

## Education for All Working Group, Third Meeting

### **Group 1: Sustainable political commitment, with particular attention to advocacy and communication**

Question 1 (Principal obstacles at national level to increasing political commitment and how to overcome them):

*Issue of inclusion of CSOs and NGOs, getting governments to accept them as full-fledged partners:*

- Example Caribbean: Inter-sectoral EFA bodies at regional and national level include civil society organisations;
- Example Chile: National EFA efforts (e.g. Working Group on EFA) suffer from lack of participation; “usually, reform processes are always top-down”; need to involve teachers, parents, MOE officials to sustain commitment over time and for strategies to succeed
- Civil society must have a say in decision making by government, participate at the highest political level

*Disabled people in EFA:*

- The disabled community has a lot of relevant but un-tapped knowledge and experience; “we are ripe for involvement in EFA”;
- Governments and media tend to ignore disabled
- Disabled people need to be represented at all political levels, up to the highest level
- Need to adapt EFA policies to needs of different groups based on consultations with all groups, “one policy doesn’t fit everyone”

Need for EFA planning, funding, mobilisation also at *sub-national level* (e.g. under decentralisation, in countries with federal structure like Nigeria);

Need to *mobilise for EFA also within donor countries*, not only developing countries; very low awareness of EFA amongst general public in these countries!

*The role of national EFA Fora/Committees:*

- Need to be as inclusive as possible of all stakeholders, target groups, constituencies in EFA (including CSOs/NGOs, representatives of disabled community, etc.);
- Involve these stakeholders as early on as possible in the EFA process.

Question 2 (how can ministries join forces for EFA):

Difficulty of coordinating and mobilising across different ministries with a stake in EFA (e.g. MOE, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance) or different ministries in charge of different ED levels (Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, Ministry of Labour): Lack of relevant legislation to facilitate this; Efforts need to be supported by strong political will; Use of consultative/coordinating committees at

different levels to enhance coordination; Positive experience with programme for mobilisation of Parliamentarians (Africa)

Question 3 (relevance of existing and possible other advocacy tools):

*Getting newspapers/their publishers involved in EFA:*

- Issue: Newspapers do carry stories about education but not under the heading of EFA; are mostly interested in emergencies, presenting what goes wrong
- Positive example Nigeria: During EFA week, six Dakar goals published in newspapers in local languages – positive feedback!
- Positive example: “Newspapers in Education”(newspapers distributed as supplementary learning/reading materials to schools);
- Positive example: Raising the status of reporting on education (train/encourage journalists reporting on ED who are usually not top level)

*Importance of tailoring messages to different target audiences:* no (stereotype, boring!) UN language; present the same message in different versions for different target audiences (e.g. develop different versions of the EFA website for students, teachers); develop messages for use through specific means of communication (e.g. rural radio – “the ideal means to reach the common man”, Education/Communication/Information materials)

*Need for right “packaging”:* EFA as a topic not of interest (to newspapers), but literacy is; EFA stories need to be presented with a human face, with easy-to-grasp information and data; no abstract but accessible messages; no bombarding of media with press releases and huge reports; tie EFA into larger political context and to current political topics to make it more attractive to the media (example: EFA in the context of globalisation)

*Develop advocacy tools to reach those not reached by current tools:* people with no access to internet, disabled people, people not interested in/able to read publications like the Monitoring Report; Current tools address mostly the higher administrative/political level (and preach to the converted) – need to develop additional tools to reach lower levels!

*EFA week:* Need for earlier notification of all concerned partners to allow for better preparation and avoid duplication (example: 2 EFA weeks in Nigeria!)

*Monitoring Report:* Need to monitor EFA achievements by social group, including breakdown for disabled people!

*Get inspiration from other successful publicity campaigns* (e.g. Rights of the Child): posters for schools; bookmarks with the EFA logo; get MOE’s to put EFA logo on their ED materials; develop prototype EFA materials for use by students, teachers;

Use *UNESCO Clubs and Associated Schools* Network for dissemination of EFA messages!

*EFA as political topic, but not to be politicised (EFA to be non-partisan):* Importance of raising public awareness, building a broad public basis for EFA by mobilising interest of all sectors, sustaining interest in EFA over time (example: Escuela Nueva), make it less dependent on support of specific political groups – EFA needs long-term commitments (not fluctuating, short-term political will)! BUT also: importance of making EFA part of a political debate!