

ECDFirst

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Recognising the transformative power of ECD for equitable development



ARNEC

Asia-Pacific Regional Network
for Early Childhood

2015 ARNEC Annual Report

This annual report outlines the progress, highlights and achievements of the Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC) from 1 January to 31 December 2015. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any manner, without written permission from the publisher.

@ARNEC 2015
Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood
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About the cover and other photos in this Annual Report

The cover photo captures a child in school, taken during ARNEC's documentation of Noteworthy Practices in Indonesia in 2015.

Also taken in the same year during the documentation of Noteworthy Practices in Nepal and Indonesia, respectively, are the other photos featured in the inside pages of this Annual Report. The photo in pages 25-26 was taken during ARNEC's Strategy Development Workshop in Bangkok in January 2016, courtesy of UNESCO Bangkok.



About ECDFirst

The year 2015 has opened doors for ECD to be recognised in the pursuit of equitable and sustainable development.

One fundamental change was the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015 and the inclusion of ECD under Goal 4.

This has required not only positioning ARNEC strategically to influence the post-SDG directions for ECD, but also assessing strengths and areas of improvement as a Network, as well as building capacities to advance holistic and inclusive ECD in the region.



Message from the ARNEC Secretariat

Unleashing the power of ECD for equitable development in 2015

ECD integral to the SDGs

ARNEC's accomplishment report for 2015 was prepared by the Secretariat influenced by two meaningful milestones in support of early childhood development (ECD).

At the strategic level, ARNEC celebrated the inclusion of ECD in Goal 4 of the SDGs. ECD is the foundation for sustainable development. Together with ARNEC's partners, we have advanced ECD in the quality education agenda, while clearly recognising its interlinkages with the rest of the Goals.

We have articulated the transformative power of ECD, as it increases the sustainability and equality of development. Our investments for children, especially in their formative years, have sustainable, long-term effects on developing human capital, peace and social harmony, and economic success.

ECD capacities essential

The inclusion of ECD in the SDGs has all the more emphasised the need for ARNEC as a regional ECD network to strengthen its capacity and widen its reach.

Advocating policy change in support of ECD; generating and sharing knowledge; and building partnerships require a focused and dynamic Secretariat to support the strategic work of ARNEC's Board of Directors, Steering and Executive Committees, including Working Groups and Standing Committees.

We also need to foster healthy relationships with the Friends of ARNEC and broaden the coalition for advancing ECD as an integral component of sustainable development in communities and societies in the Asia-Pacific region. Raising our organisational capacities will always be vital in deepening the ECD agenda in the region and beyond.



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Overview of ARNEC

Our Network

ARNEC is one of the most extensive and fastest growing networks for ECD in the Asia-Pacific region. It covers 47 countries and includes East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia and the Pacific sub-regions, as well as Central Asia to a small extent.

The Network is making efforts to create a stronger and more dynamic ECD community in the Asia-Pacific by equipping ARNEC members with updated knowledge to help become effective advocates for holistic and inclusive ECD and creating an environment where members feel motivated and connected to participate and contribute in Network activities, while making sure that ARNEC membership represents diverse communities and interests on and for ECD.



Our Vision

We envision that the development potential of the young child is realised with support from families, communities and governments in the Asia-Pacific region.

Goals towards 2015*



1

By 2015, the Asia-Pacific region will have established a stronger and more dynamic ECD community that contributes to holistic national ECD policies

2

By 2015, a holistic and inclusive ECD agenda is articulated, disseminated and adopted in the Asia-Pacific region

3

By 2015, the ECD knowledge-base specific to the Asia-Pacific region is enhanced

4

By 2015, the Asia-Pacific ECD experiences increasingly influence the global ECD agenda

*adopted by the ARNEC Steering Committee in November 2011

ARNEC moved towards 2015 Goals

1

By 2015, the Asia-Pacific region will have established a stronger and more dynamic ECD community that contributes to holistic national ECD policies

2

By 2015, a holistic and inclusive ECD agenda is articulated, disseminated and adopted in the Asia-Pacific region



