Overview of UNGEI and Status of Gender in Education in the EAP Region

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Introduction to UNGEI

- Global UNGEI Movement
  - Background
  - History
  - Activities & Updates

- Regional UNGEI for East Asia and the Pacific
  - Background
  - Activities
UN Girls’ Education Initiative

- Launched in April 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar by UN- SG Kofi Annan.
- UNGEI provides stakeholders with a platform for action and galvanizes their efforts to get girls in school.
- Global Advisory Committee (GAC) founded in 2004
- UNICEF as lead agency and secretariat.
- UNGEI Focal Points in different regions facilitate the coordination of girls' education strategies and interventions at the country level.
- At country level, UNGEI supports country-led development, and with partners, mobilizes resources.
Global UNGEI Activities

- Global advocacy
- Training and capacity-building
- Resource mobilization, building partnerships
- Mainstreaming gender issues through the work of advocacy

Plus,

- At country and regional level, supporting formation of UNGEI networks
More children in school in Afghanistan

Afghanistan, 11 January 2010 - During the Taliban’s reign, fewer than one million children went to school in Afghanistan. Now about six million children are registered in schools and about one third of them are girls. Sida’s efforts in educating boys and girls in Afghanistan have delivered results.

More

Press releases

Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah’s assembly address at The Young Women’s Leadership Network School of East Harlem

Her Majesty Queen Rania and Ann M. Veneman, UNICEF Executive Director visit Girls’ School in East Harlem

More press releases

Multimedia

20 November 2009: Mothers campaign for girls’ education!

In the run-up to 20 November 2009, the 20th anniversary of the

Other news

Global: Online discussion on Gender equality, Education and Training - 10 January to 7 February

Benin: Mothers For Girls’ Education

Global: Thousands participate in Camfed’s film campaign on World AIDS Day

EAP Newsletter: “Gender Perspectives in Climate Change and Other Emergencies”

Sierra Leone: Girls’ Education Week helps girls recognize their potential in Sierra Leone
What is the Regional UNGEI?

• The Regional UNGEI of East Asia and the Pacific is a partnership of UN agencies, NGOs and academic bodies
• United by the common purpose:
  • To achieve the Education for All (EFA) goals
  • To eliminate gender disparity at all levels of education
  • To achieve gender equality in education
• Launched in May 2002
• At country level, UNGEI is active in Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and Viet Nam.
• Seeks to establish networks and partnerships among experts and organizations promoting education and gender rights
EAP UNGEI: Background

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONAL UNGEI

The Regional UNGEI for East Asia and the Pacific was launched in May 2002 and seeks to establish networks and partnerships among experts and organizations promoting education and gender rights. At country level, UNGEI is active in Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and Viet Nam.

The goal of the regional group is to ensure the availability of quality education for all girls across the region. It aims to strengthen existing programmes for girls’ education by ensuring that the national EFA plans will be gender responsive and that the implementation of the plans and monitoring systems put in place...
Networking of Networks

GENIA (UNESCO)

APYouthNet (ILO)

EFA (UNESCO)

HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

28 May 2009
UNGEI GAC, NYC
Who is in UNGEI?

- Baha’i International Community
- Education Development Center (EDC)
- International Labour Organization (ILO) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
- Plan Asia Regional Office
- Save the Children Southeast Asia and the Pacific Regional Office
- Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Secretariat
- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Regional Support Team, Asia Pacific
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education
- United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) East Asia and Pacific Regional Office
- World Vision Foundation of Thailand
How does UNGEI operate?

Through partnerships and networking UNGEI:

1. Places girls’ education on the agenda at meetings and events at all levels
2. Develops girls’ education advocacy tools
3. Shares best practices and information on girls’ education
4. Strengthens linkages with other groups and networks working for education and gender issues
Regional UNGEI Activities

Bi-monthly meetings, newsletters focused on a theme

In 2009, the Regional UNGEI activities consisted of three focus areas, which are:

- Gender in education advocacy: Enhancing and strengthening regional advocacy strategies;
- Knowledge generation: undertaking innovative research on issues of gender in education; and
- Knowledge management: strengthening the EAP UNGEI communication functions to better serve in sharing resources and information and in facilitating communication between and amongst national, regional and global networks and partners.
Notable Achievements

- 2010: Progress Note and Snapshot of Gender Equality in Education: EAP
- Evidence-based Advocacy for Gender and Education Workshop, Sept 8-11 in Bangkok, Thailand: UNICEF and UNGEI; An advocacy learning guide is under preparation
- Key Publication in 2009: Making Education Work: The Gender Dimension of the School to Work Transition In East Asia and the Pacific, Case Studies
- Producing advocacy and policy briefs on gender issues in education, by UNESCO and the regional UNGEI group
- Issuance of statements at key events, participation in platforms and regional fora
Gender Equality in Education
East Asia and Pacific

Snapshot

Education for All Mid-Decade Assessment

Gender Equality in Education
East Asia and Pacific

Progress Note
School to Work - extensions

- Presented at UNESCO Gender Research and Studies Network Conference & ILO Regional Office
- Reprinted in the Commonwealth Education Partnerships 2009
- Country research planned in the Philippines
It is important to move beyond gender parity (numerical parity) and plan for, implement, monitor and continuously improve progress towards gender equality.

