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**Sixth Regional Conference  
of Ministers of Education  
and those Responsible  
for Economic Planning in Asia  
and the Pacific**

**Organized by UNESCO  
with the co-operation of ESCAP**

**Kuala Lumpur, 21-24 June 1993**

**Final Report**

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

### I. Education for All

A. The Conference recommends that Member States renew their commitment to EFA goals and further strengthen EFA programmes and continue to make use of the Asia Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL), with an emphasis on:

1. more effective programme monitoring and assessment as a means of improving learning achievement with a view to reporting in 1995 on the progress towards EFA 2000 goals;
2. strengthening staff support and professional development for decentralized planning and management of EFA programmes;
3. improving the data base on which EFA-related decisions are made and its reliability;
4. reinforced community and parental support for basic education by means of a strengthened partnership with the media, NGOs, and other relevant Ministries; and
5. greater involvement of women as experts and resource persons in EFA programmes.

B. The Conference recommends to UNESCO that:

6. APPEAL be strengthened in order to better fulfil the objectives of the programme, giving due consideration to the specific needs and expectations of the Member States and field offices of the region, and serving as a vehicle for expanding the provision of quality basic education for all in the region;
7. further decentralization of EFA funds to PROAP, APIA and other field offices be foreseen in 27C/5 with particular reference to target countries in the region (large countries, small island States and least developed countries);
8. efforts to obtain multi- and bilateral financial support for EFA programmes be strengthened for the forthcoming biennium and through the remainder of the decade;
9. partnerships with UNESCO National Commissions as well as national mechanisms and institutions of relevance to EFA's goals be promoted;

10. programmes to support the involvement of the media and other social service sectors in parental and community support for basic education be foreseen in the approved work plan of the Organization for 1994-1995;
11. continued vigorous support be given to reinforce national efforts on behalf of girls and women as well as to minorities, refugees, the disabled, children of the border areas where there is a mingling of cultures, languages and traditions, the urban poor and other disadvantaged groups;
12. APPEAL's efforts for the improvement of curriculum, learning materials and training of personnel of EFA including literacy and continuing education be strengthened; and
13. support be given to the priority efforts of the government of Bangladesh in the eradication of illiteracy and in their establishment of a Centre for Non-Formal Education, which would promote exchange of experiences among countries of the region.

## **II. Education for Women and Girls**

The Conference recommends that Member States commit themselves to the:

14. development of targeted action plans to increase access of girls and women to education at all levels;
15. development of educational contents, materials, and methods in both formal and non-formal systems, that take into account the unique needs and problems of women and girl learners and introduce changes which will contribute to their equal participation in all aspects of learning;
16. priority placement of education programmes for girls and women, as well as training on gender issues for those in education, within the framework of national development plans which reflect an adequate analysis of the social and educational situation of girls and women; and
17. establishment of monitoring systems to prepare a progress report on women's education to the International Forum of Education for A11 and the United Nations World Conference on Women in 1995.

## **III. Quality and Relevance of Education**

### **A. Educational Research and Innovation for Development**

The Conference recommends that, in order to strengthen its recognized mandate, the programmes and activities of the Asia and Pacific Programme of Education Innovation for Development (APEID):

18. continue to focus on multi-disciplinarity and educational innovation and research in curriculum, educational management, delivery systems, evaluation, teaching materials and methodologies, with emphasis on development materials for the teaching of thinking skills, educational technology, distance education and teacher education;
19. focus on the problem of developing normative and culture-specific life quality indicators with special attention being paid to the environment, population health/nutrition, AIDS and drugs education; and
20. support programmes for the development of entrepreneurial and leadership skills in children with due regard for the need for a balance with promoting attitudes which reflect a concern for the environment, the community and international understanding.

Further recommends that UNESCO encourage Member States:

21. to support the 1974 Recommendation on International Understanding and Peace and the Associated Schools project, in order to foster humanistic, ethical/moral and cultural values and international education for peace;
22. to make more systematic reviews and evaluations of the APEID-related programmes of National Development Groups (NDGs) and Associated Centres (ACs);
23. to increase technical support and voluntary financial contributions to APEID to enable it to respond to Member States requests for assistance in educational innovation and research for development.