ECD community

The ECD community grew to a membership of 1,876 individuals, 16 institutions, 22 active Country Coordinators, and 'ARNEC 'Buddies'

Country Coordinators have strong links with government and are well placed to influence ECD policy

UNICEF, UNESCO and four core team members (Plan International, Save the Children, OSF, and ChildFund International) are key technical and funding partners of ARNEC

ECD agenda

Regional ECD Conferences in Indonesia, Singapore, Bangladesh, the Philippines and China, which were held over the years 2011-2015, have collectively influenced the ECD agenda in the region, feeding into the SDGs

First High-Level Policy Forum on ECCE in Korea co-organised in 2013; planning stages for the Second High-Level Policy Forum undertaken, with ARNEC co-organising the next Forum to be held in Malaysia in 2016

3

By 2015, the ECD knowledge-base specific to the Asia-Pacific region is enhanced

4

By 2015, the Asia-Pacific ECD experiences increasingly influence the global ECD agenda

Knowledge base

ARNEC's web portal for ECD developed in collaboration with partners and Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development

Report on the East Asia and Pacific ECD (EAP-ECD) Scales completed with six country briefs and validation reports

Eight Noteworthy Practices on ECD in the region documented and shared

Ten innovative pedagogical approaches in the region identified for documentation

Global influence

ARNEC advocated for ECD in global and regional consultations on the SDGs in collaboration with UN and other partners and advocates in the Asia-Pacific region



What we do in ARNEC





5 Partnership building



3 Information management and dissemination



Commitment of ARNEC

We help national partners and members assess and review national ECD policies and their implementation, and promote exchange of models and tools from other contexts. We facilitate continuous analyses and syntheses of regional ECD evidence and research, and support priority areas for further learning. We provide a platform for ECD professionals to share information and resources, and foster opportunities for professional development on ECD. We build partnerships and coalitions to leverage resources and capacities to fulfill our ECD mission in the Asia-Pacific region.



Action pillar 1: advocacy for policy change

ARNEC was actively engaged in post-2015 policy advocacy for holistic and inclusive ECD

2015 Highlights

ECD advocacies

Approached high-level policy makers and Ministers in the region with a post-2015 campaign for ECD within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



Engagement with Asian ministers

Twelve ministers in Asia participated in the Fourth International Conference on Poverty Reduction and Child Development and 2015 Asia-Pacific Regional ECD Conference in China in October 2015



Advocacy video



Produced a video why ECD is the foundation for sustainable development

Key international fora



Participated in regional and global conversations on ECD, such as the Salzburg Global Seminar in February 2015; World Education Forum in Korea in May; SDG launch in New York in October; and various networking and outreach events at national, sub-regional and local levels, including the Asia-Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 in Thailand

