

Report

Regional Preparatory Conference on “Inclusive Education: Major Policy Issues in the Asia Pacific Region”

Bali, 29-31 May 2008

Organized by the Ministry of National Education of Indonesia
in Cooperation with UNESCO and IBE

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Report

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Part 1. Preparation Day: Wednesday, 28 May 2008

1.1. Expert Meeting

The Regional Preparatory Conference on “Inclusive education” Major Policy Issues in the Asia and Pacific Region,” from the expert meeting to the closing remarks all were held in several rooms in the area of Sanur Paradise Plaza Hotel, Bali, Indonesia.

The first session of the pre-conference was the expert meeting that was attended by some international experts including Mr. Renato Opertti and Mr. Daoyu Wong of IBE Office Geneva, Ms. Maria Malevri of UNESCO Headquarters Paris, Mr. Johan Lindeberg of UNESCO Office Bangkok, Mr. Anwar Alsaid of UNESCO Office Jakarta, Prof. Arief Rachman and Ms. Hasnah Gasim of Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO and Mr. Bambang Indriyanto of the Indonesian Ministry of National Education, to prepare for the conference in the next three days. Some resources people for the conference’s plenary sessions were also sitting among them.

After their self-introduction, Mr. Renato presented the issue regarding inclusive education; the importance of system, links and transitions also few examples of the practices in some countries at all school levels.

The whole idea of the conference was that inclusive education could work although people start talking about financial aspect. He emphasized that inclusion was possible and important for the society. The expectation of the conference was to identify key policy issues and political concerns in Asia Pacific countries that could be addressed and shared with other countries in the international conference.

Mr. Johan of UNESCO Bangkok highlighted the presentation of Mr. Renato, which was the balance of the issues; the links between inclusive education and EFA. He mentioned that one issue overlapped with another during the group discussions in the parallel sessions.

Mr. Bambang asked about the results of the conference if they would be the input of the next ICE in Geneva – what was the expectation of the outputs of this conference. He informed that Indonesia actually already has declarations on inclusive education. Mr. Renato said that all the output documents of this conference would be the input of the next ICE, also other documents like recommendations and declaration, which should suit the current situation.

Some more inputs were also given by other experts including the suggestions of Mr. Terje to have a look at the agenda to get the purpose of the working group discussions. Ms. Maria said that she would give contribution to the conference as the representative of UNESCO Headquarters. Mr. Johan said that the experts had to give equal distributions, as Indonesia was overrepresented by its number of the

participants. Mr. Renato suggested that Indonesian participants might join in one of four sub-themes that were relevant to the ICE agenda.

Ms. Maria said that we could come back to the practical issues; we had to bring to the facts of EFA goals. We also realized that there was a tendency in the countries to make efforts, going towards bigger commitments. The goals were not all considered and attained, even in developed countries. She reminded the roles of UNESCO in this conference to make advocacy issues.

She told Mr. Bambang that the big number of Indonesian participants could get immediate training and to get advocacy of the issue. Coming to the concrete point, she found difficult for this thing and she suggested that we had two layers to accomplish that would fit this conference and ICE. What we wanted to hear from the people was to find out what they wanted for education in their countries, and what inclusions were considered, to be associated with the conference. What we needed was synergy, political will and capacity.

Mr. Johan teased out the grouping of the participants and that the issues of sub-themes might overlap. We should take into account the numbers of the participants to get relevant results of the conference. Mr. Bambang identified the composition of the Indonesian participants, which included university students, NGOs, policy makers and educators.

Mr. Johan added a point about the composition of the participants and the sub-themes; suggested that the discussion was to gather all policy makers to talk about policy issues. Mr. Renato added some points regarding the key policy issues, and the opportunity to discuss the sub-themes among the participants.

Mr. Daoyu said that there would be natural selection about the grouping, which people will chose what they were interested to join in. The original idea was to have three plenary meetings and three parallel meetings, to change it meant to make it more complicated. Mr. Anwar said that the central issue was about policy; when going to Geneva the policy makers would be there – how we could make the most out of those to the most out of them.

Ms. Alice added a point regarding the grouping that was based on the origin of the participants. Mr. Terje added a point on language barrier, as not all of Indonesian participants understood English. Mr. Bambang said that he was happy that Indonesian participants could take parts in this conference, as he would conduct a follow-up workshop from this conference.

Prof. Arief added some points on the balance between the topics and the countries as well as the number of participants. Regarding the Indonesian participants, we were here to get the Indonesian government's interest also what IBE wanted to achieve from the conference then we could talk about the mechanism of the grouping for the group discussions.

Mr. Johan reminded the limitations of what we had and to figure out the issues of translation and the room numbers; we had to accommodate all interests of the participants or parties. Mr. Bambang added that what was important for the Indonesian participants, was to join the conference regardless the language problems.

Mr. Renato explained further about the mechanism of the grouping with regards of the sub-themes. Mr. Anwar outlined the issue of geographic and/or thematic basis. The participants mostly agreed to group the participants based on thematic concerns not geographically. Ms. Anupam added points regarding the sub-themes as she had studied another similar issues carried out by the World Bank. Prof. Arief reminded the participants of the upcoming ICE in November, that it was set similarly like this, and this conference was the preparation for it.

Mr. Terje responded to what Ms. Maria had said regarding the expectation of the conference. Ms. Alice added a point regarding the imbalance of the grouping.

Mr. Johan outlined the balance of the grouping, the number of the participants as well as the sub-themes. He also emphasized holistic approach to the issues and to look at the four dimensions of the issue.

Mr. Renato added a point regarding the grouping mechanism, which was to group the participants into eight groups. Mr. Johan said that if we had smaller groups, that could be better for the results. Ms. Vivian said that there was no point for extension for the first topic: children and disability. Mr. Wang agreed with her.

Mr. Christophe also added his perspective regarding the issue raised by Ms. Vivian. Ms. Maria said that in China, the issue was huge, especially after the disaster, but more importantly that it was a social issue.

Mr. Johan urged that the group discussions to have broader perspectives during the parallel sessions. Mr. Simon gave two clarifications: the experts would give presentations for the plenary sessions and short presentations during the parallel sessions. Mr. Johan responded that there was only one presentation by each expert, while during the parallel sessions, members presented best practices or case studies.

Mr. Renato added another point that should be very clear during the parallel sessions. Mr. Simon continued his clarification on what were the roles of the experts in these four sub-themes. Mr. Renato answered that we were aware of the continuity; there was much difficulty to build separation of the issues – what was the scope of the conference – and to identify policy-making regarding inclusive education.

Prof. Arief, Mr. Anwar and Mr. Renato left the room to attend the press conference representing UNESCO and IBE.

Mr. Johan responded to Mr. Simon's clarifications: what kind of key messages to be made regarding his concerns on HIV/AIDS. We were looking for particular policy that could be included in the system. He also referred to Ms. Alice's concerns on mother language. Ms. Alice wondered if we had to come up with points for the four sub-themes and suggested that the outcomes should be a mix of recommendations that covered the four sub-themes.

Ms. Anupam added another point regarding that issue. Mr. Terje asked about the country presentation position in the outcomes. They continued the discussion of the mechanism of the grouping. Indonesian participants mostly were going to be observers.

Mr. Wang added a point: to group the big number of Indonesian participants in a separate big forum to discuss the issues. Ms. Hasnah also added some points regarding the mechanism of the grouping.

Mr. Johan raised another point of the presentation of the experts. Ms. Alice asked a point regarding the case studies. Ms. Vivian asked about the time for the presentations and the issues raised. Mr. Johan said that experts should give perspectives in their own sub-region.

They argue about the presentation timing. Ms. Vivian added another point about children with disability and the policy that was not really implemented yet. Mr. Terje added a point regarding the contents of the presentations of the experts; for example the topic of HIV/AIDS and health.

Ms. Hasnah confirmed again about the grouping and would help decide the grouping with the issue of Indonesian participants number. Ms. Alice raised another issue of the balance to discuss the key concerns. Mr. Johan responded to Ms. Alice that we had to pay attention to the key concerns of the issues. Mr. Terje recommended a person to help with the language barrier.

The discussion continued: the grouping mechanism, the presentation timing, the contents development of the parallel sessions, case study presentation mechanism and the outcomes – recommendations – or any other forms of outcomes of the conference. Mr. Johan wrapped up the discussion and closes the meeting.

1.2. Preparation Briefing

Prof. Arief Rachman of Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO chaired the preparation briefing that was attended by Ms. Hasnah Gasim, Mr. Suryo and Ms. Ratna of Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO; Mr. Anwar Alsaid of UNESCO Office Jakarta, Mr. Johan Lindeberg and Mr. Sheldon Shaeffer of UNESCO Office Bangkok, Ms. Maria Malevri of UNESCO Headquarters Paris, Ms. Clementina, Mr. Renato and Mr. Daoyu of IBE Geneva.

Prof. Arief chaired the briefing and scanned through the conference schedule from day 1 to 3—that was subject to adjust. The discussion outlined the recent rundown agenda, what needed to be adjusted; the agenda of the conference and covered the mechanism of the speaker presentations and the Q&A sessions. They determined the facilitators of the working groups.

Mr. Johan explained the mechanism of the presentations, the chairs of each plenary session and the mechanism of the working groups regarding the assistance of the facilitators as well as the rapporteurs of each working group.

Ms. Hasnah explained about the rapporteur provision by Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO during the plenary sessions, but for the parallel sessions, the groups would decide the rapporteurs of each working group.

Mr. Renato suggested that there should be equal opportunity for everyone to contribute to the conference. He said that we should give the opportunity to Laos and the Philippines, for the chairpersons and the rapporteurs during the parallel sessions.

Mr. Johan said that Mr. Renato and he could help make the draft for the results of the conference; it was not necessarily recommendations, it could be the key concerns of this conference. Informal discussion took place further: the detailed mechanism of the conference including plenary and parallel sessions. Prof. Arief closed the preparation briefing and adjusted the new conference schedule and was assisted by Ms. Hasnah.

1.3. Notes on the Facilitation of Parallel Session

The steering committee of UNESCO and IBE assisted by Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO formulated the note on the facilitation of the parallel sessions of the Regional Preparatory Conference for the 48th Session of ICE, Inclusive Education: Major Policy Issues in the Asia and Pacific Region on 29 – 31 May 2008 in Bali, Indonesia.

