

Chapter 1

REVIEW OF EDUCATION FOR ALL

1.1 BACKGROUND:

At the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand 1990) some 1,500 participants, comprising delegates from 155 governments, policy – makers and specialists in education and health, social and economic development from around the World, met to discuss major aspects of EFA. The World Declaration on Education for All and the Framework for Action to meet Basic Learning Needs, adopted at Jomtien, foresaw the need for an end of decade assessment of progress as a basis for a comprehensive review of policies concerning basic education. A number of meetings, conferences and forums were held in 1990's to assess the achievement/progress and revise the targets, goals and policies in EFA. A brief overview of these meetings/conferences is as follows:

1.2 Jomtien Conference 1990:

The Jomtien Conference clearly defined the basic learning needs of the child i.e. learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving) as well as basic learning contents (such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes). The framework for action to meet basic learning needs identified six main areas of action:

- i. expansion of early childhood care and development activities;
- ii. universal access to and completion of primary education;
- iii. improvement in learning achievements;
- iv. reduction of adult illiteracy;
- v. expansion of basic education and skills training for youth and adults.
- vi. increased acquisition by individuals and families the knowledge, skills and values for better living.

In addition, following five principles for promoting basic education were endorsed:

- i. universalizing access and promoting equity;
- ii. focusing on learning,
- iii. broadening the learning environment;
- iv. improving the learning environment; and
- v. strengthening partnerships.

Goals and targets agreed upon in the Jomtien conference were:

1. Universal access to and 80% completion of primary education by the year 2000.
2. Reduction of adult illiteracy rate to one half of its 1990 level by the year 2000, with sufficient emphasis on female literacy.

3. Improvement in learning achievement so that an agreed percentage of an appropriate age cohort (e.g. 80 percent of 14 years-old) attains or surpasses a defined level of necessary learning achievements.
4. Expansion of early childhood care and developmental activities, including family and community interventions, especially for poor, disadvantaged and disabled children.

The World Education Forum In Dakar (2000):

Ten years after Jomtien, the countries and development agencies gathered in Dakar and reaffirmed their commitment in providing Education For All (EFA). The World Education Forum, convened by UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank brought together 1,500 participants from 182 countries, as well as major development agencies. It ended with the adoption of the Dakar Framework for Action, wherein ministers of education and other government representatives, heads of United Nation agencies, the donor community and representatives of NGOs, indeed all participants, committed themselves to achieve the EFA goals and targets by the year 2015.

1.3 EFA Goals And Targets:

- i. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable disadvantaged children;
- ii. Ensuring that by 2015 all children with special emphasis on girls and children in difficult circumstances have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
- iii. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning, life skills and citizenship programs;
- iv. Achieve a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;
- v. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality; and
- vi. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

1.4 Dakar EFA Strategies:

In order to achieve the above mentioned EFA goals and targets following strategies, applicable to our situation were outlined in Dakar.

- i. Mobilize strong National and International political commitment for Education For All, develop national action plans and enhance significantly investments in basic education.
- ii. Promote EFA policies within a sustainable and well-integrated sector framework clearly linked to poverty alleviation and development strategies.
- iii. Ensure the engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for educational development.
- iv. Develop responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management.
- v. Implement integrated strategies for gender equality in education which recognize the need for changes in attitudes, values and practices.
- vi. Create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments conducive to excellence in learning and clearly defined levels of achievement for all.
- vii. Enhance the status, morale and professionalism of teachers.
- viii. Harness new information and communication technologies to help achieve EFA goals.
- ix. Systematically monitor progress towards EFA goals and strategies at the National, Regional and International levels.
- x. Build on existing mechanisms to accelerate progress for Education for All.

1.5 **Post Dakar Actions and Activities:**

As a follow up to Dakar, Pakistan completed number of actions/activities for broad based consultations with principal actors of EFA; preparation of provincial and national plans of action and resource mobilization for EFA planning. An overview of these actions/activities is as follows:-

- i. Education Advisory Board suggested strategies and recommendations for EFA Policy and Planning.
- ii. Census of Private Educational Institutions conducted.
- iii. Primary and Non-formal Education Wing of Ministry of Education restructured and named as Education For All (EFA) Wing.
- iv. EFA Unit established in EFA Wing

- v. National EFA committee constituted.
- vi. Political commitment for EFA at the highest level i.e. Cabinet, the President of Pakistan and Chief Executive mobilized.
- vii. Resource Mobilization Campaign for EFA at Provincial, National and International levels initiated.
- viii. Education Sector Reforms - Focusing on EFA Goals, Sector wide approaches and Poverty linkage were developed through broad-based consultations with the stakeholders.
- ix. National Conference on Education For All with the objectives to launch EFA Movement, share Dakar Goals and prepare Framework of EFA Plan held in Islamabad. All concerned i.e. UN Agencies, Donor Agencies, NGOs, Private Sector, Media, Government Departments and Ministries participated.
- x. Focal points for EFA in the provinces and federating units identified.
- xi. TORs of National EFA Forum finalized and representative/member organizations/agencies to the Forum identified.
- xii. Orientation/planning meetings for EFA plan preparation held in the provinces.
- xiii. Provincial EFA Forums and Technical Groups set up.
- xiv. 2-day meetings of Provincial EFA Forum, Technical Group and Coordinators of Federal Ministry of Education held in the provinces to finalize framework of Provincial EFA Plan, collect and analyze data/statistics and initiate the preparation of draft plan.
- xv. Framework of National Plan of Action (NPA) covering all the three main sectors of EFA i.e. Primary Education, Early Childhood Education and Adult Literacy was prepared and presented to the Director General, UNESCO in Islamabad and South Asia EFA Ministerial Meeting in Kathmandu-Nepal.
- xvi. UNESCO supported regional workshop on Curriculum Planning and Reforms in Learning Achievement held in Islamabad.
- xvii. Draft provincial EFA Plans for all the four provinces i.e. Punjab, Sindh, NWFP and Balochistan as well as federating units, i.e. FATA, FANA, and ICT prepared and constituted building blocks for NPA.
- xviii. National EFA Forum constituted.

- xix. 2-day workshop for finalization of provincial/federating units EFA plans held on 6-7 August in Islamabad.
- xx. The Draft National Plan of Action (NPA) developed.
- xxi. NPA was presented in E-9 Ministerial Meeting held in Beijing, China from 21-23 August, 2001.
- xxii. Subsequently, the plan was shared with other countries during International Conference on Education (ICE) held in Geneva, Switzerland and then presented in EFA High Level Group Meeting held in Paris.
- xxiii. Later on Federal Education Minister presented the plan in a meeting of UN agencies, Bi-lateral and Multi-lateral agencies. INGOs, NGOs, Private Sector Line Ministries and Provincial Education Departments. The plan was strongly supported by all.