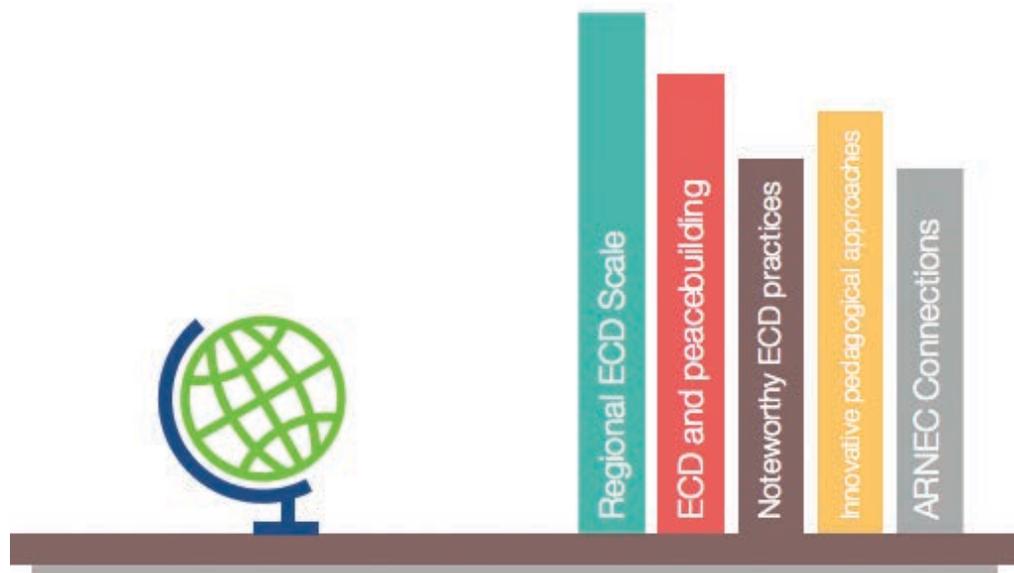
Knowledge leadership



Presented a paper during the 13th International Conference on Education and Development at the University of Oxford in UK

Action pillar 2: knowledge generation

ARNEC advocated for a solid evidence base for ECD policy development and programming in the Asia-Pacific region



Regional ECD Scale developed

1 The East Asia and Pacific ECD Scale was produced in collaboration with Hongkong University and with support from UNICEF and OSF, to measure holistic development of children 3-5 years old. This was validated in Cambodia, China, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu. The ECD Scale covers seven domains: cognitive development; socio-ecomotional development; motor development; language and emergent literacy; health, hygiene and safety; cultural knowledge and participation; and approaches to learning.

ECD link with peacebuilding supported

2 ARNEC's Working Group on ECD led the conduct of a perspective survey among children on their views on peace. More than a hundred children participated in the survey. They come from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, and Timor-Leste. An advocacy sheet on the linkages of ECD and peacebuilding entitled *My Peace, My Piece* was developed. A 3-year strategy for the Working Group was also drafted.



'Noteworthy ECD practices' documented

3 Building on ARNEC's annual tradition to document good ECD practices in the Asia-Pacific, the Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) was engaged to document ECD cases responding to unique needs of children in the region. Eight cases were selected from Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan and the Philippines with high potential for replication. Local researchers were engaged using UBD's rigorous framework and methodology for case documentation.

Innovative pedagogical approaches identified

4 Ten innovative approaches and tools used in diverse pre-primary and early childhood care and education settings were selected from Australia, China, India, Japan, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Solomon Islands and Thailand. Using reports and/or videos, the documentation is intended to demonstrate creative and effective approaches, which other ECD practitioners can learn from. UNESCO, UNICEF, OMEP and ARNEC collaborated for this initiative.

'ARNEC Connections' published

5 ECD professionals published their researches to share findings and invigorate knowledge diffusion in the ECD community through *ARNEC Connections*, an annual publication. This year's theme was *The transformative power of ECD for equitable development* edited by Professor Margaret Sims of the University of New England, Australia. Visit www.arnecc.net for e-copies of ARNEC Connections.