The main purpose of the Regional Preparatory Conference was to make policy contributions from Asia and the Pacific to the 48th Session of the International Conference on Education on inclusive education to be held on 25 – 28 November 2008 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Three parallel sessions would be conducted, each in four groups and made by representatives of participating countries, international organizations, NGOs and resources persons invited to this Preparatory Conference as well as UNESCO staff, to discuss the six topics identified for this preparatory conference, two groups for one topic in a session.

Each group in parallel session was facilitated by three persons: one resources person, one national representative and one UNESCO staff.

The resource person should summarize the presentation made during the plenary session on the topic concerned, highlighting the points related to the topic, and if necessary, adding extra points that should be given more emphasis and/or be clarified.

The UNESCO staff made sure that the group discussions were conducted with an aim to contributing to the themes that would be addressed in the International Conference on Education and within limited time slot.

National representative should be the main facilitator of each group. One of the national representatives among the two groups on the same topic would serve also as the rapporteur to a plenary session where discussions on all 6 topics were summarized.

The facilitators should bear in mind that the ICE was a worldwide forum for education ministers to discuss major policy issues. Discussions should better help address or raise the concerns of the education ministers on inclusive education, particularly from the perspective of Asian and Pacific countries.

The 6 facilitators from the two groups on the same topic should meet during lunch or dinner following the respective parallel session to exchange notes, elaborate a common report and designate a national representative as rapporteur to debrief the first plenary on day 3.

Participating national representatives were required not to make a formal presentation of national report on inclusive education in their respective countries. Instead, they could highlight cases where policies, programmes and practices worked well in promoting inclusive education.

In order that more people could have an opportunity to participate and express their opinions and concerns, each participant should be sensitive of the time taken when speaking. The facilitators should find a way to interrupt the excessive speakers.

Part 2. Day 1: Thursday, 29 May 2008

2.1. Plenary Session 1

MC welcomed H.E. Prof. Dr. Bambang Sudibyo, the Minister of National Education, honorable guests, resource people, the participants of the conference; gave introductory sentences and opened the session.

2.1.1. Opening Remarks

Welcome Address by Prof. Suyanto, Director-General, Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of National Education, Indonesia

He greeted the honorable Minister Bambang Sudibyo, Mr. Sheldon Shaeffer, Ms. Bhaswati Mukerjee, Prof. Arief Rachman and all the participants. He thanked the participants for coming to the conference and mentioned the purpose of the conference, which the participants could formulate policy on inclusive education.

Topics to be discussed in the conference would embrace the four sub-themes. There would be expert presentations that would facilitate the parallel sessions. He believed that the discussion would be progressive and beneficial for all participating countries. It was a great honor for him to invite the Minister of National Education to officially open the Conference.

Welcome Remarks by Ms. Clementina Acedo, Director, IBE-UNESCO

She greeted the participants of the conference as well as people from the UN agencies also the distinguished guests. She would like to recognize the efforts of Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO to organize the conference. This was very important because this would be the preparation for the International Conference on Education with the topic of inclusive education for the future.

She thanked the committees for the endeavors of this conference and gave brief historical background of Indonesia's membership to IBE. She was very grateful for this conference. The results of this conference would be important for the ICE in November. Inclusive education was the challenges for education towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

She explained further about learning needs. There were more teaching challenges thus hamper achievements. She thanked everyone for the participations and she hoped there would be interesting discussion and fruitful results out of this.

Opening Address by H.E. Prof. Dr. Bambang Sudibyo, Minister of National Education, Indonesia

He welcomed the distinguished international and Indonesian guests, participants and observers. He thanked God for giving the opportunity to summon in the conference on inclusive education. The main objective was to raise awareness that education should be inclusive in nature regardless of any backgrounds. Indonesia was lucky to host the conference and it was his decision.

He mentioned the importance of EFA, ESD and Lifelong Learning Education. These were the three principles raised by UNESCO, which were also important. The biggest challenge was in Indonesia. If UNESCO succeeded to apply those three principles, that would be easier for UNESCO to apply them in other countries. There are more than 50 millions of students from primary to university levels in Indonesia. This is not easy, as we are fragmented by nature giving the geographic condition of Indonesia to deliver education services to the people.

He mentioned that Indonesia was adopting national policy for education for example the national education; we had to do it because national exam was to measure the capacity of the students and to create unity among the students. One problem for Indonesia was to manage more or less national system; there were three problems to be raised: youth problems of magnitude, diversity management and disparity management. Indonesia was life laboratory to manage diversity and disparity. We faced big challenges for inclusive education. Recognizing that the problem was huge and challenging, we, at the legal level, assured that EFA in Indonesia was in progress; that quality education was the rights of every citizen. Another point was flexibility; in our education system there were formal, non-formal and informal education tracks. Those three were related to the rigidity, standard and regulation.

Multi-exit and multi-entry systems were used for the national education system related to those three education tracks. It was guaranteed by the legal system. Another strategy was to use technology to deliver education devices. Indonesia started to install intranet system, so called Indonesia Education Network. ICT could improve the delivery and efforts to improve access to education; it could help to improve quality education. The problems were complex, thus the national budget can't afford it, and thus ICT had become important in Indonesia towards inclusive education. Fourth strategy was the role of teachers; we needed a lot of time of teachers who were experts in teaching the disabled, those with special needs.

We also taught street children and those who lived in remote and/or isolated areas. We needed to develop education services for children whose parents were living and working overseas. The four strategies were important: legal system, flexibility, role of ICT and specialized teachers development. He believed that Indonesia could cope with the problems of inclusive education by embracing those strategies. He would like to thank the participants and he officially opened the conference.

MC invited some distinguished people of IBE Geneva, UNESCO Bangkok, and the National Education to assist the Minister to strike the gong to inaugurate the conference. He invited everyone to take silence moment to pray for the disaster victims in Myanmar and China.

2.2. Plenary Session 2

Prof. Arief Rachman, Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO, chaired the plenary. He opened the session, explained the procedures for the plenary session and introduced the speakers of the session.

2.2.1. Keynote Speech: A Regional Perspective

Mr. Sheldon Shaeffer, Director, UNESCO Office Bangkok

Mr. Sheldon explained the excluded and the unreached groups; who were the excluded. They were learners from remote and rural communities, learners from religious, linguistic and ethnic minorities as well as indigenous peoples and members of lower castes, and girls and women especially from rural or ethnic minorities as well as at-risk boys.

Furthermore, he outlined the characteristics of the excluded that included learners with disabilities or special needs and street and working children. He showed the diagram of out-of school children by region. Another information was the percentages of children with and without disabilities not attending school. In Indonesia, 2003 there was 70.8% with disabilities and 11.5% without disabilities; the difference is pretty high of 59.3%. He showed another table of sub-national disparities in access to education – national primary enrollment ratios. In 2005 there was 122.6 regional maximum enrollment ratios in Indonesia.

He highlighted the ten components of quality that included healthy, safe and protective learning environments, adequate evaluation of environments, processes and outcomes, participatory, school-based management, respect for and engagement with local communities and cultures.

In school, children were also learning, in regards of a child-friendly school. It was about a child-seeking school, to actively identify excluded children to get them enrolled in school and included in learning; to promote and help monitor the process. It was also a child-centered school; including all children in learning. Above all, it had an environment of good quality. It was effective with children to promote good quality teaching and learning. It was also healthy and protective for children – to ensure a learning environment of good quality and to provide life-skills based health education. It was responsive to gender equality; encouraging participation of children, families and communities, furthermore, it was inclusive of children. It did not exclude, discriminate against, or stereotype on the basis of difference.

Children preferred to homogenous classes; though it should respect and welcome diversity. Inclusive education was to support education for all, with a special emphasis on removing barriers to participation and learning for those excluded: those who were enrolled in school but were excluded from learning. UNESCO also defined inclusive education that embraced the process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning.

The policies and practices outlined the strategies to remove barriers to learning and participation for all children, only then we achieved education for all. Implementing inclusive or child-friendly education at school level has to analyze the situation, to set objectives and design strategies and to develop an integrated, inter-sectoral approach and to ensure participation as well as to assess progress. It had to clarify the concept, to raise awareness, to take legislative action, to provide high-level political support, to change policies and to inform the curriculum.

Special consideration included ECCE, teacher training, and the policy-maker “education.” National policy must have become fully committed to inclusive education, despite the fact that identifying still-excluded groups difficult. UNESCO Bangkok provided a toolkit to promote inclusive, child-friendly learning environments; to facilitate the process of making school environments more inclusive, of better quality and friendlier to children.

Inclusive education was a process, not only an outcome. Those excluded from education were often simply not seen. If seen, they were often not counted. If counted, they were often not served. If served, they were often served badly. It was a constant process of school environments to ensure that EFA was really for all.

2.2.2. Experts Presentation

1. Inter-regional Perspective on Inclusive Education: Issues and Challenges Mr. Renato Opertti, IBE-UNESCO

Mr. Renato presented regional perspectives and challenges in inclusive education: main findings from nine meetings and outlined the areas of debate. First challenge was special education, integration and inclusive education. It limited to which special educational schools and institutions should still be maintained and improved in co-existence with mainstream school. A question to ask, “how expensive was inclusive education in comparison to existing models of special needs education and integration?”

In many places and countries, there should be placement of equality. To clarify the characteristics of inclusive education should adapt the curriculum, not only equipments and facilities, to the particular needs of the child. It needs to overcome the integration or inclusion debate towards the generation of inclusive settings in different types of schools.

Another point was the dialectical relationship between social inclusion and inclusive education. Learning conditions and processes could only be developed if the conditions allow it, it would lead to the relation between, on the one hand suitable societal, community and family conditions needed to achieve an active participation in the educational process and on the other hand, educational conditions. The knowledge society was more to inclusion. We had gaps in inclusive education, in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Furthermore, he highlighted the participation in the design and implementation of inclusive education. It was about the power of the community to remove barriers. Another point was the role of inclusive education within a renewed commitment towards EFA goals. It was about how to conceptualize the quality education (EFA goal 6) in the light of assuming the concept of inclusive education as a guiding policy principle.

A strong childhood education policy would support inclusive education. We had to have a coherent and integrated international framework to develop a broadened concept of inclusive education. This would imply a strong political dialogue. The fifth area of debate was to promote and safeguard the right to an equitable, high-quality education. There was a delicate and complex equilibrium between governments' and parents' rights and responsibilities; also prejudice towards heterogeneous learning environments. Diversity took time to look for alternatives. There were also arguments and pressure in favor of homogeneous school.

