



World Education Forum 2015

19-22 May, Incheon, Republic of Korea

Draft Concept Note – 9 February 2015

1. Introduction

2015 is the target date for reaching the Education for All goals and the education-related Millennium Development Goals. In April 2000, the participants of the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, adopted the Dakar Framework for Action “Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitment”¹. They reaffirmed the vision of the World Declaration on Education for All² adopted ten years earlier (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990) and committed to the attainment of six goals, supported by 12 strategies, in order to meet the basic learning needs of all children, youth and adults. In September 2000, world leaders came together at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to adopt the UN Millennium Declaration, committing to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of targets that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and included two goals related to universal primary education and to gender equality in education, acknowledging the pivotal role of education in human development.

Today, it is widely recognized that the Education for All (EFA) agenda and the related MDGs have led to significant advances for the right to education. The mobilization and investment which they triggered since their establishment yielded unprecedented progress, notably with regards to access to formal schooling and to gender parity in primary education. However, major education issues are persisting in all countries and regions of the world. Some of them - notably equity, quality and learning opportunities for youth and adults - have still not received the attention they deserve and new ones have emerged since 2000, such as the need to improve the development of skills for life and for work, for all age groups.

For these reasons, national governments and other stakeholders have mandated UNESCO since 2011 to “initiate deliberations with Member States on the EFA objectives to be defined for the post-2015 period”³. These broad-based and inclusive consultations, which included the UN Thematic consultation on Education in the post-2015 development agenda co-led by UNESCO and UNICEF, were notably conducted through the existing EFA coordination mechanisms at sub-regional, regional and global levels. They culminated in the Muscat Agreement, adopted at the 2014 Global EFA Meeting in Oman and representing a shared vision of the global community of education for the future.

¹ [Dakar Framework for Action “Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitment”](#), UNESCO 2000

² [World Declaration on Education for All](#), UNESCO 1990

³ [Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its 186th Session](#), Item 6. II - Progress and challenges in achieving the education for all (EFA) goals by 2015, UNESCO, June 2011

This important agreement informed the standalone goal and targets on education proposed by the UN Open Working Group and decided by the UN General Assembly as the basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda. The UN Secretary-General's Synthesis report on the post 2015 sustainable development agenda proposes one universal and transformative agenda for sustainable development, underpinned by rights, that is people-centred and planet-sensitive.

UNESCO, jointly with UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and the World Bank Group as co-conveners, is inviting world leaders in education, and key stakeholders to a milestone event, the **World Education Forum (WEF) 2015**. The Forum, to be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea, will be held from 19 to 22 May 2015 in the city of Incheon.

The WEF's outcome will be fully aligned to the education goal and targets of the global development agenda to be adopted at the UN High-Level Summit in September 2015, so as to have one single education agenda for 2015-2030. This requires continued strong engagement and support of governments and all other education partners to ensure that the future education agenda is holistic and transformative and that its targets are achievable and measurable.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the WEF 2015 are to

1. Take stock of achievements and shortfalls in the implementation of the Dakar Framework for Action and the education-related MDGs during the period 2000-2015
2. Agree on a joint position for the education goal and targets in the post-2015 development agenda, which will be adopted by UN Member States at a Summit in September 2015
3. Agree on a comprehensive Framework for Action to guide and support the implementation of the future education agenda.

3. Preparations

Preparations for the WEF 2015 are being conducted by UNESCO in close collaboration with Member States and all partners – notably the EFA co-convening agencies – through the EFA Steering Committee⁴.

The NGO Forum to be held on 18 and 19 May 2015, just prior to the main event, is organized in close collaboration with the Coordination Group of UNESCO's Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA (CCNGO/EFA).

A Joint UNESCO-Republic of Korea Preparatory Committee ensures effective communication and coordination during the preparatory process, in particular with regard to logistical arrangements.

3.1. EFA 2015 Reviews

The WEF 2015 will be informed by the reports of the *National EFA 2015 Reviews* which over 120 countries have already undertaken since July 2013 in order to assess their progress towards achieving

⁴ The EFA Steering Committee is composed of Member States representing all six regional groups of UNESCO, the E-9 initiative, and the host country of the WEF 2015; and representatives of the five EFA convening agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP and the World Bank); the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Global Partnership for Education, civil society, the teaching profession and the private sector.

EFA and to identify priorities for advancing the transformation of national education systems in order to better contribute to equitable and sustainable development in diverse contexts and in view of emerging new challenges. Regional review reports analyse the key findings of the national reports, and a global synthesis will be presented to the WEF.

