



## **Teacher Development for Inclusive Relevant Quality Education**

**Meeting of E-9 Countries**

**31 May 2012**

**New Delhi**

**India**

# Teacher Development for Inclusive Relevant Quality Education

## Introduction

This concept note aims to provide participants the background, objectives and expected outcomes of the one-day meeting on *Teacher Development for Inclusive Relevant Quality Education* which will be held back-to-back with the *Conference on Teachers Challenges for Education for All in India*.

## Background and rationale

The E-9 Initiative, a consortium of the nine most populous countries of the South was put in place in 1993, following the World Conference on EFA in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. “E” stands for education and “9” for those nine countries which are home to over half of the world's population as well as to almost half of the world's out of school children and two thirds of the world's illiterates: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan. The nine countries committed to pursue “with determination” the Jomtien goals and have become over the years a driving force within the Education for All partnership. The E-9 countries identify an EFA-related theme and focus on it during a two-year period. Measures to strengthen cooperation with regard to the identified theme and ways to extend support to other countries of the South are discussed at the biennial E-9 Ministerial Review Meetings and expert meetings hosted by the country that holds the chair for the two-year period.

India will assume the chair of the E-9 in the fall of 2012 when it hosts the Ninth E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting on “Inclusive, relevant quality Education for All” identified as the thematic focus for cooperation for the two coming years. The International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All in conjunction with the Government of India will also organize a conference on Teachers for Education for All in India in May 2012.

To this end, the meeting of the E-9 focal points for teacher training for inclusive quality will serve as propitious occasion to develop an outline for an action plan that will contribute to the broader thematic of Inclusive Relevant Quality Education in the E-9 countries.

## Objectives of the meeting

UNESCO defines inclusive education as process of *addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning and reducing exclusion within*

*and from education*<sup>1</sup>. The link between the inclusive approach to education and quality is intrinsic. Quality in education is often equated with academic results and completion of examinations. However, quality goes beyond this perception and extends its scope to a school system that offers learning opportunities to all individuals and groups - including boys and girls, students from ethnic and linguistic minorities, rural populations, those affected by HIV and AIDS, and those with disabilities and difficulties in learning.

Due to the large populations and high numbers of illiterate adults and out-of-school children<sup>2</sup> in the E-9 countries, , the issue of quality education is a key factor in engendering more inclusive and just societies. Inclusive relevant quality education has an intrinsic link with the issue of economic growth and participation in democratic processes and the larger development agenda. Inclusive relevant quality education cannot be achieved without a well qualified teaching force. Teachers play a key role in facilitating learning processes to address the day-to-day learning needs of students. It is therefore imperative that the teacher angle is adequately addressed in any educational reform for the integration of the inclusive relevant quality education perspective.

Building on the recommendations of the seventh E-9 Ministerial Review meeting that took place in Bali, Indonesia, in 2008 on “Improvement of Teacher Education and Training as a Focus of Educational System Reform” and the work accomplished by the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA on teacher-related challenges, this meeting which focuses on Teacher Development for Inclusive Relevant Quality Education will address the four following issues.

### **I. Qualifications framework and competency standards**

Teaching and learning for inclusive quality education requires a minimum standard of qualifications and competency. There could be generic frameworks for teacher standards; however, global and national categorizations may prove inadequate to articulate regional, national and provincial specificities. Addressing the issue of inclusive relevant quality education would need a concerted effort and harmonization as well as provisions that take into account socioeconomic and cultural factors at local level.

To this end, the issues that will be examined under this area are:

- Qualifications for teachers to deliver inclusive quality education
- Harmonisation of competency standards, which take account of diverse socio-cultural realities

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO (2005).Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All. Paris, UNESCO.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/international-cooperation/e-9-initiative/>

-Integration of the inclusive quality education perspective in teacher competency assessment systems

## **II. Management of teacher education and the issue of quality inclusive education**

A positive and open attitude towards inclusion is necessary if inclusive quality education has to succeed. The attitude and behaviour of teachers, school principals and other education stakeholders with regard to inclusion plays a crucial role. According to UNESCO, *negative attitudes of teachers and adults (parents and other family members) are the major barrier to inclusion.*<sup>3</sup>

The logic of inclusive quality education extends to development of appropriate teaching and learning materials as well innovative methodology. A “whole-school” approach is necessary to address the question of inclusive quality education. To this end, the issues that will be examined under this session are:

- Reorienting teacher management towards effective delivery of inclusive quality education (teacher training and continuous professional development, teacher deployment, school leadership, community involvement etc.)
- Use of innovative methods to reach the unreached- the role of ICTs
- Selection, induction and deployment criteria for teachers for the delivery of inclusive relevant quality education

## **III. Teacher education and training: the question of inclusive relevant quality education**

Ideally, the inclusive quality education perspective should be a compulsory part of the preparation and continuous professional development of all present and future teachers as well as an integral part of teacher training curricula. Fundamental knowledge and skills of inclusive education, such as understanding needs and abilities of different student audiences- ethnic minority groups, children with special needs, persons suffering from HIV and AIDs, to name a few, and pedagogic skills such as instructional accommodation and activity differentiation, as well as learning assessment should be provided widely to teachers.

The question of integrating the excluded groups within the teacher force also remains an area to be discussed and examined.

To this end, the issues discussed under this session are:

- Challenges and opportunities to address the issue of inclusive relevant quality education in pre-service and continuous professional development programmes

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<sup>3</sup> UNESCO (2005).Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All. Paris, UNESCO.

- Integrating excluded groups within the teacher force: challenges and opportunities
- Pedagogical considerations for the effective delivery of inclusive quality education

#### **IV. Financing for the inclusion of teacher training for inclusive relevant quality education**

Reorienting teacher education management towards the issue of quality inclusive education is not without financial implications. This aspect often becomes the stumbling block for policy reform. The experiences with regard to this issue within the framework of South-South cooperation will also be useful. To this end, the issues that will be discussed under this session are:

- Financial implications for the inclusion of quality inclusive education
- Incentivizing teaching for inclusive quality education
- Innovative financing mechanisms to support inclusive relevant quality education

#### **Expected outcomes**

***-Outline of action plan for E9 countries with regard to teacher training for inclusive quality education that:***

- provides a framework for increased cooperation among the E9 countries with regard to teacher training for inclusive quality education;
- identifies key areas that need to be addressed within the realm of teacher education and training with regard to inclusive quality education;
- maps out roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, based on comparative advantage, involved at national and international levels;
- provides a timeline for the final action plan document;
- provides monitoring and reporting mechanism to facilitate review of progress on agreed objectives within a stipulated timeframe.

***-Experience sharing with regard to teacher development for inclusive relevant quality education in the framework of South-South cooperation***

#### **Draft list of participants**

- E9 country representatives specializing on teacher -related issues
- E9 country focal points
- Members of the Secretariat of the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA
- Members of UNESCO HQ, New Delhi office, Bangkok office

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