Another point to consider was that if the curriculum mattered for achieving an inclusive educational setting. The conceptualization, the structure and the contents of the curriculum were sources of inclusion or exclusion from the education system. The commonly perceived and evidence-based problems including curricula are overloaded, too academic and excessively exam-oriented and development of competency-based approaches.

The last point was to change teachers' profile and role, and support teachers for professional development. The commonly perceived and evidence-based problems were strong teachers' resistance to cope with school and classroom heterogeneity as well as the lack of competences and knowledge on how to address diversity. Teacher education curricula lacked conceptual frameworks and methodological tools to effectively address the diversity of learners' expectations and needs. He finally gave points of school-based support to teachers that included interdisciplinary teamwork.

Questions & Answers Session

Prof. Fasli asked Mr. Renato if we had best practice for this issue in school level. Did we have completion in the region? Given the condition, how could we approach it, what kind of model that could be used to change the mindset of the society?

Prof. Suyanto asked Mr. Sheldon if there was any policy from UNESCO for the problem solving regarding the access to education for children whose parents worked overseas.

Ms. Fatima Aziz asked both speakers about UNESCO's contribution to application of inclusive education in Indonesia.

Indonesia asked Mr. Sheldon about the measure of the success of the implementation; was there any best practice to institutionalize teachers in inclusive education?

Mr. Sheldon said that best practice was dependent on the needs; for example, the need for remote areas. Vietnam was the pioneer for the whole approach. 30% children in the world were in developing countries. If we looked at multilingual education, there were a lot of examples in the region. We would be hearing the presentation of best practices from some countries later. From the point of view of system, it allowed flexibility that children were educated.

Which one was suitable for the community was dependent on the contents. The basic principle was that all children had the rights to education. About the children who lived in another country, the problem was the language used in the receiving country. We were looking at the important components that boosted inclusion. We were supporting Indonesian education including language of instruction and gender equality.

Mr. Renato said that teachers' education should use good models, as it provided the tendency to cooperate. In terms of the contents, it emphasized on the curriculum frame. Teachers in primary and secondary schools were included in the training of inclusive education, to get the common understanding and framework. Inclusive education was a process because it needed response.

Mr. Sheldon added that one of the major questions was the pre service-training programme; it was given to young children; it was also outlining the recognition of individual needs and problems. The problem was that the system could not do that. It was not impossible to develop inclusive teaching and learning; arranging some assignments in small groups.

World Bank asked Mr. Sheldon about the language barriers in Indonesia.

Mr. Sheldon said that there were ways to encourage mother tongue literacy to attract and to use them in the classroom; this could be resolved, underlying the whole issue if the government encouraged the use of minority languages.

Prof. Arief invited the participants to write down their questions on papers that could be discussed during the parallel sessions later on.

2. Enhancing Learning and Inclusive Education, UNESCO Perspective

Ms. Maria Malevri (ED/BAS)

Ms. Maria presented the new idea to make a change hoping to support the EFA goals. She raised a question, “why to focus on enhancing learning?” She measured “quality as not only access, not only access to retention, not only access, retention and learning; it was more.” There were many factors in quality including outcomes, literacy, numeracy, other skills, creative and emotional development as well as values and attitudes.

She elaborated quality measured in GMR 2008, EFA goal 6; it emphasized on learning outcomes – all level (international regional and national) assessments. The focus should be also on the balance of quality and quantity of teaching force. For the quality matter, there should be provision for adequate TT hire or retain or trained teachers in regards of financial matter.

While enrollments had increased in recent years, the quality of learning remains a serious issue. She mentioned about the goals of the EL programme that highlighted the contribution to MDGs goals by linking poverty and school learning. We had defined three factors that were very important for the learning to take place: individual learner, in-school factors and out-of-school factors.

The factors that influenced individual learner were nutrition, mental health and sleep architecture that affected the development of the brain, which had multiple interconnected functions; not forget to mention also mental dysfunction or illness impedes learning. That was for absorbing the learning process. This idea was to change the curricula and to introduce the new method of teaching. There were some other factors including emotional factors that had a profound impact on successful learning.

The second point was in-school factors. Educational success was in part dependent upon the educational environment, learning was based on comprehension, mother tongue instruction gave to the child a great deal of knowledge; more to mention was that the school curriculum should be designed to enlarge the child’s vocabulary and to let them use the language creatively; text books and school equipments were other factors as well as other instructional materials. Other factors were that teachers should be trained in multi-grade teaching.

The out-of-school factors covered the issue of poverty-poor health-malnutrition, violence and learning, school governance and learning process that also influenced the learning in the school as well as the parent’s literacy that contributed to this factor.

The immediate objectives of the EL programme were to share information and models. The programme that could be done was to develop guidelines or methodology to test learning for MS; to develop parameters or standards to be considered. The next step was to organize interregional meetings to identify country

needs in the areas of enhancing learning, to continue the identification of priority areas for research. What was suggested being done for 2008-2009 was to advocate research findings, show case on the good practices and build south-south synergy?

The objective of the conference was to agree on regional priorities to enhance learning, to identify innovative best practices on enhancing learning, to select themes to be further developed, to agree on methodology for research and to create networks. There was synthesis of the research studies to find out some points including inequity arising out of exclusion. This finding will be brought to Geneva to advocate the results that were based on the factors defined by the researchers of each country. She raised two questions related to the quality and the measures.

There were points to be considered for the analysis of the research studies including the context, methodology of research, the achievements of the learning and the achievements measures. She briefly presented a case study of EL through policies in Bangladesh on the reform of examination; also another case study in China on the case of migrant children. Another study was in France on EL for primary school children with socio-economic difficulties, case studies in Estonia, India and Tanzania.

There were some studies that were taking place currently in Latin America and Arab States; these would be presented in ICE. She mentioned about the template of the best practices on EL that involved many stakeholders, funds and the target groups. She finally urged to work on enhancing learning.

3. Disaster Risk Reduction Education

Ms. Christel Rose of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR), Asia Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand

Ms. Christel presented “Disaster Risk Reduction Education as part of Inclusive Education.” She showed the trends of the disaster reduction in many graphs. There was increased impact of disasters due to climate change. She emphasized this point on disasters as constant rise and climate change frequency. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) was a long-term development activity, recognized as integral part of SD.

She showed the framework of disaster reduction that covered the context and the risk factors. UN/ISDR had Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) for 2005-2015. The expected outcome was the substantive reduction in losses and lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and nations.

There were some priorities to include; to ensure that disaster risk reduction was a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation, to identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning, to use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels. To reduce the underlying risk factors, to strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

She gave the facts of the reality check that happened in Asian region. Based on NSET, study found 60% school in Asia made of weak construction materials and located on fragile and low-lying areas. These tragedies were no longer acceptable especially when education was supposed to be a primary priority of the international community through the following global processes. This was even less acceptable because education was a basic fundamental human right.

The long-term disaster risk reduction education complied the concept with two-fold parallel objectives – encompassed all measures that gave contribution to raise awareness and knowledge building and community empowerment as well as the protection of educational assets. DRR was by essence inclusive, grouped together all key stakeholders at national level, including local authorities, NGOs and communities – DRR was everybody's business and inclusive of all concerns and expertise. The concept of EFA would be realistic only when the protection of all school children and teachers would be fully ensured through disaster risk reduction education. Children were agents for change.

She further explained the process of the DRR education as well as the content of the curriculum. There were two ways: separate DRR subject and module. It was also to institutionalize the content, the capacity, community, children and the scale-up. She gave recommendation for action including to seek political commitment, to recognize DRR education as a pre-condition, to invite the ministries of Education to mainstream DRR into education system through DRR education and to allocate necessary financial, human and technical resources as well as to request the international conference on education (ICE) to include the issue of DRR education as an essential topic of inclusive education.

She showed the existing regional processes and partnerships for DRR education and ultimately invited the governments from the Asia Pacific region to support the programme through the World Bank's "One Million Safe Schools," to seek other possible funding sources, to seek the endorsement of ICE's recommendations on DRR Education and to seek supports from Ministries of Education and key actors.

4. Disaster Risk Reduction Information

Ms. Sae Kani, Project Manager, Arbeiter Samariter Bund, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

She presented widening access to disaster risk reduction information: disability, rights and inclusion – an example from Yogyakarta, Indonesia. She gave the figure of the number of disabled people in the world, which is over 650 millions people and 2/3 of them are in Asia and Pacific. She showed the Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF) for 2003 – 2012 as well as Biwako Plus 5 for 2007 – 2012.

Furthermore, she highlighted the Bangkok Action Agenda that complied four recommendations for children with disabilities, including the design of educational strategies. She showed a picture of an existing programme in Yogyakarta – earthquake preparedness for students with disabilities. The aim was to provide

information on earthquake early warning system. How to teach disaster preparedness education for deaf students was outlined to use sign language, oral method and reading based learning. The solution highlighted visual based total and communication method.

She showed other pictures on the process of producing earthquake preparedness materials with deaf students, in the classroom and outdoors. The programme was showing film; teachers had to check the progress towards total communication methods. Students also showed other students what was right or wrong – what to do and what not to do when earthquake occurred.

They also conducted earthquake evacuation drill. Only covering special needs schools was not enough; there were still many disabled children who were not accessing formal education. The reasons were lacks of information or misinformation regarding special needs children to attend special needs schools and parents' misjudgment regarding children's disabilities and physical capacities.

Another problem to consider was there is no time and no transport to take children to the nearest special needs schools; the possible solution was to provide more local schools that accept children with special needs. The issue to focus was the inclusive schools needed more teachers with experiences working with special needs children also the administrative complications between province and district government of Indonesia to make coordination between special needs schools and inclusive schools. Inclusive education was not only about to get children into the classroom but also to provide quality education.

She concluded with the concerns of access to information, which could potentially save lives that was the right for all and disabled children had a right to learn how to protect their own lives.

Questions & Answers Session

Indonesia asked Ms. Sae about the changes of policy in Indonesia; when we looked at special needs schools, this was opportunity for us. This was a key issue on how to make special needs schools to be a research center.

Helen Keller International asked about recommendation for young people to get into teaching profession.