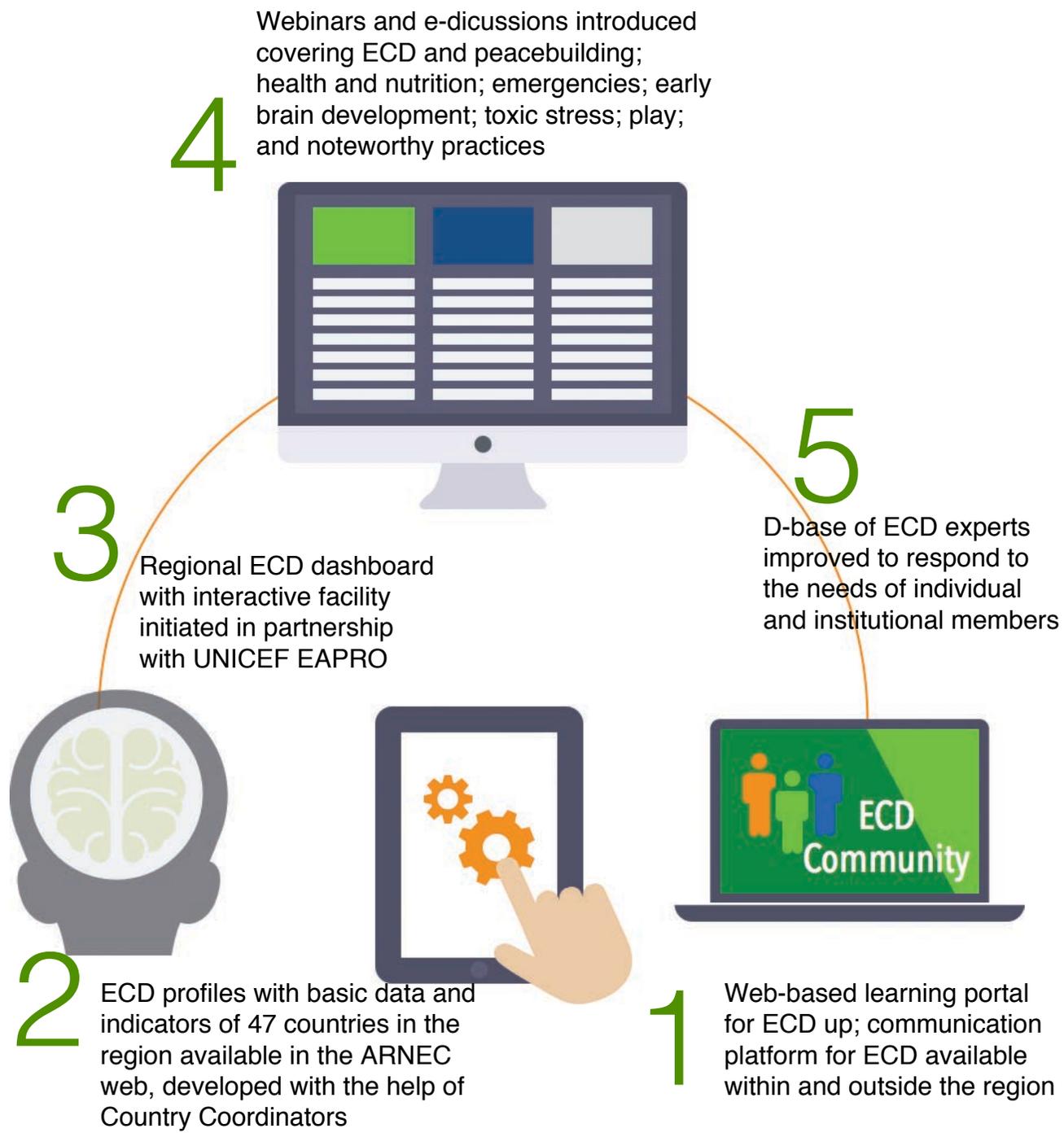
2015 Highlights



Action pillar 3: information management and dissemination

ARNEC leveraged to 'connect' the ECD community in the region; new technologies for learning and sharing introduced

Info management & dissemination



Capacity building

Action pillar 4: capacity building



The joint Fourth International Conference on Poverty Reduction and Child Development and ARNEC's 2015 Asia-Pacific Regional ECD Conference was held in Beijing with the generous support of the China Development Research Foundation (CDRF)

Two pre-conference workshops convened: *learning through play* and *transformative parenting practices*

A session on Building Better Brains was held showcasing evidence from neuroscience shaping child development; video documentation completed for future capacity building and awareness-raising activities

A Report was produced as a result of the Beijing Conference; abstracts and other resources, as well as video documentation were put together to be launched in 2016

Highlights

Action pillar 5:
partnership building



1

ARNEC membership has grown to 1,876 individuals; 16 Friends of ARNEC; and six core team and partner agencies

2

Three new Friends of ARNEC were accepted to the Network: Child Australia, Children's Global Network Pakistan (CGNP) and Early Childhood Network Pakistan (ECDNP)

3

ARNEC's Country Coordinator mechanism improved; 'Buddy' system for Coordinators introduced to enhance collaboration