B. Education for the World of Work

The Conference recommends that UNESCO encourage Member States to:

24. promote stronger links between general education and technical vocational education, and between technical vocational education and industry, agriculture and other fields, both within each country and across the Region in application of the Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education and the Convention on Technical and Vocational Education;
25. promote the mutual recognition of qualifications in co-operation with industry;
26. support the co-operative development of curricula and learning materials in technical and vocational education subjects;
27. support the cooperative development of curricula which link science, humanities, and cultural and traditional values to the world of work in *each Member State*;

28. develop appropriate credit transfer, twinning arrangements, articulation and recognition, procedures within and outside the Region; and
29. exploit open learning approaches to deliver TVE programmes to areas for which access is currently difficult.

Further recommends that Major Programme Area I continue to accord a high priority and appropriate resources to education for the world of work and technical and vocational education in general, and to UNEVOC in particular, with a view to:

30. effectively mobilizing APEID, its associated centres, and the technical and vocational unit at PROAP for programme coordination to assist institutions, organizations and statutory bodies involved in technical and vocational education;
31. supporting cooperative regional projects to develop technical and vocational educational programmes that integrate school and work experiences in the curriculum; and
32. developing cooperative regional projects to promote learning for the work place, and in conjunction with the Associated Centres network, support the UNEVOC project within the region.

#### C. Teacher Education

The Conference recommends to the Director-General that UNESCO provide technical advice and other forms of assistance to member countries to:

33. strengthen and upgrade their systems of teacher education at both the pre service and in-service levels;
34. assist with the development of teaching and learning materials and appropriate delivery systems to improve the professional development of teacher educators; and
35. provide opportunities for key teacher educators in member countries to study abroad in order that they can develop improved knowledge, skills and understandings to upgrade their own countries' systems of teacher education.

#### D. Higher Education

The Conference recommends that the Director-General:

36. transmit to the forthcoming session of the General Conference the Iranian proposal to establish a Centre for Higher Education for Asia-, paying special attention to the principle of programme concentration and

administrative decentralization, together with the feasibility study undertaken by UNESCO;

37. support regional and national programmes for monitoring the quality of education in private universities; and
38. increase the level of resources required to render the UNITWIN and UNESCO chair programmes more effective in the region and to suggest other forms of university network;
39. support regional and national programmes for providing the recognition of learning acquired via different pathways in university and distance education and technical training and to ensure that there is a linkage between higher education and the world of work, especially in those nations in a state of economic transition.

#### **IV. International and Regional Co-operation in Education**

##### **A. APEID and APPEAL**

The Conference recommends that the Director-General:

40. give further clarification and an operational definition of the APEID and APPEAL mandates;
41. establish a Regional Committee on Education with a broad-based participation and including representatives of funding agencies and NGOs in order to plan, monitor and assess all of PROAP's activities in the area of education, it being understood that this Committee would replace the Advisory Committee and the separate Regional Consultation Meetings currently held to monitor the work of APEID and APPEAL; and
42. the full name of the APEID Secretariat be expanded to the 'Asia and Pacific Centre of Educational Innovation for Development', while retaining the abbreviated form ACEID, since the acronym is widely known.

##### **B. Policy and Management**

The Conference recommends that, through the Director-General:

43. assistance be given to Member States to establish or strengthen education management information systems;
44. needs assessments, policy analyses and sector reviews be carried out in the context of national reform and reconstruction initiatives in response to Member

States requests and in partnership with National Commissions as well as other United Nations Agencies;

45. the educational authorities of each member state of the region be urged to designate one internal department as the liaison organ for exchange of educational legislature and policy information, this organ providing information upon request about educational legis-lation and innovation of its own country to other Member States;
46. special attention be paid to the needs of countries with major edu-cational needs such as those with large populations, those with high illiteracy Rates, small island States, least developed countries, or those with a rapidly evolving socio economic environment;
47. assistance be given to Member States to develop physical environ-ments suitable for life-long learning by making use of existing schools, religious centres and parks and stimulating community par-ticipation in construction, maintenance and ecological landscaping;
48. in welcoming the proposed new UNDP-UNESCO initiative, UNESCO PROAP be asked to work out the details necessary to launch and coordinate this plan, particu-larly the regional project on Basic Education in close consultation with UNDP, bearing in mind the gui-delines presented by Members attending the Seventh Session of the Advisory Committee;
49. UNESCO convey to the Asian Development Bank the appreciation of the six regio-nal Member States concerned for its assistance in for-mulating national EFA plans of action which are worthy of emula-tion;
50. UNESCO take initiative to mobilize all partners of the Jomtien Conference and other donor agencies to provide additional resources, mostly in grant form, so as not to overburden those who are already suffering from debt burdens;
51. agencies such as UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank concen-trate their efforts on Basic Education for All, working together so that in least developed coun-tries and countries with high population and high illiteracy rates EFA goals are achieved according to their national policies;
52. support be given for developing a system of effective indicators for monitoring the performance and quality of education which reflects the specificity of the countries of the region;
53. considering that UNESCO field offices in the Asia Pacific region have grown under the conflicting stresses of needs and demands, with some offices working as inte-grated units and others as single disci-pline units, and keeping in view the large dis-tances and vast area of the region, UNESCO be urged to undertake a complete review of all the field offices to make them more efficient and functional;