3.2. Preparatory Meetings

In the run-up to the Forum, Regional Ministerial Preparatory Conferences have taken place in each region, as well as for the E-9 countries, as follows:

- Asia-Pacific: 6-8 August, Bangkok, Thailand
- Latin America and the Caribbean: 30-31 October 2014, Lima, Peru
- Tenth E-9 Ministerial Meeting: 27-28 November 2014, Islamabad, Pakistan
- Arab Region: 27-29 January 2015, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt
- Africa: 9-11 February 2015, Kigali, Rwanda
- Europe and North America: 19-20 February 2015, Paris, France

These conferences provided regional perspectives and recommendations for education beyond 2015 and contribute to the elaboration of the Framework for Action.

The World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) held in Nagoya, Japan, from 10 to 12 November 2014, was another important milestone on the road to the WEF which highlighted the importance of including ESD in the post-2015 development agenda.

3.3 Development of the Framework for Action

A Framework for Action is being prepared by the EFA Steering Committee, to be agreed upon at the WEF 2015, and which will guide and support the implementation of the future global education agenda. It will define the coordination and monitoring mechanisms related to the post-2015 education agenda at global and regional levels as well as mechanisms related to partnerships, financing and governance and accountability. The development of the Framework is based on discussions at the regional conferences and other consultations with Member States and stakeholders.

3.4 Documents

The main documents for the WEF 2015 will be the following:

- Provisional Programme
- 2015 EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR)
- Global Synthesis of the National EFA 2015 Review Reports
- Draft Framework for Action
- Recommendations from the Regional Ministerial Preparatory Conferences (5 Statements) and from the E-9 Conference
- Rethinking Education in a Changing World – a UNESCO Report.

Further technical and other reference documents include, among others:

- Indicators for the post-2015 agenda and monitoring process
- 5 Regional Synthesis reports on EFA 2015 reviews and the E-9 Synthesis Report (in the languages in which they were published)
- Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development.

4. Participants

Around 1,500 participants will be invited, including global leaders in education, policy makers and representatives of civil society, UN agencies, multilateral and regional organizations, the teaching profession, youth, the private sector, the media and experts.

5. Format and Programme

The WEF 2015 will provide multiple spaces for discussion and interaction through a combination of plenary and parallel group sessions, panel debates and side events on issues related to the post-2015 education agenda and its implementation.

In all sessions, time for introductory presentations will be limited so as to maximise time for debate. Speakers' lists will be established during the WEF to facilitate the participants' interventions during the plenary session debates.

The Working Languages for the Plenary Sessions and Panel debates are English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Korean. For parallel sessions and side events, interpretation will be arranged in as many languages as possible.

The Opening Ceremony will take place in the afternoon of 19 May and the Closing Ceremony in the afternoon of 21 May.

A Drafting Group will be established, drawing largely on the representation in the EFA Steering Committee, and meet throughout the WEF 2015 duration to prepare a Declaration on education post-2015 and to finalize the Framework for Action, based on the discussions in the plenary, panel and parallel group sessions.

Programme Overview

	Pre-WEF Mon 18 May		Day 1 Tue 19 May		Day 2 Wed 20 May	Day 3 Thu 21 May	Day 4 Fri 22 May
Morning	NGO Forum (Day 1)	Side events	NGO Forum (Day2)	Side events	Plenary Session 2	Plenary Session 4	Study Visits to Korean institutions
					Thematic Panel Debates (6 in parallel)	Parallel Group Sessions 2 (10 groups)	
Lunch					Lunch time Side-events	Lunch time Side-events	
Afternoon	NGO Forum (Day 1)	Side events	Opening Ceremony		Parallel Group Sessions 1 (10 groups)	Plenary Session 5	Departure of participants
						High-Level Statements: Special Commitments for Education 2015-2030	
			Plenary Session 1	Plenary Session 3	Closing Ceremony		

6. Side Events and Study Visits

Side events will include, on 18 and 19 May in the morning, a global NGO Forum convened by UNESCO and pre-conference side events organized by the Republic of Korea.

The WEF 2015 will feature possibilities for stakeholders and partners (registered conference participants only) to organise further side events during the lunch breaks on 20 and 21 May for which guidelines and a call for proposals will be circulated.

A series of visits to discover the host country's education system as well as a glimpse of the Korean culture will be organized by the local authorities for participants on 22 May.

7. Exhibition

UNESCO and the host government will present exhibitions on Education for All and on the Republic of Korea's education system.

In addition, a booth display will be set up during the WEF 2015 where participants can reserve a stand to present initiatives or documents and publications.