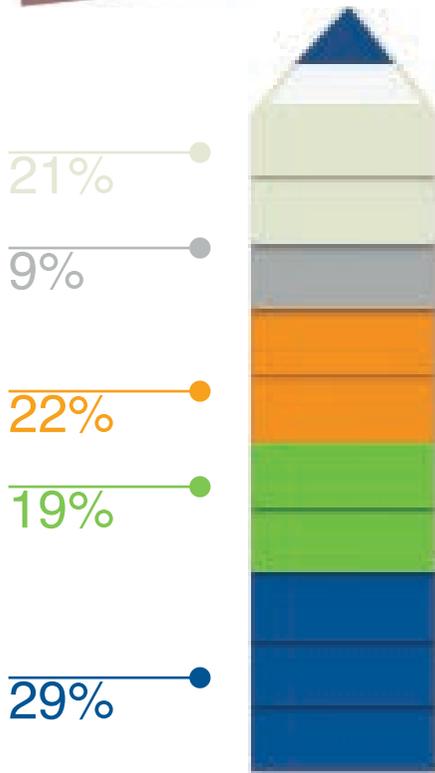
Partnership building

2015 facts



ARNEC's individual membership has increased and diversified

Membership largely comes from multilateral organisations, international and local NGOs, and the academe



1876

individual members in 2015

- multilateral organisations
- academic institutes
- NGOs: international, 13%; and local, 9%
- governments
- others: training institutes, 5%; schools/pre-schools, 4%; research institutes, 3%; private sector, 2%; networks/associations, 1%; foundation, 1%; independent consultant, 1%; and not disclosed, 4%

& figures

11.5%

88.5%

Outside the region

Within the region

ARNEC's individual membership is diverse based on geographical distribution in the Asia-Pacific



By country

The three countries with the most number of ARNEC members are India, 237; Singapore, 171; and the Philippines, 126. Rounding up the list of ten top countries with ARNEC individual members are Indonesia, 119; Bangladesh, 106, USA, 93; Pakistan, 75; Australia, 69; China, 62; and Malaysia, 55.

Friends of ARNEC



The institutional membership category, Friends of ARNEC, was launched in 2010.

Friends of ARNEC is open to networks, forums, professional societies, private sector associations, civil society organisations, NGOs, community-based organisations, volunteer organisations, universities, and research or policy institutes that actively promote ECD and would like to enter into joint ventures with ARNEC. Three new institutional members were accepted in 2015, resulting to a total of 16.

2011



India



Hong Kong



Singapore



2012



Pakistan



India



Korea



Bangladesh



Cambodia

2013



USA



USA



Kyrgyzstan

2014



Japan

2015



Australia



Pakistan



Pakistan

Friends of ARNEEC

ARNEC's governance arrangements



The Board of Directors provides leadership to ARNEC and sets strategic aims ensuring that the necessary financial and human resources are in place for ARNEC to meet its objectives



The Steering Committee is responsible for the overall strategic direction and programme activity implementation of ARNEC. It has 15 members, including representatives from each core member organisation and ECD experts from countries in the region, who are selected to serve a term of two years



The Executive Committee is composed of five members from the Steering Committee and is responsible for developing and implementing strategies and operational plans, policies, and procedures and budgets; monitoring operational and financial performance; managing risks; and allocating resources



The Secretariat facilitates planning, development and implementation of ARNEC's work plan

Board of Directors



Christine Chen

Founder and President,
Association of Early
Childhood Educators,
Singapore, and President,
Association for Childhood
Education International

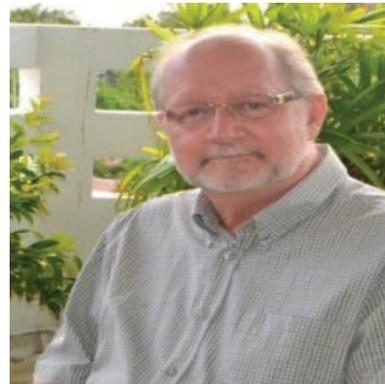
2013-2015



Mae Chu Chang

International Consultant,
China/Indonesia, and
former lead Education
Specialist, World Bank

