

**“Equity, Gender and Quality in Education in Asia-Pacific”  
Asia-Pacific Technical Meeting of UNGEI Global Advisory Committee  
9 – 13 June 2008, Kathmandu, Nepal  
Concept Note**

The goal of the UN Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) is to narrow the gender gap in primary and secondary education and to ensure that, by 2015, all children complete primary schooling, with girls and boys having equal access to all levels of education. Having made notable progress at global level, the decision of UNGEI’s Global Advisory Committee (GAC) to focus on the regional and country levels will help boost current efforts towards gender equality in education and beyond in a designated region. The GAC holds two meetings annually as follows: one in conjunction with key global EFA meetings such as the Working Group on EFA with the objective of feeding policy recommendations into EFA processes; and the other meeting at regional level to harness knowledge-sharing on themes related to access, equity and quality of gender in education as well as to strengthen UNGEI’s network and impact at the regional and country levels. Having GAC meetings at the regional level also helps to assess the effectiveness of UNGEI in regions and countries and to sharpen GAC’s strategic role at the global level.

The choice of the Asia-Pacific region for the first regional-level GAC meeting not only recognizes the tremendous strides have been made there towards ensuring a quality education for all children, but also acknowledges a persistent gender gap in educational enrollment, retention and performance in a number of areas, as well as inequalities in the teaching and learning process and in education outcomes.

The meeting has two general objectives:

- To accelerate the sharing of knowledge and experience related to gender in education among UNGEI partners and across regions through in-depth technical discussions and field visits (GAC members only), and
- To strengthen regional- and country-level UNGEI networks, activities and impact through interaction with regional UNGEI partners, as well as through advocacy for stakeholders including education and other ministry officials and civil society.

Theme:

The technical meeting will focus on teaching and learning processes, and education and learning outcomes. In spite of their importance, these are areas that lack information and therefore call for knowledge and experience sharing. The overall theme of the meeting is Equity, Gender and Quality.

Dates, Venue and Meeting Modality

The meeting will take place during the week of 8 June 2008 in Kathmandu. It will consist of a two-day optional field visit for GAC members and members of the media (by invitation only), a two-day technical meeting and a one-day GAC business meeting ((by invitation only).

Participants:

In addition to GAC members, also invited to participate are regional- and country-level UNGEI partners, country gender focal points, government officials, members of CSOs including representatives of women’s networks, donors based in Kathmandu and involved in the education sector in the region, and a limited number of academicians. In order to facilitate meaningful discussions, the total number of participants will be limited to 100. Participation by countries where UNGEI is active will be given priority. See Annex B for further details on participants.

Technical Paper(s):

A technical paper has been commissioned as the basis for discussion during the technical meeting and will be posted on the meeting web page. In addition, UNGEI partners from the region may choose to commission technical papers to supplement the background paper.

Communication:

One of UNGEI's greatest strengths at global level is its ability to disseminate knowledge on gender and education through its various partner organizations and its web site [www.ungei.org](http://www.ungei.org). This meeting will benefit from these resources and will seek maximum networking and visibility around gender and education issues of importance to the Asia-Pacific region. A global eDiscussion focusing on the Technical meeting theme will feed into the meeting's proceedings. Web coverage will include stories and features leading up to, during and after the meeting. Press materials will be developed in coordination with the Global Secretariat and country focal points. Time will be devoted during the meeting to highlight GAC partner activities through multimedia features. Stories will be generated from the associated field trips for the UNGEI website and proposed to international and national media. Regional and national media attention to the technical issues discussed will be actively sought through UNGEI Communication Focal Points.

Budget:

The UNGEI Secretariat has allocated a budget for this meeting, notably for the development of the background paper and the administrative costs. Participants' organizations will cover the cost of their travel; regional and country UNGEI partners should be solicited directly for support to country participants' travel costs, as necessary.

Ongoing Planning:

The GAC tasked development of the initial concept for this meeting to a working group made up of the UNGEI Regional Focal Points from South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific, ASPBAE and the Commonwealth Secretariat, with support from the Global UNGEI Secretariat. Given the regional theme of the meeting, the importance of regional ownership and logistical difficulties posed by the Global Secretariat's location in New York, an Advisory Group will facilitate the ongoing planning of the meeting. The Regional UNGEI Secretariat (UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia) will represent the Global Secretariat in all planning sessions. Communication through email and teleconferencing will replace the physical presence of Advisory Group members not resident in Kathmandu. See the annex for the composition of the Advisory Group.

*For further information, contact:*

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*or*

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**Annex****Members of Kathmandu-based Advisory Group**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Mr. Manoj Subedi	National Planning Commission
Mr. Deepak Kharel	Ministry of Finance
	Ministry of Women & Children
Mr. Jeevan Ram Bhattarai	Social Welfare Council
Mr. Surya Nath Koirala	Ministry of Local Development
Ms. Usha Dixit	Department of Education
Mr. Lava Deo Awasthi	Ministry of Education & Sports
Mr. Narayan Shrestha	Ministry of Education & Sports
Mr. Indra Kunwar	Ministry of Education & Sports
Ms. Renuka Pandey	Ministry of Education & Sports
Mr. Peter Reid	Ministry of Education & Sports
Ms. Gita Bharati	Ministry of Education & Sports
Mr. Tap Raj Pant	UNESCO
Mr. Udhav Poudyal	ILO
Ms. Bilan Osmanjama	WFP
Ms. Pramila Ghimire	WFP
Ms. Sudha Pant	UNFPA
Ms. Priyanka Bhalla	UNFPA
Ms. Mera Thompson	USAID
Ms. Sita Ghimire	AIN
Ms. Elin Gjrdrem	Royal Norwegian Embassy
Ms. Halima Begum	DFID
Mr. Ove Fritz Larsen	Royal Danish Embassy
Mr. Shiva Bhusal	Royal Danish Embassy
Mr. Mohan Aryal	World Bank
Mr. Rajendra Dhoj Joshi	World Bank
Ms. Raka Rashid	UNGEI Regional Secretariat, UNICEF ROSA

Ms. Linda Jones	UNICEF Nepal Country Office
Ms. Sumon Tuladhar	UNICEF Nepal Country Office
Ms. Cheryl Gregory Faye	UNGEI Global Secretariat, UNICEF NYHQ
Ms. Mita Gupta	UNGEI Regional Secretariat, UNICEF EAPRO
Ms. Susan Durston	UNICEF ROSA
Mr. Samphe Lhalungpa	UNICEF India