

International Conference on Equitable Education: Together Towards Equity

19-20 October 2022

Purpose and Background

Since the beginning of 2020, COVID-19 outbreak has challenged governments, teachers, students, and parents worldwide. In response to school closures, distance learning options – mainly online – have been implemented worldwide. Nonetheless, internet penetration varies from country to country, online-based, high-tech approaches do not always provide equitable and inclusive learning environments. The challenge of digital divide exacerbated inflexibility of teacher's pedagogies on online platforms and inefficient learning resource allocations. While it has been reported that COVID-19 has created additional challenges and costs for out-of-school children and youth (OOSCY), the path to recovery is still tenable.

The Equitable Education Fund (EEF), in partnership with the Ministry of Education of Thailand, UNESCO Bangkok, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (UNICEF EAPRO), UNICEF Thailand, Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) and Save the Children, brought together the initiatives to promote equity-based learning for all. Consequently, the 1st International Conference on All for Education: Equitable Education,¹ hybrid, Thailand, was organized. The Conference, attended by over 2,424 participants globally, emphasized the need to continue the support for equitable education and holistically and innovatively address, at the regional and national levels, exclusion of the educationally underserved by focusing on the following five areas; 1) legal framework with a regular and innovative budget system, 2) decentralized mechanisms and leadership, 3) partnership and alliance, 4) lifelong learning and skills development with a growth mindset, 5) technology, data and monitoring.

The continuation of equitable education's initiative has been proposed and implemented, including the 2nd conference on Teachers and Equitable Education: All for Education in Southeast Asia, attended by over 3,272 participants, organized in close consultation with the Ministries of Education and key regional actors in the field. As teachers' capacity has been identified as one of the principal factors in ensuring quality learning for all, the theme of the regional conference in 2021 was set on teachers and equitable education. This regional conference was organized with aims to raise awareness and share information on equity-based education at the national level and reflect on existing and new strategies for building teachers' capacity to foster equity in their work. This conference offered participants an opportunity to exchange ideas and learn how equity is shaped in the invited countries, efforts to ensure educational equity in different contexts, and supported teachers in this endeavor.

Following the successful organization of the 1st and 2nd conferences, EEF and its partners are planning the 2nd International Conference on Equitable Education: Together Towards Equity on 19-20 October 2022 to continue the equitable education initiatives to strengthen the education responses amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. At the Asia-Pacific level, the 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional Education Minister's Conference (APREMC II) was organized to discuss and make recommendations on how to achieve learning recovery as an immediate step post-COVID 19 and strengthen and transform education systems to become more equitable, inclusive, responsive, relevant, and resilient with the overall objective to accelerate SDG4 implementation. As the outcome of the conference, the Bangkok Statement 2022 "Towards an effective learning recovery for all and transforming education in Asia-Pacific" was adopted on 7 June 2022. The Statement includes an emphasis on the importance of monitoring of the Education 2030 Agenda – Sustainable Development Goal 4 and transforming the current education delivery and education systems in the face of recovering from the impact of COVID-19.

The Transforming Education Summit (TES) was held in New York, The United States, on 16 - 19 September 2022 to bring together related governmental bodies, policymakers, and related agencies at global level, to review the commitment to education and lifelong learning as a pre-eminent public good. The goal is to mobilize actions and solidarity to transform education. To recognize efforts to recover learning losses from the pandemic; rethink education systems, and to revitalize national and global efforts to achieve SDG4.

To continue with the efforts for equity in education, the 2nd International Conference will address the government's strategies for OOSCY, emerging trends of digital learnings, and recovery programmes for the marginalized and disadvantaged groups during COVID-19 outbreak to equip the target groups with necessary skills for livelihood and work. The discussion on the implementation of education systems, assessments, and partners will also be addressed to tackle the critical issue concerning OOSCY.

Objectives and Expected Outcomes

This international conference on *Equitable Education: Together Towards Equity* will raise awareness and share information on equity-based education at the national, regional, and international levels and reflect on emerging strategies, mechanisms, and practices to foster equity into their contexts. Considering the 2022 Bangkok Statement, the outcomes of the TES and the participants' discussions, applicable, technical recommendations will be developed as the outcome of the conference.

This conference offers policymakers, educational leaders, and educators an opportunity to gain experience from international and regional experiences to enhance equity through the education system, exchange ideas with colleagues, and support the work on together towards equity. The efforts made to ensure educational equity through non-formal education focuses on the work on equity in education, including the underprivileged and marginalized groups. However, many of the principles can be applied to a variety of contexts within formal education.

