



Meeting of the Coordination Group
UNESCO Paris, 17 and 18 July 2006

Report presented by Monique FOUILHOUX on 21 July 2006

Ladies, Gentlemen,

The CCNGO/EFA is a thematic collective mechanism of UNESCO provided for in the Directives which rule the Organisation's relations with NGOs.

Established since many years, shortly after Jomtien, this grouping aims at facilitating the collective expression of, and cooperation among, NGOs as well as their participation in the follow-up and evaluation of the EFA goals. After the Dakar Forum, its composition was revised and its functioning revitalised in order to better reflect the diversity of the NGO community and to better integrate the national and regional levels.

Initially intended to meet annually, (this periodicity could not be kept, principally for financial reasons), the CCNGO has held its last meeting in Beirut in December 2004.

In between meetings, an elected coordination group, comprising 7 members of which 4 are regional focal points designated by the regional NGO federations, ensure the follow-up of recommendations and the implementation of the activities decided in the framework of the work plan. This group also sees and contributes to the fact that the collective voice of the CCNGO/EFA is heard in a certain number of places, meetings and conferences, such as this one.

Our group met on 17 and 18 July here in Paris. It prepared comments on the GAP (Global Action Plan for EFA) which were presented here by my colleague Gorgui Sow during the GAP session, I therefore won't repeat them.

We centred our work on:

- ◆ A stock-taking of activities undertaken since Beirut
- ◆ The preparation of a work plan for the coming 18 months.

1. Stock-taking of activities

- ◆ Reports from the Focal Points: We stated that multiple activities had been undertaken and we particularly welcomed the tangible progress accomplished in terms of mobilisation and better organisation of civil society at the national and regional levels. We also noted the remarkable dynamism of the Arab region since Beirut. This should however not hide the fact that much remains to be done with regards to putting in place spaces for dialogue and real cooperation with governments and other EFA partners, as we note that all too often NGOs are still

consulted for the *implementation* of policies or activities but they are not always invited as partners in the *formulation* of policies.

- ◆ Another issue of satisfaction is the reinforced cooperation between the networks of Asia, Africa and Latin America thanks to the capacity-building project « Real World Strategies » financed by the Netherlands. This is complementary to the IE project implemented in 21 countries and which integrates EFA and HIV/AIDS.

2. Adoption of a work plan for the coming 18 months

- ◆ Undertake a series of studies to measure the level and quality of participation of civil society in national EFA processes and the development of educational policies in order to identify in particular which are the determining factors for real partnership and which the main obstacles are. This will be one of the contributions of the CCNGO/EFA to the Global Monitoring Report 2008 and to the Review and Stocktaking of EFA progress (RASEP) which we discussed here this morning. This contribution is one aspect and we sincerely hope that NGOs and civil society partners will be fully integrated into the different processes of progress assessment at national and regional levels.
- ◆ Participation in the *EFA Roundtable* of the NGO Committee of UNESCO's Executive Board, at its 175th session (28 September 2006)
- ◆ Preparation of two or three activities (roundtables or workshops) in the framework of the Nairobi World Social Forum (January 2007)
- ◆ Preparation of the next CCNGO/EFA Conférence which is scheduled to be held in Dakar, Senegal, in connection with Global Action Week end of April 2007. I would like to thank the Director of BREDa for her rapid and favourable reaction to our proposal. Among the conference themes will be, among others, an assessment of the capacity-building activities conducted in the different regions.
- ◆ Improvement of the communication between all participants of the network, the Coordination Group and UNESCO via a new EFA Website and online fora; publication of a brochure to promote the CCNGO/EFA and its work.

3. Meeting with the Director of the Division

During this meeting, we expressed our concerns, principally on two aspects of the reform of the education sector of UNESCO about which we were informed:

- EFA. It appears to us that the priority of EFA is not rightly reflected in the fact that it is only considered as a "Decade".
- Literacy. The dispersal between the follow-up of the literacy Decade in one division, formal literacy in another division and literacy and non-formal education and substance questions with UIL in Hamburg seems to us to be prejudicial to a good coordination of this important issue.

Finally, I would like to share with you a concern we had earlier this week when looking at the programme of this meeting, and which is reinforced now towards its end: it is the almost complete absence in the different sessions, of the Latin American region. This region is certainly penalised by the absence of interpretation, but behind the language, you will agree with me, there is more to it. Holding a meeting of this kind without the contribution of Latin America is unthinkable. UNESCO and this is in its honour, is the champion of cultural diversity and the diversity of cultural expressions. In the future, more attention must in our view be given to this question in order to preserve the indispensable balance between regions.

I want to conclude however on a positive note:

We want to remain confident and hope that the partnership between UNESCO and the CCNGO/EFA will further develop and that UNESCO will fully take it into account in its Draft Medium-Term Strategy which it is currently elaborating.

Thank you.