A question addressed to Ms. Maria, about policy issues on pilot project of inclusive education.

Ms. Maria had no advice regarding the provision for teacher training in addressing the multi-facet and diversity issue, whether the profession was given values. Today, some community saw it but slowly we lost that attitude; it needed to be revitalized, to improve the quality of education, the governments needed to give better training for the teachers as well as the capacity development for them in order to perform

better. Another point was about benchmark; at this level we could not give any benchmark; this would come from your side. If this was a demand, we could see if it could be included.

Ms. Christel added that all we needed was political commitment because it could not be done without it.

Ms. Sae said that it was a matter of centralization or decentralization to find out different solutions.

2.3. Plenary Session 3

Mr. Anwar Alsaid, UNESCO Office Jakarta, chaired the session. He opened the session, briefly explained the agenda of the next plenary session, introduced the speakers of the session and gave the time to the speakers.

2.3.1. Topic 1: Children with Disability

Dr. Vivian Heung, Hong Kong

Ms. Vivian firstly mentioned about her past experiences working with schools in different countries including Indonesia and said that doing inclusive education was a challenge. The purpose of this meeting was to review the current status including the approaches and content, public policies, systems and transition and learning and teaching. She would like to make recommendations for future development.

Regarding inclusive education, she raised some questions including the learners, the role of the teachers, the purpose of education and the issue of underclass of citizens in the society. There were not so much concerns on the learning outcomes. This group of children might have not experienced exclusive education, although at first they were excluded. We had to be thankful because of inclusive education; we could be inference in the inferential values. If these questions were asked in Asian countries, the answers would be different from western countries.

Furthermore, she explained about the concept that embraced the issues of disability, impairment and learning difficulty, system of identification, assessment and classification. In this specific issue, we had to see, what these children needed to learn. She explained the prevalent thinking in most Asian regions and asked some questions to elaborate the issue further including the value of education to these children and if they should be taken care of by social welfare agencies as well as their participation in school.

Another point that she concentrated was the approaches used in this programme; special children required special methods, deficient model or medical model, correction and remedial work, changing the child to fit the system, special curriculum and schools. She asked if we should give them special treatment or we

should change the system to fit the children. Other approaches were to outline special needs education and inclusive education itself.

There was a difference in the approaches to use: whole school approach or whole community approach. Next point she examined was the public policies issue. There were some points that she highlighted including a range of policies set up to protect their rights. These policies might have not been implemented in practice; there was lack of policies regarding access to curriculum, learning outcomes and accountability. The UK had initiated the idea of “no child left behind.”

The rationale of inclusive education was the most effective education. It also held the pre-post 1994 (Salamanca Statement). She explained further about the systems, links and transitions; it was to gain access to education, to transform the dual system of education: integrating students with Special Education Needs (SEN) in mainstream schools – there were policies regarding discrimination. It upheld full inclusion.

There should be examination on the current statues including the enrollment figures, percentage of children in school and percentage of children in segregated provision, which remains the same. Inclusion was a process, it should emphasize on the capacity building process in schools, leadership, additional resources, changing culture and the professional development for teachers. She showed a diagram of the indicators for inclusion and school self-evaluation, in Hong Kong. There were some barriers in participations, in the classrooms. She mentioned about the teaching practices that enforced the issue of mixed ability teaching, homogenous or heterogeneous issues, the emphasis on academic teaching and respect for different learning styles.

Some practices – case studies – in Hong Kong used whole school approaches. She explained the new funding model of the project also the three dimensions of service provision; she showed the diagram of services of educational psychology service (NT) section and explained about the resources development and showed the examples of publications and resources that were put in schools to help the children.

Finally, there was also multi-disciplinary collaboration, issues in teacher training. She mentioned that teachers were agent for change, changes in the school system and support models. We had to support disabled children to learn day by day, if we did not include them in every day lesson how they could make progress.

Questions & Answers Session

Indonesia asked why policies were important thing? Referring to some issues in several countries that were not discussed. Policies were not widely disseminated and the participation of the children was not counted.

Indonesia asked about the issue of large number of teachers in training; the effective way of training for teachers in Indonesia.

Ms. Vivian said that all the teachers needed to be trained but the number was too big. However, this could be done by school-based training, we could encourage them to do research training by themselves.

2.3.2. Topic 2: HIV/AIDS and Health

Mr. Simon Baker, Thailand

Mr. Simon outlined his presentation on HIV/AIDS, but this must have been seen, as one of many diseases that affected inclusive education. HIV/AIDS was an obstacle to inclusive education; it threatened to put a break on reaching the EFA goals. He gave the estimation of people living with HIV/AIDS at the end of 2005. In Asia; there were 8.3 million people were living with HIV/AIDS, 1.1 million adults were newly infected, 225 thousand children living with HIV, and over half of million died from AIDS.

He teased out the focus of HIV and young people. Young people lacked of knowledge and skills to protect themselves, young people especially in urban areas, were increasingly sexually active. Many adolescents were having sex younger than suspected. He showed some graphs on the number of adolescent having sex before their 15th birthday, the figure of young people aged 15-24 who lived with HIV/AIDS in 2001. He shared the figure of HIV prevalence in Thailand and South Africa from 1990-2000. In Thailand, the government was very proactive in this issue compared to the government of South Africa.

HIV stigma was the main reason why children were being denied their right to an education. Through our failures we made the situation worse, stigma led to higher infection rates because it prevented people from getting tested and protecting themselves. HIV had challenged MOEs, teachers, parents, children and all of us – and too often we had failed. The psycho-emotional impact outlined the issue of children who lost their family unit and ‘safety net.’ How could the education system respond to psycho-emotional impact; involves the issue of teachers’ understandings and curriculum as well as teaching activities?

The social impact of HIV/AIDS on children would give negative reactions that were usually based on moral judgments. The education sector could respond to social impact by understanding and being sensitive to affected children’s needs. Poverty often hit families affected by HIV/AIDS leading to fewer resources for education and health care for children. Stigma was a two-way crisis. Another way was scholarship programmes for children in difficult circumstances that should be expanded to include children affected by HIV/AIDS. The implication to access education; materials social and psycho-emotional impacts were barriers to access. There was a need for educational policies, not only punitive.

The other issue was the importance of education in the fight against HIV. Education was the only vaccine; there were no cures or vaccines for HIV. Currently education was the only way to prevent infection. The most effective education to HIV/AIDS was education itself. He showed a diagram of a social vaccine in a rural Uganda – HIV

prevalence by education category; how education protected against HIV, becoming literate and numerate enhanced one's potential to make discerning use of information.

The implications, was that the most powerful education sector response to HIV was to send children into school and keep them in school for as many years as possible. Making the education responses more effective, it strengthened the education response to HIV/AIDS by enabling the entire school community to live responsibly safely and productively in a world with HIV/AIDS. The curricula should reflect the learning needs related to HIV. The curriculum response to HIV/AIDS should ensure the integration to classroom activities. We had to make HIV an inherent part of the national curriculum. HIV preventive education worked.

Research showed that young people well informed about sex and HIV, delayed starting sexual activity. He raised a question if Asian education's system could do all of these. After a quarter of a century of HIV and AIDS, most of our Asian schools had not yet provided HIV and sex education. In conclusion, we had to develop appropriate policies, ensured adequate planning and management, made HIV an inherent part of the national curriculum, focused on preventive education, reduced vulnerability, introduced or upgraded life skills education and promoted a culture of compassion and care.

He ultimately urged the participants to read a magazine related to HIV/AIDS that was distributed. Further, we were all ready doing it. Many children infected and affected by HIV were in school, teachers and students might or might have not known the child's HIV status, the child and the parents might or might have not known their status. If we could provide education to so many children infected and affected by HIV, why could not we do it for all such children?

Questions & Answers Session

Indonesia asked about the stigma discrimination to children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Simon said that the community did not understand about HIV/AIDS, thus the stigma discrimination occurred.

2.4. Parallel Session 1

Mr. Johan explained about the mechanism of the parallel session and the grouping of the participants as well as the venues of the working groups. He urged the country delegation to equally group themselves in the working groups and asked them to bring their coffee to the parallel session to save the time constraint.

Participants were divided into four groups in four different rooms. The rapporteurs were selected from country representatives decided by the groups.

2.4.1. Topic 1: Children with Disability

The topic had two groups and each was facilitated by Ms. Vivian Heung and Mr. Johan Lindeberg, and Mr. Ian Kaplan and Mr. Renato Opertti. Both groups had 37 and 19 participants respectively including the facilitators. They conducted interactive dialogue, discussion and case study presentations on children with disability.

2.4.2. Topic 2: HIV/AIDS and Health

The topic had two groups and each was facilitated by Mr. Simon Baker and Mr. Daoyu Wang, and Mr. Terje Watterdal and Mr. Anwar Alsaïd. Both groups had 15 and 17 participants respectively including the facilitators. They conducted interactive dialogue, discussion and case study presentations on HIV/AIDS and health.

3.1. Plenary Session 4

Mr. Sheldon Shaeffer, Director of UNESCO Bangkok chaired the plenary and opened the session by greeting the participants and outlined the topics discussed yesterday. Ultimately, we were trying to put these policies in the larger frameworks. He introduced the speakers of the session and gave the time to them.

3.1.1. Topic 3: Minority (Ethnic, Language, Religion)

Prof. Dr. H. M. Amin Abdullah, Rector of State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta

Prof. Amin highlighted his presentation on “Inter-subjective Religious Approach Contribution to the Dissemination of Inclusive Education (Special Reference to Ethnic and Religious Minority)”. He touched the issues of terrorism of Bali bombing few years back; and it was important to talk about inclusive education and religion was included here. Religion was very seldom found in the praxis of education in general. It was segregated to the department of education, but generally it was under the department of education and religious affairs. It was the contemporary issue that had to be dealt with; otherwise it would get more difficult in the future.

It was in education we could disseminate the new values; religion and education had to contribute in this changing world. There were three approaches to religion from the point of view of education: subjective, objective and inter-subjective approach. In this changing world, the challenge was how to respond to it. In the community, it was usually found that people were defensive not communicative. We had to describe other religions, not to judge them. Sometimes we had to put ourselves as outsiders, not merely insiders. It was important to the people so that they could be more tolerant. Every religion performed rituals and they had their own history.