Gender responsiveness in ALL aspects of programme cycles in education will ensure greater impact on other aspects of development including economic and social development.

Systematic investigation of barriers to education that exist for both boys and girls in the region. In primary education, in countries where gender parity goals have not been met by 2005, girls continue to be disadvantaged. However, in secondary and tertiary education boys are disadvantaged in many countries (eg Philippines, Mongolia and Malaysia) while girls continue to be disadvantaged in some others (eg Cambodia, Lao and Vietnam). Understanding specific and unique conditions that contribute to these barriers may in fact, promote better outcomes for both sexes.

Disaggregation of data by gender, location and residence, ethnicity status and other factors of disadvantage may unmask and unpackage some of the key gender-based factors underlying disparities in data.

There is an urgent need for increased capacity-building in the form of increased evidence-based advocacy initiatives, gender training, evidence-building and ensuring gender-responsive strategies in educational planning.

BOTTOM LINE: Investment in gender responsiveness in education can serve as a pathway to attain multiple goals for development.
What to expect in this presentation

A review of....

• Why Gender in Education?
• Overall progress of gender in education in EAP
• Remaining challenges for preprimary, primary and secondary education
• Moving beyond gender parity towards gender equality in education
Why gender in education?

Research shows...

- Education of is a significant step on the road to breaking the cycle of poverty.
- Investing in girls’ education delivers well-known returns - increased likelihood of higher wages, better jobs, fewer and healthier children.
- In emerging markets in South East Asia, young women with secondary education form an important pool of labour, particularly as workers in call centres (Moore, 2002).
- Plan International (2009 Because I am a Girl report) argues that OECD statistics reveal that “countries with the lowest number of girls in education lie at the bottom of the human development tables.” (.9 Executive Summary).
Significant progress made for gender responsiveness in Education

- Most countries have reached or are on track for MDG2

- De Jure gender equality widespread across the region: EFA, CRC, CEDAW, commitments from MDGs, Beijing, Dakar

- Many more girls in school today, and the Gender Parity Index (GPI) increasingly favors girls.

- Ex) Cambodia made significant strides between 1999 and 2005 in closing the gap

Yet, daunting challenges remain at all levels of education ...
Pre-primary Education: disadvantages of both girls AND boys

GPI for gross enrolment ratio in Pre-Primary Education

Source: EFA GMR 2008
Primary Education: significant gaps remain for some countries

GPI for gross enrolment ratio in Primary Education

Source: EFA GMR 2008
Primary Education (cont): national aggregates mask sub-national disparities

GPI for net enrolment ratio in Primary Education

Source: National EFA MDA Reports
Secondary Education: Again, disadvantages of both girls and boys

GPI in gross enrolment ratio in Secondary Education (2005)

Source: EFA GMR 2008
How disaggregation by gender helps further our understandings: Poverty and Gender in Education

Poverty is often a key factor in girls’ and boys’ school attendance.

- **Mongolia:** Boys often drop out of school to contribute to household incomes by working with livestock.
- **Thailand:** Boys’ attendance is a problem in middle-income families, which raises questions regarding the circumstances that create this condition.
- **Viet Nam:** Girls’ enrolment and attendance is lower proportionally than that of boys, poverty does seem to be a factor given the gap at the lowest income quintiles.
What about quality and learning outcomes?

• High drop out rate among girls in some countries and boys in others
• Multiple disparities, issues of exclusion and inequities
• Gains in terms of gender parity are not necessarily translating into equality in education outcomes.
  ▫ Gender differences related to LFPRs and chosen fields of study.
  ▫ Women’s participation in science and engineering continue to be low across the region.
  ▫ In many of the countries of the region, the teaching profession is highly feminized, particularly at the lower education levels.
• Progress threatened by rising conflict, economic crisis
Percentage share of women in non-agricultural wage employment: 1990 and 2005

Source: MDG Report 2007
Disparities in the presence of male and female teachers

Pre-Primary Education

Source: EFA GMR 2008
Conclusions

- Education enrollments have increased and de jure gender equality exists in the region.
- For sustainable social and economic development, ensuring and *progressing beyond gender parity towards gender equality* is a critical next step.
- Gender equality can be achieved through parity *within* the quality of education received, as well as *through* education, outside the formal school context.
- *Disaggregation of data by gender, poverty level* etc can enhance our understandings of those boys and girls that slip through the cracks of education.
- *Qualitative and quantitative research* can inform and guide understandings and policies for disadvantaged groups.
Recommendations

• Multiple levels of Bias: Disaggregation, qualitative research, proactive schools

• Closing the gender gap against boys: Strengthen monitoring, qualitative research, revise curricula, increase advocacy and re-examine corporal punishment

• Bridging the gender divide in fields of study: research, counselling and guidance, gender—responsive education management, review staff development and training, incentives for women’s tertiary education enrollment

• BOTTOM LINE: Investment in gender responsiveness in education can serve as a pathway to attain multiple goals for development
Thank You