outlined in the global guidance.



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The orientation was well-received by participants and officials working in curriculum development, for both primary and secondary levels, who expressed a keen interest in integrating lessons into the syllabus for Healthy Living and Family Life Education. Key to the success of the meeting was the adaptation the global guidance to the country context including ensuring participants were familiarized with relevant national policies, and entry points to advance action to ensure gender-responsive and safe spaces for all learners. In addition, the importance of convening representatives from a variety of sectors was highlighted as being of value by participants, as it provided different perspectives and further emphasized the importance of collaboration in promoting positive social norms. Outcomes from the Fiji meeting, and future meetings in other countries, will prove invaluable in informing revisions to the curriculum resource and training package. The next orientation meeting is planned to be held in Cambodia in early 2016.

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