They knew about their own tradition but they did not know about others’ tradition. Furthermore, he explained about the inter-subjective approach that outlined the understanding about other religious faiths and recognizing their right to exist and live, the belief of common patterns. It also developed sympathy and empathy in order to achieve perpetual peace and peaceful coexistence also it developed new mindset. The implication to inclusive education was the recognition of other groups to exist and live as suggested by inter-subjective approach, could be employed to disseminate. The core of the approach was to develop sympathy and empathy to other religions. They omitted this to inclusive education within this domain. The main question to be raised was if schoolteachers could make these civility values in inter-subjective approach in education; it couldn’t be found easily without talking about subjective or objective approaches about being religious.

To make this happened in classroom, it was necessary to change the mindset, vision, and attitude of teachers towards more inclusive, dialogical, partnership, participative and critical. To his opinion, he had five points to implement this idea: first was dialogue center (for undergraduate and graduate students to disseminate pluralism and multi-pluralism). National university also should have this center; second was the center for difabel study for developing issues on people with special needs; third was the ICRS, the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies to conduct inter-religious studies; the fourth was center for woman study that was responsible for gender mainstreaming; the fifth was center for language, culture and religion, a center that was responsible for studying issues on those issues. Later we could discuss minority education especially in religion.

Mr. John Custer, SIL Indonesia

He presented “Including Ethnolinguistic Communities in Education for All: Major Policy Issues in the Asia and Pacific Region.” He asked the participants to write down the word ‘language’ in their own languages on a piece of paper and collect them. He showed some publications relevant to language and the map of Asia Ethnolinguistic Heritage, also showed the chart of the number of language spoken in Central, East, South and South-East Asia. There were 2,265 languages spoken in Asia but education systems concentrated on the 45 official languages found in the region.

He showed another a picture of an analogy of mother tongue for children, which was needed for primary education while the second language is introduced. He showed a figure of tested secured functional literacy rates in Lao by the language family in the country; also the estimated percentage of country populations with access to initial education in their mother tongue. He showed a graph of the level of restrictive and support of language-in-education policies. Mother tongue instruction was essential instruction and literacy should be extended. He showed the phases of a three-language programme.

The first phase was to build small children fluency and confidence in oral first language. He mentioned about the benefits and challenges that outlined the improved self confidence, faster literacy acquisition, better comprehension of curriculum content, improved cognitive development, and more success in learning second language. The challenges were political will to accommodate diversity, perceived concerns for national unity, increased costs and administrative complexity. The most powerful actor in predicting the educational success of minority learners was the amount of formal schooling they received in their fist language.

He elaborated the components of strong multilingual education programmes that included supportive language and educational policies. He gave issues for discussion: how inclusive were your national policies regarding ethnic or local languages and education? What difference was there between policy and practice in the inclusion of ethnolinguistic groups in your country?

Mr. Sheldon wrapped up the presentations and gave analogy that there were a lot of children in the region that did not understand what the teachers were saying. He said mother tongue was very important for children.

Questions & Answers Session

Indonesia asked about the challenge of bilingual education to be presented in school as Indonesia had a lot of ethnic languages. What is the strategy that can be used for the teachers? Another question was for Prof. Amin about consideration of other religions to be the best religion among others, what was the activity of the center towards the religious diversity.

Timor Leste asked Mr. John about students who used mother tongue would learn faster and how the finding was applied in the countries that had a lot of dialects.

Prof. Amin said that it was the most difficult situation to be religious. In every religion, they had strong belief that there was something non-falsifiable alternate realities; this was the source of dogma, if we could not communicate this to others, and this would be the source of fanaticism. The issue of inclusive education would confront this. We had to find solution on how to give space for others. Inclusive education would give room for others. The dialogue center was for rising awareness for the students that there were a lot of people that were different, diverse and plural. He urged to be proficient for our religion and world citizenship.

Mr. John said it was important that teachers were aware of their mother tongue and they were presented in the classroom. Asian countries that had a lot of dialects had challenges in the society. He gave a good example of Papua New Guinea. There were a lot of success stories in Indonesia through local curricula that outlined local languages. There was a process that we could go through to develop.

Ms. Alice of SIL Indonesia added that we had complex situation in this condition; we had to be flexible in the national context. Teachers could not teach language what they could not speak, thus we had to hire bilingual teachers. Another way was to recruit two teachers in one class, or volunteer or the locals as teachers' assistant. Another issue was the materials. In Indonesia, the government sent graduate students back to their hometown to teach literacy.

Ms. Bhaswati of India shared a religious education and the whole issue of ethno-languages and the policies. India was similar to Indonesia that had hundreds of languages and thousands of dialects. We used English and Hindi; we had three-language formula. The India's experience proved that it was important to learn mother tongue and it made us easier to learn third language. In a secular country like India, we had to recognize the atheists, not only the religious citizens. She suggested that the flow of the conference should link the ICE's mission. One country and another might not be comparable, for example, there was Madrasah in India and Pakistan.

3.1.2. Topic 4: Migrant Children/Refugees/IDP

Mr. Robert Ashe, UNHCR

Mr. Robert started his explanation on the migrant children and refugees. UNHCR had been dealing with emergency situation. Refugees were spread out but they didn't get proper education. The conditions forced the families withdrew the children from school. Refugees parents were sometimes reluctant to have their children educated in national languages, seeing that they were only temporarily staying in the country. There were also refugee children in Indonesia. He mentioned some current situation in some countries like Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

The right to education was the fundamental right of every child. The provision of education was an obligation of the host states and all organizations to provide for all child including refugees. In conclusion, there were two issues: legal and practical that we had to consider. There were some challenges like financial concerns that must be overcome if education wanted to include children in marginalized groups.

Questions & Answers Session

Pakistan asked about the resources, as the country concerns more on MDGs and other things. The country wanted to talk about all sectors of education and what inclusive education should include; those with HIV/AIDS or those with disabilities. We needed to focus more the specific issues. Referring to the comments of India, English had become compulsory as a language not medium of instruction; a lot of private schools were using English.

India followed the comments of Pakistan. It was impossible to teach hundreds of languages in the globalization. We prepared our children to get into globalization. India had similar issue as Pakistan. About migrant children, there were a lot of migrants to India from the neighboring country. It was also the issue of economic migration.

Mr. Robert said that children should not be discriminated. If they were in another country they still should get proper education.

Mr. Sheldon wrapped up the session and outlined that the discussion would facilitate deep deliberation of what could be linked to the ICE. He mentioned about the achievements of MDGs and EFA to deal with the conceptual framework and about evidence-based policy also the issue of mother tongue. He said that we had to see the practicality of the use of mother tongue.

3.2. Parallel Session 2

Participants are divided into four groups in four different rooms. The rapporteurs would be selected from country representatives decided by the groups.

3.2.1. Topic 3: Minority (Ethnic, Language, Religion)

The topic had two groups and each was facilitated by Prof. Amin Abdullah, Mr. Renato Opertti and Mr. John Custer, and Ms. Alice Eastwood and Mr. Johan Lindeberg. Both groups had 19 and 19 participants respectively including the facilitators. They conducted interactive dialogue, discussion and case study presentations on minority (ethnic, language, religion).

3.2.1. Topic 4: Migrant Children/Refugees/IDP

The topic had two groups and each was facilitated by Mr. Robert Ashe & Mr. Daoyu Wang, and Mr. Bartholomeus Vrolijk. Due to the small number of the group members, the two groups merged with 30 participants including the facilitators. The group conducted interactive dialogue, discussion and case study presentations on migrant children/refugees/IDP.

3.3. Plenary Session 5

Ms. Bhaswati Mukherjee, Ambassador/Permanent Delegate of India to UNESCO, Chaired the plenary, thanked for the opportunity and gave brief introduction of the topics of the session and introduces the speakers; and explains the mechanism of the session including the question and answer session. She then gives the time to the two speakers.

3.3.1. Topic 5: Social Exclusion

Dr. Anupam Ahuja, National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), New Delhi, India, accompanied by Mr. Budi of Indonesia

Ms. Anupam delivered a presentation on “Social Exclusion: Some Critical Reflections.” She briefly introduced a current situation of a school building in Laos. A female teacher that she met there said, “all for the children, for all the children.” What was really there was a will. She explained about the journey towards inclusion. She referred to Indonesian motto of “Bhineka Tunggal Ika” (Unity in Diversity) for that journey diagram.

The purpose of schooling outlined some points including to be safe and secure, to develop a sense of self towards the shared intentions in formal and informal educations. Another point was exclusion from school because the school was too far, not considered important for some e.g. girls, a miserable place where you failed and

got into trouble and the real cost of free education was too much. However, the questions to ask were: did children choose to live away from school? Did families choose to be poor? Did children choose to fail? And did children like to be socially excluded?

She showed a picture a flock of sheep's and asked the audience about what they saw from the picture. She asked a question from that picture, "did I have the right to be different?" Social exclusion had often a social, lingual and financial base. She said about challenging struggle that highlighted variety of national, regional, cultural and social contexts exit that led to no single solution. Some points asked about what our values and beliefs were about social exclusion; that outlined education learning, support in learning, difference, discrimination, responsibility for child learning and teachers. She explained about the understanding social exclusion and used some terminologies and labels about children with special needs; were we not still considering the children "special"?

The elaboration furthered on social exclusion and poverty and the term in social exclusion. She explained about access to education, which touched the point that societies lived for a millennium by value system based on division hierarchy under caste feudal society economic status, gender relations and cultural diversity; historical exclusion from formal education, educational disparities-quantity, quality, teaching learning process and learning outcomes; no matter about the age, gender, place of residence, etc. Social exclusion was the right to quality education towards some critical reflection. She left some questions to the participants, "how could school increase achievement of disadvantaged learners?" "How did we look at children at risk as children with promise?"

Next point was about social exclusion towards curriculum including the context, teaching-learning methods, exams and resources-books. She showed pictures about a girl who failed an exam, yet she was learning and working at the same time. She elaborated about gender bias in the Asian context that contributed to exclusion; she showed some examples in some countries about gender equality, which required access to equal opportunities to attend school.