As an overall outcome of participation, delegates will have 1) a clear overview of the education system situation and equity 2) clarity of future needs and demands 3) practical cases/solutions to make quality education accessible for all.

Organization of Sessions

This is a two-day conference consisting of five main sessions. Sessions 1, 2, and 3 concentrate on current situations, emerging trends, and future demands for learning and skills, respectively. In session 3 and 4, participants will have the opportunity to contribute to tangible recommendations for bridging the gaps in education. Session 5 invites participants to explore better ways to enhance learning through formative assessment.

Expected Participants

1. Government agencies and NGO service providers, including academics, policymakers, educators, and youth representatives.
2. Organizations committed towards equity in education can be invited as members of **Equitable Education Alliance (EEA)**, a community of practitioners with like-minded organizations aiming to improve equity and narrowing gaps in education within the region and beyond.

Time and Venue

Date: The conference will be held on 19-20 October 2022. The commencement speech will be arranged back-to-back with this year's Princess Maha Chakri Award Conference (PMCA), which is scheduled on 17-18 October 2022.

Onsite: Centara Grand at Central World, Bangkok, Thailand

Online: link will be provided after registration

Co-organizers

- a. Equitable Education Fund (EEF)
- b. Save the Children
- c. Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO)
- d. UNESCO Bangkok
- e. UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (UNICEF EAPRO)
- f. UNICEF Thailand

Programme

Wednesday 19 October 2022	
09.00 - 10.20	<p>Opening Session:</p> <p>Welcoming Remarks by Working Group Executives (7 mins each):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Education, Thailand, <i>Ms. Treenuch Thienthong, Minister of Education</i> Equitable Education Fund (EEF), <i>Dr. Kraiyos Patrawart, Managing Director</i> Save the Children, <i>Ms. Warangkana Mutumol, Strategy, Program Quality and Impact Director</i> UNESCO Bangkok, <i>Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, Director</i> UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (UNICEF EAPRO) and UNICEF Thailand, <i>Ms. Kyungsun Kim, Director</i> <p>Welcoming Remarks and Recap of the Transforming Education Summit (TES) (10 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), <i>Dr. Ethel Agnes P Valenzuela, Director</i> <p>Youth Perspectives on Equity in Education (10 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ms. Siribut Musikapodok, Student, Chiang Mai University, Thailand</i> UNESCO
10.20 - 10.30	Break
10.30 - 12.00	<p>Effects from COVID-19 Pandemic</p> <p>Session 1, Plenary</p> <p>Moderator: UNESCO Bangkok</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Statistical Overview: Access & Enrollment (20 mins) <i>Mr. Nyi Nyi Thaung, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Bangkok</i> Learning Loss (20 mins) <i>Ms. Mitsue Uemura, Chief of Education, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO)</i> Multidisciplinary Approach: COVID-19, a Human Capital Catastrophe and Solutions (20 mins) <i>Mr. Lars M. Sondergaard, Lead Economist, Education, East Asia and Pacific Region, World Bank Group</i> <p>Discussion and Questions (20 mins)</p>
10.30 - 11.00	<p>Press Conference</p> <p>In parallel with Session 1</p>
12.00 - 13.00	Lunch
13.00 - 14.30	<p>Building Forward Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic</p> <p>Session 2, Panel Discussion</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Stuart James Cameron, Education Specialist, Global Partnership Education (GPE)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerated Digitalization <i>Ms. Maneerut Anulomsombut, Chief Executive Office, SEA Group</i> Pedagogies and Didactics <i>Mr. Pg Haji Mohd Wahab Bin Pg Haji Abdullah, Assistant Senior Technical Instructor, Brunei PMCA Awardee</i> Government Agility and Institutional Change <i>Ms. Risa Nihayah, Researcher, Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE) Indonesia, The SMERU Research Institute</i> Community and Parental Support <i>Mr. Siddhesh Mhatre, Co-Head and Lead Operations of Direct Elementary Programs, Pratham Education Foundation</i> Collaboration with Private Sector to Benefit Access to Education <i>Mr. Samatcha Promsiri, Chief of Staff, Sansiri PLC.</i>
14.30 - 14.40	Break
14.40 - 14.55	<p>Skills Development & Needs of Disadvantaged Children and Youth in Rapidly Evolving Societies</p> <p>Session 3, Introduction to the topic, breakout room instructions</p> <p>Facilitator: Mr. Mirza Delmo, Child Poverty Technical Lead, Save the Children</p>
14.55 - 15.05	Move to Breakout Rooms
15.05 - 16.35	<p>Session 3, Breakout Rooms</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Skills Moderator: Ms. Hannah Najar, Regional Program Manager, The Asia Foundation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ms. Poornima Meegamma, Director for Youth Development, NextGen- Girls in Technology</i> <i>Ms. Ida Mboob, Senior Digital Development Specialist, World Bank Group</i> <i>Ms. Supahrat Juramongkol, Microsoft APAC Philanthropies Lead, Microsoft Accelerating Thailand</i> Social and Emotional Skills Moderator: Dr. Prompilai Buasuwan, Associate Professor of Educational Administration, Kasetsart University <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ms. Danielle De La Fuente, Founder & Executive Director, Amal Alliance (Karanga Steering Committee)</i> <i>Mr. Norhailmi Abdul Mutalib, Science Teacher at Juerlun Secondary School, Malaysia PMCA Awardee</i> <i>Ms. Cornelia Hirania Wiryasti, Digital Skills and Distance Learning - Skills Development and Employment, ILO Indonesia</i> Entrepreneurial and Work-Life Skills Moderator: TBD <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ms. Panthatip Mongkolsri, Programme Director, Assessment of Raks Thai Learning Centers for Migrant Children in Mahachai</i> <i>Mr. David Hall, Chief of Party - Second Chance Opportunity for OOSY, USAID (SEAMEO)</i> <i>Ms. Pratin Leanchumroon, Head of Science-Based Technological Phang Nga Technical College, Thailand PMCA Awardee</i>
16.35 - 16.50	Move back to Plenary Room
16.50 - 17.50	Session 3 Summary
17.50 - 18.00	Wrap-up Day 1