2013-2015



Sheldon Shaeffer

International Consultant,
Thailand, and former
Director, UNESCO's Asia
and Pacific Regional
Bureau for Education

2013-2015

Steering Committee



Chiam Heng Keng
 Immediate Past President,
 ECCE Council Malaysia,
 Advisor of Association of
 Professional Early
 Childhood Educators
 Malaysia
 Elected 2015-2017

Karma Gayleg*
 Senior Programme
 Manager, Ministry of
 Education, Thimpu,
 Bhutan
 Elected 2013-ongoing

Divya Lata
 Early Learning and
 Education Advisor, Plan
 Asia Regional Office,
 Thailand
 Elected 2008-ongoing

Mahmuda Akhter
 Executive Director,
 Institute of Child & Human
 Development,
 Bangladesh, Friends of
 ARNEC
 Elected 2008-ongoing

Eunhye Park
 Professor, Department of
 Early Childhood
 Education, Ehwa Women's
 University, South Korea
 Elected 2015-ongoing

Margaret Sims
 Professor of Early
 Childhood, University of
 New England, Australia
 Elected 2015-ongoing

Ghazala Rafique
 Interim Director, Human
 Development Programme,
 Aga Khan University,
 Pakistan
 Elected 2012-2016

Melissa Kelly*
 Senior Early Childhood
 Development Advisor,
 ChildFund International,
 USA
 Elected 2015-ongoing



Steering Committee

Marilyn Manuel*

Independent ECCD/Social Work Professional/ Practitioner, Manila, Philippines

Elected 2015-ongoing

Monisha Diwan

Head, Early Childhood and Primary Programmes, Aga Khan Education Service, India

Elected 2015-ongoing

Mugyeong Moon

Director, Trend Analysis and international Cooperation Team, Korea Institute of Child Care and Education, South Korea, Friends of ARNEC

Elected 2011-ongoing

Sara Dang*

Senior Early Childhood Development Advisor, Save the Children, USA

Elected 2013-ongoing

Tina Hyder*

Deputy Director, Early Childhood Program, Open Society Foundations, UK

Elected 2013-ongoing

Ufemia Bera Camaitoga

Consultant, Early Childhood Education, Fiji Early Childhood Teachers' Association, Fiji

Elected 2015-ongoing

Zhixin Du

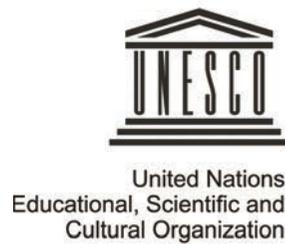
Deputy Director, Center for Child Development, China Development Research Foundation, China