She requested a silence moment to read some quotes regarding social exclusion, some voices from children and teachers. She showed pictures of a day care center in Tajikistan. "We don't eat at home. We eat at the Day Care Center." She mentioned about the focus on NPAs, positive intents towards CFS in some NPAs including Sri Lanka. She explained about the emerging issue of NPAs including the IE and CFS as not a recurring theme, the focus primarily on the poor or marginalized rather than 'all.' She mentioned about inclusion that was not a utopian dream, which led to inclusive societies overnight, the current effort just marked the beginning of journey and the challenge was to work collectively and find contextual options to address social exclusion and make IE a reality.

Mr. Budi Hermawan

Mr. Budi introduced the traditional Balinese puppet show and invited the puppet player; Mr. Wayan Sudjana who would perform the puppet titled “Sumantri Sukarsana” about social inclusion issue. Mr. Wayan was assisted by two traditional music players while performing his puppets on the stage on social inclusion in relations to inclusive education.

3.3.2. Topic 6: Gender

Ms. Nina Sardjunani, represented by Ms. Suharti

Ms. Suharti presented “Inclusion of Gender Responsiveness in Education: Indonesian Experiences.” Firstly she mentioned that Indonesia had important legal basis related to gender: Law No 20/2003 about National Education system and Presidential Decree No. 9/2000 about Gender Mainstreaming in National Development. She mentioned about the progress in gender equality that could be measured in terms of access, process and outcomes (from the point of view of education). She mentioned about the current condition table of the mean years of schooling of population age 15 years and above in urban and rural areas.

She showed the table of the literacy rate among population by age groups for male and female in urban and rural areas for the year 2006 and mentioned about the disparity within the region – province. She showed the chart of the literacy rate among population and the ratio of female to male net enrollment rate (NER) by level of education for the year 1992-2006, based on the MDG Indonesia Report 2007. She showed another table on the reasons for not continuing education among out-of-school children age 7-18 years old in 2006. The reasons were that they didn’t have money, they didn’t like to go to school, they had to work, etc. She further showed another table on the score of national examination at junior and senior secondary school in 2004 on the subjects of Indonesian and English and Mathematics.

There was tendency that girls chose subjects that were less hard like tourism, she showed the proportion of girls and boys in vocational schools. The key issues and challenges were that national aggregate data hid disparities at sub-national levels and inversed gender gap phenomenon in some areas. She also talked about the process of gender equality in education. The trend showed that the teachers’ knowledge and awareness of gender responsiveness and gender responsive teaching methods was inadequate.

Furthermore, another finding was that most methods and other learning materials implicitly communicated differentiated gender roles. She showed pictures on example of gender stereotype in textbooks. Another point was about the governance in education. She then showed a chart on the proportion of teachers in schools as well as the proportion of head masters by sex – male and female for the year 2002.

She elaborated the challenges and key issues that outlined the data on quality indicator were limited, concept of responsive gender school was not yet implemented and unequal proportion of male and female in decision making at school level. She explained about the outcomes of gender equality; labor participation of male was higher than female and the level of unemployment as well as the proportion of male and female in parliament.

She gave some policy recommendation on gender in education: to institutionalize gender mainstreaming in education system as integral part of inclusive education strategy, to ensure allocation of resources for promoting gender equality in education, to ensure gender responsive teaching and learning materials and process and to ensure the accessibility of education services and facilities, especially of unreached and at-risk children (especially girls).

Questions & Answers Session

Indonesia asked Ms. Suharti about the possibility of quota in Indonesia on gender mainstreaming issues, so that women could take more integral roles.

Ms. Bhaswati gave an example of the similar case in India, which was very difficult to give more quotas for Indian women to be in the parliament.

Indonesia asked about the cross cutting issue on gender equality with other issue like environment.

Ms. Suharti said that there was no regulation in the civil service for the female staffs. In her office there was 'fit and proper' tests, for example if the scores between male and female were the same, the Minister would choose the female candidate. In the Ministry of National Education, there was a regulation to give more attention to female teachers to be the headmasters of the school, still there was difficulty regarding the quality between male and female candidates. There was a cross cutting issues on gender equality and other issue in our office too.

Mr. Renato asked about social inclusion issue if it was an active foundation in education. When we were talking about social inclusion or exclusion; was it also about social development in the society towards knowledge society? How was the discussion of social inclusion in the region?

Prof. Arief asked about the social inclusion issue. The issue of gender equity sometimes went to the cultural principle issues. In one area in Indonesia, women were happier to stay at home to do domestic activities. It was the issue of gender equity and social development; how were we going to explain about what gender equity was?

Ms. Bhaswati said that to answer that question we needed women teachers who had been empowered – from their perspective.

Ms. Anuja said that social exclusion was leading to social inclusion and it couldn't be limited only to education issue; it would continue to working environment. No one had any control of us. We were here also talking about system change. This had to be addressed everywhere. We might have good social infrastructure in school, but they would be still excluded.

Ms. Suharti said that gender equity did not mean women had to work out of the house; there should be an agreement between husband and wife. What mattered a lot was that male and female had equal education. Based on the data, the increase of education would decrease the level of fertility.

Ms. Bhaswati supplemented her answers about the stereotype of women in India; it had been banned because women had the rights to choose what they wished to do and to be. She believed that stereotype played important role in inclusive education, and this was what we needed to bring to the conference.

Announcements

Mr. Renato announced the mechanism of the next working groups and reminded the rapporteurs of each working group to prepare a report of the discussions.

Prof. Arief announced the submission of the form of best practices to Ms. Maria of UNESCO Headquarters Paris.

3.4. Parallel Session 3

Participants are divided into four groups in four different rooms in the hotel area. The Rapporteurs will be selected from country representatives decided by the group.

3.4.1. Topic 5: Social Exclusion

The topic had two groups and each was facilitated by Ms. Anupam Ahuja, Mr. Renato Opertti and Mr. Daoyu Wang, and Mr. Sheldon Shaeffer and Mr. Anwar Alsaïd. Due to the small number of the group members, the two groups merged with 28 participants including the facilitators. The group conducted interactive dialogue, discussion and case study presentations on social exclusion.

3.4.2. Topic 6: Gender

The topic had two groups and each was facilitated by Ms. Suharti, and Ms. Yangxia Lee and Mr. Johan Lindeberg. Due to the small number of the group members, the two groups merged with 14 participants including the facilitators. The group conducted interactive dialogue, discussion and case study presentations on gender.

3.5. Rapporteurs Meeting

Mr. Renato opened the session and explained the procedures of the meeting. Mr. Johan added a point on the coordination of the rapporteurs of the working groups for the presentation session in the last plenary session the next day. There would be six rapporteurs for the six respective topics. The rapporteurs then grouped themselves into six topic groups and prepared the presentations for the results of the group discussions.

Topic 1: Children with Disability

Rapporteur, Ms. Widya Prasetyati, Indonesia was assisted by the facilitator, Dr. Vivian Heung to formulate the report of the group discussion for the final plenary session.

Topic 2: HIV/AIDS and Health

Rapporteur, Mr. Budi Hermawan, AUSAID, Indonesia was assisted by the facilitator, Mr. Terje Watterdal to formulate the report of the group discussion for the final plenary session.

Topic 3: Minority (ethnic, language, religion)

Rapporteur, Ms. Jennifer Tamarua, Papua New Guinea was assisted by the facilitators, Mr. John Custer and Ms. Alice Eastwood to formulate the report of the group discussion for the final plenary session.

Topic 4: Migrant Children/Refugees/IDP

Rapporteur, Ms. Sae Kani, ABS, Indonesia was assisted by the facilitators to formulate the report of the group discussion for the final plenary session.

Topic 5: Social Exclusion

Rapporteur, Dr. Leela, Nepal was assisted by the facilitator, Ms. Anupam Ahuja to formulate the report of the group discussion for the final plenary session.

Topic 6: Gender

Rapporteur, Ms. Mona Aliana DPHM Alimin, Brunei Darussalam was assisted by the facilitators to formulate the report of the group discussion for the final plenary session.

4.1. Plenary Session 6

Ms. Sengdeuane Lachanthaboune chaired the session and greeted the participants in Indonesian, “Selamat Pagi!” She thanked the organizers for the opportunity and explained about the mechanism of the plenary session as well as the presentation time and introduced the rapporteurs of each working group.

4.1.1. Reports of the Parallel Session

Topic 1: Children with Disability

Rapporteur: Ms. Widya Prasetyati, Indonesia

Ms. Widya hoped that the summary could cover the voice of each participating country. First point she outlined was public policy. There was a need of identification and assessment tools for enrollment of the children with disabilities to the schools. She mentioned some points to be the key concerns or point of recommendations of the topic. Further she gave the approaches that were used including the medical model that might have deflected attention from education intervention, which was important for children with disabilities.

There was a need to increase awareness and empathy of parents, as they might have not fully understood the values of inclusion. Another point was about teaching and learning that highlighted the pedagogies for inclusive teaching and learning and child-centered teaching that should be encouraged in supporting the inclusion of students with disabilities. While, the national standards valued by some countries were considered a barrier to inclusion. Some countries emphasized that support for the child with disabilities in inclusion should be rendered.

Topic 2: HIV/AIDS and Health

Rapporteur: Mr. Budi Hermawan, AUSAID, Indonesia

Mr. Budi thanked the chairperson, explained about the participating countries in the group discussion and gave the key issues that come up. He explained about the strategy possibly used including the developing community counseling board to introduce HIV/AIDS and sex education. He mentioned about parenting programme (helping parents to become more open and warm and embrace family environment).

Topic 3: Minority (ethnic, language, religion)

Rapporteur: Ms. Jennifer Tamarua, Papua New Guinea

Ms. Jennifer thanked for the group contribution and explained about the key issues, which included that parents might not want their children to be influenced by

another religion, not accept member of different faith teaching their children about faith issues. She gave the possible solutions for open dialogue on the subject of religious education between the school authorities. She touched the linguistic issue and needs. There was choice of language for children in school. Parents had choice of three languages of instruction but might choose one over another.

She gave an example in Aceh about the use of languages; the medium of instruction was Indonesian but they also taught Acehnese. Another example was in India; mother tongue was used before formal schooling. English might not be almost a first language for some, whereas in other countries it was definitely not. She gave some suggestions and recommendations to consider including the development or adoption of a National Curriculum that would provide flexibility in accommodating the needs of local language; teach local language at the early stage of education and then bridge into the national or official languages. Finally, there was a need for governments to have legal framework in inclusive education for ethnic, religious and linguistic issues.