54. To provide PROAP with the requisite facilities including reinforced staff, budget and decentralized authorities to enable it to efficiently implement major regional programmes such as APEID and APPEAL, working in co-operation with sub-regional education advisers;
55. adequate emphasis be placed on twining and research activities in rural education within the UNESCO Programme and Budget for 1994-1995;
56. support be given to the priority efforts of China for the establishment of an International Centre for Research and Training in RUMS Education in China considering that the majority of the population in developing countries live in these areas and that the International Symposium on Rural Education reaffirmed the need to reform, strengthen, and integrate rural education programmes;
57. the allocation in the 1994-95 Draft Programme and Budget for the Pacific Member States be increased to at least the current levels, in view of the Basic Education and Life Skills (BELS) programme and other emerging education activities in the region, and that this recommendation be presented to the General Conference;
58. realizing that illiteracy is a most outstanding problem of the region, UNESCO be urged to consider the most populous countries with high illiteracy Rates as a separate priority target group, with specific focus, resources, and priority attention in the design and implementation UNESCO's education programme and budget, and to present such to the General Conference; and
59. recognizing the specific nature and difficulties of the land-locked newly independent Central Asian Republics, UNESCO be likewise urged to consider the countries in these categories as a separate priority target group, to be given specific focus, resources, and priority attention in the design and implementation UNESCO's education programme and budget, and to present such to the General Conference.

## V. THE 1993 KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION ON EDUCATION

60. The Sixth Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and the Pacific, meeting in Kuala Lumpur from 21 to 24 June 1993, examined a broad range of educational challenges facing the countries of the region today. The size and complexity of this region, which accounts for nearly two-thirds of the world's people and is predicted soon to become the largest force in the global economy, would suggest that a consensus on educational priorities would be difficult to achieve.

61. The Conference agreed, however, that two overarching concerns stood apart from all others. The first was the importance of values, ethics and culture in education; the second, the need to improve the situation of women and girls within the education systems of the region. These two imperatives are integral parts of education as the foundation of socio-economic development.

62. The Conference expressed the profound conviction that the only path to the restoration of a balance in its value system in a world increasingly shaped by materialism was to assign a significant place for the teaching of ethics, values and culture in the school curriculum. On the subject of women and children, consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in particular with the spirit and letter of paragraph 26 relating to the right to education, equity, that is the quality of fairness or justice, must lie at the centre of national and regional educational plans. Since women and girls constitute half the population of the region and, in many parts of the region, are deprived of equity in education and employment, they must receive special emphasis in the preparation of national educational plans.

63. Bearing the foregoing in mind, the Conference called upon the countries of the region, on UNESCO and on the international community to:

- review their existing education systems with a view to formulating appropriate values education within the curriculum at all levels of the education system;
- promote the use of effective pedagogical strategies and curriculum to inculcate ethical, cultural, and moral values;
- ensure their education systems play a positive interventionist role in the promotion of women's status by developing targeted action plans, removing both women's illiteracy and barriers inhibiting their access to and retention in, education;
- emphasize women's participation in scientific, vocational, technical, and professional education;
- foster development of new values through gender-appropriate curricula, learning measures, and the enhanced awareness of gender issues amongst teachers, planners, and administrators;
- continuously monitor the progress of education for women and girls.

64. The Conference further called upon international agencies and non-governmental organizations to give top priority in their developmental programmes to the education of women and girls; and upon the United Nations to place on the agenda of the forthcoming World Conference on Women, the issue of women and girls' education, with emphasis on access and equity.