Elected 2015-ongoing

***means elected as member of the Executive Committee**

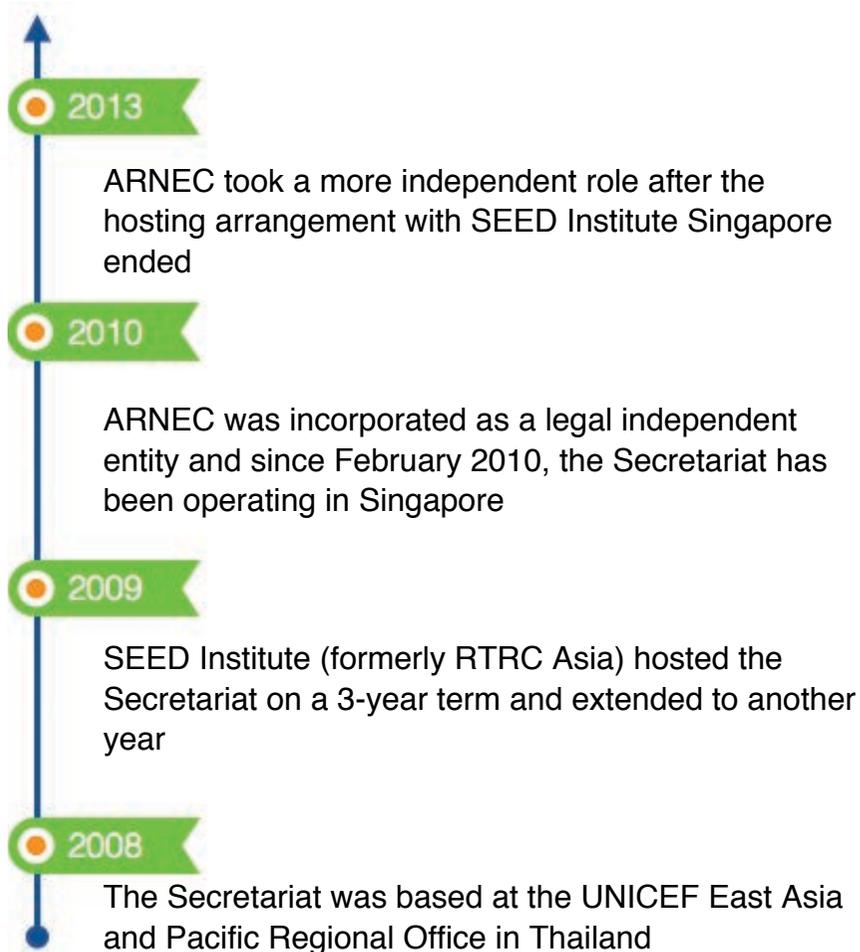
UNICEF and UNESCO have been supporting ARNEC, together with our Core Team members, namely, Plan International, Open Society Foundation, Save the Children, and ChildFund International

Core Team



Secretariat

ARNEC operates through a Secretariat facilitating planning, development and implementation of the work plan



ARNEC Secretariat

Junko Miyahara
Executive Director (August 2008-May 2015)

Evelyn D. Santiago
Executive Director (June 2015-present)

Debbie Fang
Programme Support Officer

Silke Friesendorf
Communications Manager

Denise Tan
Administrative Assistant (part-time)

Looking ahead

Moving the ECD agenda forward in 2016 and beyond



* ARNEC's Vision 2020 will be finalised and launched in 2016.

Setting our sight for ARNEC's Vision 2020

As we close the *Goals towards 2015*, ARNEC has started looking forward anew with a Strategy Document for the next five years aptly called Vision 2020.*

We are setting our eyes to the future, given the inclusion of ECD in Goal 4 and its interlinkages with the rest of the SDGs.

We are looking at national ECD policies and programmes in the Asia-Pacific with the intent of raising investments for children's early years. We intend to strengthen our efforts to generate and share knowledge and innovations on ECD. We hope to forge more strategic partnerships for ECD, as well as increase and diversify our membership base.

We are engaging everyone—partners, friends, advocates, practitioners and other stakeholders—to join us in this exercise and push our shared ECD agenda in the Asia-Pacific region.

You form part of our strategy development process. Feel free to amplify your voice to advance holistic and inclusive ECD in the Asia-Pacific region.

Stage 1: Review ARNEC operations in the last five years

Together we assess the following aspects of ARNEC operations to determine our strengths and areas of improvement:

1. programmatic results and achievements
2. structures and governance mechanisms
3. partnerships and memberships
4. location of the Secretariat
5. sustainability



Stage 2: Facilitate strategy development for 2020

Informed by the results of Stage 1, we will formulate the Strategy Document covering the following:

1. ARNEC's vision and mission aligned with the ECD targets under the Sustainable Development Goals
2. ARNEC's core values and principles
3. Strategic goals and outcomes of the Network in the next five years
4. Governance structure and other enabling mechanisms to support the achievement of strategic goals and outcomes



About ARNEC

The Asia-Pacific Regional Network (ARNEC) is a network established to build strong partnerships across sectors and different disciplines, organisations, agencies and institutions in the Asia-Pacific region to advance the agenda on and investment in Early Childhood.

Our core partners

We would like to thank our key partners, UNICEF and UNESCO, and our core partners, namely, Plan International, Save the Children, Open Society Foundation, and ChildFund International for their continued support to ARNEC.

Please get in touch with us at ARNEC

secretariat@arnec.net

www.arnec.net

Singapore