Topic 4: Migrant Children/Refugees/IDP

Rapporteur: Ms. Sae Kani, ABS, Indonesia

Ms. Sae presented social exclusion issue that covered migrant children, refugees and IDP. Migrant workers' children were not getting equal access to education. Illegal workers' children were not having access to education because their parents were afraid to be arrested by the local authority. Illegal status of children should not affect their entitlement to education. During the discussion, the group focused more on external migrant issue but also internal migrant issue like in China, where parents were working in big cities and the children were left behind and did not get proper education. About the refugee children in camp school that outlined the psychosocial support for children should be provided in order to adapt their new environment; their mother tongue should be taught and the refugee children should have opportunities to learn host nations' languages.

While the mainstream schools in host nations highlighted the issues of refugee children that should have equal access to education in host nations in order to avoid bullying and discrimination from other children, teachers and parents; awareness raising and sensitization about refugees should be conducted at schools and in communities. This was also about the process of learning. Finally about IDP children as well as civil wars, natural disasters were identified as one of main reasons for children to be out of education, i.e. environmental refugees; effective temporary school solutions to be implemented immediately after disaster. Government should coordinate with international agencies for recovering school as soon as possible. She gave an example of the case in Aceh after the Tsunami, thus disaster-resilient schools should be built back, as they didn't get proper education after disaster. There should be more awareness of already existing international frameworks and guidelines about education in emergency.

Topic 5: Social Exclusion

Rapporteur: Dr. Leela, Nepal

Dr. Leela thanked for the time and mentioned the participating countries in the group discussion. She explained about the social exclusion as the emerging key issues that outlined the clarification of meaning, scope and coverage of social exclusion, social exclusion in both visible and hidden, social exclusion often led to discrimination, social exclusion needed to be focused on both schools and be part of ongoing education-both formal and informal. Another emerging key issues were that governments in many countries provided scholarships to the poor and the marginalized students. She elaborated further the impacts of war in Afghanistan that many children were not attending schools. There was lack of qualified teachers; due to poor economic condition, parents did not want to send their children to the school. In some countries, school age children were supporting parents by working, selling the newspaper, etc.

Social exclusion was due to gender discrimination; children did not want to go to school due to non-friendly environment of the school. She gave some workable strategies for social exclusion that included awareness of education being a right of the children and responsibility of parents and community; identification of the socially excluded school going children for support (financial) and recognition. Besides that, there should be involvement of parents and community members for supporting excluded children, selection to appropriate income generating programme. Another important point was guidance and counseling for the children as well as proper instruction.

Topic 6: Gender

Rapporteur: Ms. Mona Aliana DPHM Alimin, Brunei Darussalam

Ms. Mona thanked the chairperson and presented the concerns and issues recognized and identifies in the topic of gender. The first point was the evidence based that included the need for data to give an accuracy if not indication of current situation of gender in education specifically and in society in general; research design or structure of questionnaire; sampling in information gathering. Another point was equity for female students; equity in education for girls as well as boys. Access to education for all the children should they be left behind due to societal or family pressure or systematic infrastructure. Lifelong education and continuing education were also important.

She mentioned about the specific issue in gender education that outlined the equity in gender in education – approach, enrollment, curricula, teacher, pedagogy, needs to address developmental needs and issues, gender responsive or sensitive schools, management structure, teaching and learning materials, introduction of sexual education, preparation of real life situation. The other issue was about safety of both genders within education that involved violence in school. National coordination was another point that outlined the issue of inter-ministerial or interagency collaboration towards enforcing and implementing existing policy/framework/initiatives/laws.

She explained about the point of 'Guru' that emphasized the importance of teacher education, the dissemination of information regarding legislation, policies and framework about current and historic condition. Other point she mentioned was about the global village that touched the issue of sensitivity to gender issues in community, workplace and society towards gender sensitivity. There was a change in culture through understanding; and it should be dynamics between teachers and the students. It should be working within the boundaries of respect of religion and local values. There was also a dilemma of the issue – the crosscutting points.

Questions & Answers Session

Mr. Bambang Indriyanto of Indonesia appreciated the comprehensiveness of the presentations of the rapporteurs. He wanted to learn some good and bad lessons. Unfortunately, to his perspective, he couldn't get good nor bad examples happened in other countries, so that we knew how to solve the problems effectively. He mentioned an example of religious teaching in education; the problem was how national policy could facilitate the solutions. There were needs for the regulations and policies and we could discuss in here. The question: how is the policy facilitated?

The Philippines supported the comments of Indonesia regarding some issues of inclusive education. She would like to suggest giving messages in the region. Policy makers might not be able to absorb these comprehensive presentations. She would like also to response the issue of inclusive education towards the goal of EFA. The two concepts would compete against each other. Another issues were about class sizes. She mentioned the issue of HIV/AIDS; the expectation of teachers to deliver sex education and the use of mother tongue as the language of instruction in classes; there was a need of communication to the policy makers regarding this issue; she mentioned the current condition of mother tongue use in the Philippines.

China explained that the country had suffered from various natural disasters; given the current condition and fact of the statistical data of the disasters outlined the points of DRR and gender. The country needed more donations from international community to support the children to move to safe places that would enable them to study again. The challenges are the DRR and Gender education to be the key concerns of this conference to the ICE in November.

Thailand gave example of the current condition in the country of education for children with disability. There had been a project since 2004 on that issue. The suggestion was to create proper function at each level and cooperation among ministries. She outlined the issue of ICT in inclusive education for children with disabilities. Another point was about the understanding and attitude issues as well as the government supports in the programme implementation.

Ms. Sengdeuane thanked the six rapporteurs for the presentations and she urged the organizers to take those recommendations and suggestions into account that would support the next ICE in November in Geneva.

4.2. Plenary Session 7

Ms. Clementina Acedo and Mr. Renato Opertti chaired the plenary assisted by Mr. Johan Lindeberg.

4.2.1. Summary, Suggestions and Recommendations

Ms. Clementina greeted the participants, “Selamat Pagi,” and informed on the composition of the participants that attended the conference. She gave some remarks of the conference and would like to express gratitude to the Ministry of National Education, UNESCO Office Jakarta, Prof. Arief Rachman of Indonesian National Commission of UNESCO team and Ms. Maria Malevri of UNESCO Paris.

There were general remarks from the discussions of the previous parallel session; they were not recommendations to the governments but recommendations to the next conference of ICE in Geneva. She suggested the participants to write down some of their comments regarding the general remarks that had been distributed to the participants, then collected them to Prof. Arief. She mentioned about the mechanism of the 48th session of ICE in November in Geneva. The conference would be discussing transversal topic within the conference.

She encouraged the participants to encourage the Ministers of Education to attend the conference and do national plan of the country and each country sent a national report on the educational system and it should be fitting the topic of the conference: inclusive education. Besides that, it should refer to the global monitoring reports. Furthermore, she urged the participants’ countries to recognize educators from different countries in different regions, in terms of research and teachings – contribution to the country. The deadline of this would be in the next coming weeks. She explained further about the detailed mechanism of the ICE and closed her general remarks.

Comments, Suggestions & Recommendations

Helen Keller International, Indonesia said that the document was excellent but the document was too long. She outlined three points: identification, importance of early intervention and collaboration among departments.

Pakistan said that if he encouraged the Minister of the country that would be an inclusion. He thanked the organizers and the governments of Indonesia and Pakistan. He commented on the general report that was really focused and digested; he hoped that everyone in this hall would be committed. He mentioned something about resources and collaboration; south-south, south-north collaboration. Something about resources could be added to the recommendations to the Ministers. He gave some comments on inclusion and exclusion and congratulated the organizers for the conference organizations, arrangements and hospitality.

Afghanistan thanked the organizers of the conference and the participants for the active participation. She gave small comments to give stronger remarks for the next conference; she wanted orphan and street children to be included. After this conference, she hoped that the meaning of inclusion to be taken very broad in real life at all level of education as well as in the society.

The Philippines gave comments on the general crosscutting themes to be put forward to the Ministers' meetings. Another point was curriculum and localization, school and community empowerment, excluded and marginalized from the system and the need to collaborate with other stakeholders.

Ms. Bhaswati Mukerjee of India had some comments to consider. First was about the declaration to be implemented in each country's government. She gave another comment on the document that covered only Asia, which should also include Pacific region, as this is Asia Pacific conference. She gave comments on the urgent nature of the documents; also comments on migrant children, which should be shared internationally.

Ms. Clementina thanked for the comments and identified the common point raised by India, Pakistan and Afghanistan, which was the resource. She responded to the point of migrant children; that the drafting committee would reformulate the general remarks on that point. She would also like to address the comments from the Philippines that would enrich the general remarks of the documents (the budget, localization of curriculum, supports to the marginalized and community empowerment as well as collaboration). She said the terms of monitoring should be included too. The comments of India would be acceptable regardless of the status that children should be included in education.

Indonesia gave some comments for the next meetings in the future regarding the respect of inclusion; a point of languages that were used. A suggestion was on the provision of the materials in the language of the host country.

Ms. Simon Baker, the experts representative, wanted to make one comment on HIV/AIDS issue regarding the point of stigma discrimination, that had become major issue that did not allow children to go to school, that needed to be encountered.

Ms. Clemetina said that she encouraged the Ministry of National Education and Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO to later provide the materials in Indonesian. She thanked for all the comments and the suggestions for the summary of the outcomes that would be the conclusion of the conference. Finally, she would like to thank the participants and invited them to be the members of the community of practice. So far, IBE-UNESCO had 700 experts in 90 countries. She again thanked the Ministry of National Education, Indonesian National Commission, UNESCO Jakarta, UNESCO Bangkok and UNESCO Paris and all the participants for the fruitful conference.

4.2.2. Closing Remarks

Mr. Bambang Indriyanto thanked the organizing committees, Mr. Eko Sudjatmiko of the Ministry of National Education for managing this conference and hoped that this conference would be the benefits of the participating countries and could foster the value of inclusive education. Gratitude was also addressed to the staffs of Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO and the conference participants for their commitments to inclusive education.

There were also many people that had been involved in this conference that he would like to thank to. He would like to see the participants in the 48th session of ICE to discuss further on inclusive education and thanked again in some languages.

Announcements

Prof. Arief reminded the participants to obtain their attendance certificate and the CD of the materials of the conference; also to check their flight and name at the reception desk. He invited the participants to do a little exercise of '5 Ss': Senyum, Salam, Sapa, Sabar, Syukur (Smile, Greetings, Say Hi, Passion and Gratitude). He closed the conference and invited the participants for group photos.