Thursday 20 October 2022	
09.30 - 09.55	Recovery Programme for The Disadvantaged Groups – Bridging The Gaps in Education Session 4, Introduction to the topic, breakout room instructions Facilitator: UNESCO Bangkok
09.55 - 10.00	Move to Breakout Rooms
10.00 - 11.30	Session 4, Breakout Rooms 1) Children and Youth with Disabilities Moderator: Ms. Barkha Henry, Regional Manager, Regional Manager, Asia & Pacific, Leonard Cheshire a) <i>Dr. Hanani Binti Harun Rasit, Director, SEAMEO Regional Centre for Special Educational Needs (SEAMEO SEN)</i> b) <i>Ms. Prashanti Pradhan, Co-founder and Chairperson, Phensem Parent Support Group</i> c) <i>Ms. Gereltuya Barimid, Officer, Ministry of Education and Science Mongolia</i> 2) Migration, Language and Ethnicity Moderator: Dr. Heon Joo Suh, Director, National Institute for Lifelong Education (NILE) a) <i>Mr. Francesco Calcagno, Chief of Education, UNICEF Poland</i> b) <i>Ms. Marianna Dimitriou, Chief of the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning, Municipality of Heraklion (Crete)</i> c) <i>Ms. Maria Mercedes E. Arzadon, Associate Professor, College of Education, University of the Philippines</i> 3) Urban Poor Moderator: Mr. Mirza Delmo, Child Poverty Technical Lead, Save the Children (TBD) a) <i>Dr. Le Anh Vinh, Director General, The Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences</i> b) <i>Ms. Rasheda K. Choudhury, Executive Director (CEO), Campaign For Popular Education (CAMPE)</i> c) <i>Mr. Italo Dutra, Regional Education Advisor, UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO)</i>
11.30 - 12.30	Lunch
12.30 - 13.30	Session 4 Summary and Recommendations
13.30 - 14.30	Assessment as a Tool to Transform Learning Session 5, Plenary Moderator: Mr. Alejandro Ibanez, Project Manager, The Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) 1) Individualized Assessment for Equity, Holistic Development, and Wellbeing <i>Ms. Aija Maarit Rinkinen, Senior Education Specialist, The World Bank</i> 2) Summative Assessment vs. Formative Assessment <i>Dr. Joanne Caddy, PISA for Schools Team Leader/Senior Analyst, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)</i> 3) Multi-Sectoral Data for Learning Assessment <i>Ms. Haryati Mohamed Razali, Senior Principal Assistant Director, Educational Macro Data Planning Sector, Ministry of Education Malaysia</i> Discussion and Questions (25 mins)
14.30 - 14.45	Break
14.45 - 15.30	Summary of Conference Outcomes & Recommendations <i>Name, Title, Organization (TBD)</i>
15.30 - 16.30	Closing Session AFE connection to APREMC II and TES <i>by Ms. Jenelle Babb, Regional Advisor (Education), UNESCO Bangkok</i> Introduction to Equitable Education Alliance (EEA) Network <i>by Dr. Kraiyos Patrawart, Managing Director, Equitable Education Fund (EEF) Thailand</i>