5.1. Declaration

Asia Pacific Regional Preparatory Conference for the 48th Session of the International Conference on Education 29 – 31 May, Bali, Indonesia

1. Introduction

160 participants from 23 countries – Ambassadors, Ministers, Vice ministers, policy-makers, educators, curriculum specialists and teachers trainers – and representatives from inter-governmental bodies, institutions of civil society and NGOs – attended the Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Conference for the 48th Session of the International conference on Education (29-31 May, Bali, Indonesia).

Proposed by the Indonesia government at the IBE (International Bureau of Education) inter-governmental Council (January 2008) and supported by all council members, this conference is part of the consultative process among UNESCO members states with regard to the 48th session of the ICE entitled “Inclusive Education: the Way to the Future” (25-28 November, Geneva, Switzerland).

The participants expressed their deep gratitude to the Indonesian government – Ministry of National Education and Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Asia (Bangkok) and to the International Bureau of Education (IBE), for organizing this regional conference, which provided and proved to be an excellent opportunity and a productive setting to discuss and exchange visions, strategies, practices and experiences around inclusive education.

2. Social Inclusion, Inclusive Education and EFA Goals

Asia and the Pacific is a region with plentiful examples of diverse and fruitful experiences and strategies conceptualizing and implementing inclusive education policies and programmes. Inclusive education is progressively understood as a key approach towards the realization of the EFA goals, thus an issue of growing policy concern throughout the region. Inclusive education as an approach seeks to address the individual learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion.

It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies in education and responds to and celebrates difference and diversity of human beings. Inclusive education entails profound and progressive changes

throughout the entire education system; the curriculum objectives and content and assessment tools; school visions, principal leadership and relations with the community; and teachers roles, education and practices. It is an on-going process removing barriers to learning, and of promoting the engagement, empowerment and participation of communities, schools, principals, teachers and learners.

Among other relevant aspects, inclusive education refers to long-term educational policies and their articulation with other social policies; the provision of lifelong opportunities through a flexible and adaptable inclusive education curriculum in formal, non-formal and informal learning environments; and the diversification of teachers' practices to effectively address learners' diversities.

In more general terms, the discourse around inclusive education implies addressing the challenges towards attaining more inclusive societies (social inclusion) by coping with the lack of access to basic social services and to learning opportunities. Inclusive education implies social inclusion and vice versa, as guaranteeing effective learning conditions and opportunities means addressing the problems, among others, of poverty, marginality, ethnic and gender disparities, HIV-AIDS, and residential and social segregation. The role of the government is essential to assure the effective provision of education as a public good and facilitate a dynamic relation between the national and local levels in developing and implementing policies.

It is recognized that the learning that takes place in school environments in the region is far from satisfactory. Low achievement levels are reported despite increased enrolments the minimal levels of learning are not acquired as defined by individual countries. In an area of globalization, it is critical to enhance and democratize learning opportunities principally in environments where inequity, exclusion and marginalized groups are great relevance. In the rapidly changing and increasingly competitive world, inclusive education is an essential approach to achieve high-quality equitable education.

Within the broader conceptualization of the interfaces social inclusion and inclusive education, the participants acknowledge the need of: i) further specifying and giving content to the role of inclusive education as a guiding principle within the EFA framework, ii) sharing and disseminating inclusive practices that prove to work at different levels – i.e., educational and curricula structure, school models and teacher practices, and iii) strengthening the role of UNESCO as providing intellectual leadership on how to foster and carry out a broader conceptualization of inclusive education, and exploring the creation of a clearinghouse on effective evidence-based inclusive practices. The participants strongly recommend that these issues can be brought up by the Asian Ministers of Education in the 48th Session of the ICE.

3. Topics addressed and inputs for the 48th session of the ICE

The regional conference addressed seven main topics – children with disability, HIV/AIDS and health; minorities (ethnic, linguistic and religious); migrant children, refugees and IDP's; social exclusion; gender; and disaster risk reduction (DRR) education. These seven topics were addressed in relations to the four sub-themes of

the 48th session of the ICE: a) approaches, scope and content; b) public policies; c) systems, links and transitions and d) learners and teachers, from the perspective of going from visions to practice.

Children with Disability

The inclusion of children with disability in education has been on the international agenda for many years and is gaining increasing attention. They remain, however, the largest and most significant group of children being excluded from mainstream education in many Asian countries. It indicates a strong need to formulate policies to effectively monitor the full implementation of inclusive education for children with disability. The following issues require further discussion at the ICE.

- The formulation of policy that will help to clarify and define inclusion in a way that is broad enough to take account of gender, ethnicity, class and other issues not specifically disability related, but does not overlook the importance of disability and the specialist skills and knowledge, which are necessary to include children with disability.
- The formulation of policy to ensure that segregation is not practices in inclusive classroom.
- There is a need to establish a database of children with disabilities both in school an out of school in the Asian region so that the progress of inclusive education could be effectively monitored.
- Class size, examinations and national standards are considered great barriers to inclusion
- Capacity building of teachers, parents and children with disability themselves is crucial.
- Equipment, resources and facilities should be looked at to facilitate inclusion.
- The role of special schools in supporting inclusion should be addressed.
- Child-centered teaching should be adopted.
- Inclusive education should be practiced at all levels, from kindergarten though to high education.
- Collaboration among different departments, agencies to ensure effective inclusion.

HIV/AIDS

Inclusive schools must welcome all children, and enable al children to play, learn and grow up together with their siblings and peers. Discrimination and exclusion of children affected by or infected with HIV must therefore be prevented. Protection and anti-discrimination laws, policies and regulations should be issued. Close collaboration and coordination between all concerned ministries, authorities and community based organizations and grouping will ensure that these are implemented. The following issues must be further addressed in the ICE.

- Access for children and youth affected and/or infected with HIV to quality education in their home communities (in the nearest school together with their siblings and peers).
- Access to quality HIV prevention and response education for all children and youth – this would include reproductive health, sexuality and sex education, as well as drug prevention education in formal as well as non-formal settings.
- Access to child and youth-friendly health services offering free and voluntary testing, counseling and treatment for HIV, as well as HIV and AIDS related illness (among others opportunistic infections).
- Media's role to promote HIV prevention and response education, to inform the public about HIV, as well as to help correct misconceptions and myths.
- Confidentiality – education and health institutions must guarantee that the HIV status of children and youth is treated with confidentiality - it is their decision who they would like to disclose their status to, as well as how and when they would like to share this information.

Minorities

Asia and the Pacific contain thousands of ethno linguistic groups whose mother tongue is not an official language of the country in which they live. Language is sometimes a major barrier to quality education. It is recognized that the issue of language is closely interlinked with issues relating to culture and religion and a holistic approach should be used. Depending on the context of individual countries it is recommended to explore the following issues at the ICE.

- Development of legal frameworks that allows for local flexibility and adaptation.
- Curricula and content that encourage local adaptation in order to increase local relevance.
- Proactive recruitment policies for teacher training in order to increase the capacity of minority groups.
- The role of the education system in inter-cultural/religious dialogues to promote increased understanding and tolerance.
- The progressive introduction of mother tongue instruction in the early years of primary education as a means of gaining mastery of national and international languages.
- Provision should be made for incorporation of official, national and/or international language instruction alongside the mother tongue.

Migrant Children

- Migrant workers' children usually do not have equal access to education, especially illegal workers children, because their parents are afraid being arrested by local authorities.
- The illegal status of children should not affect their entitlement to education.

Refugee Children

In camp schools

- Psychosocial support for children should be provided in order to adapt their new environment.
- Their mother tongue should be taught and depending on the context refugee children should have opportunities to learn the host nations' language.

In mainstream schools in host nations

- Refugee children should have equal access to education in host nations, and international support may be required to make this possible
- In order to avoid bullying and discrimination from other children, teachers and parents, awareness raising and sensitization about refugees should be conducted at schools and in communities.

Social Inclusion

There is a need to build awareness for understanding the nature, relevance, scope and implications of social inclusion (faced by different marginalized groups) in various contexts at the national and regional levels. The following issues should be a focus of discussion at the ICE.

- Continued efforts to address social exclusion for various marginalized groups within school and society.
- Access to quality education for children affected by war, civil strife and natural calamities.
- The need to review existing national level provisions for marginalized groups.
- Monitoring mechanism so that the existing provisions, such as scholarships, reach the real target group or marginalized children.
- Establishment of mechanism to ensure the quality of education in faith-based schools so that the competencies developed and subjects taught are pertinent and relevant to the needs of national development.
- On-going support to teachers and other stakeholders for providing equal opportunities for full and meaningful participation of all children.

Gender

It is recognized that at the core of inclusive education are issues related to gender and education. Gender-based discrimination is a major barrier to learning in Asia and the Pacific. Gender awareness and sensitization is needed at all levels of the education system in order to become inclusive. The following issues deserve great attention at the ICE:

- The need for gender disaggregated education data and additional qualitative and gender-sensitive indicators.

- The development and/or implementation of supporting legal frameworks to protect the right to education for all, specifically addressing the protection against gender-based discrimination.
- The integration of gender awareness and sensitization into mandatory pre- and in-service training as well as education material content.
- Gender equality in terms of enrolment, retention, survival and curricula.
- Pro-active recruitment strategies to address gender imbalances among teachers, principals and education system officials.
- The role of the education system to actively challenge cultural, religious and social traditions that are gender discriminatory.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Education

These recommendations require further discussion in the context of the ICE.

- Natural disasters represent a major cause of exclusion from the education system for children as it denies their access.
- Particularly marginalized children living in disaster –prone areas, as well as children displaced as a result of a disaster, should be allowed an equitable access to education, effective temporary school provisions should be implemented immediately after disasters occur.
- Governments have the responsibility to provide all children with the necessary knowledge about disasters, risks and vulnerabilities to disasters and related competencies through the integration of disaster risk reduction into school curriculum as well as non-formal and informal education so as to better protect themselves, their family and community and get properly prepared to disasters.
- In order to meet the objectives of “Education for All” and the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) by 2015 as well as the Millennium Development Goal of Universal Education, the Governments have to moral imperative of ensuring school safety through the enforcement of building codes and the development of disaster-resilient school buildings.