



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



The Newsletter of UNESCO's Education Sector

# Education TODAY

## HIGHER EDUCATION FOR SALE

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Higher education is slowly being drawn into the world of the market. Should we be frightened or excited by this evolution? Focus, a four-page report, looks behind the arguments in this very controversial debate.

### EDITO

The hue and cry about the 'McDonaldization' of education should make us reach for our critical faculties. First, despite their ubiquity, McDonald's restaurants account for only a tiny proportion of the food that people eat. Second, McDonald's is successful because people like their food. Third, their secret is to offer a limited range of dishes as commodities that have the same look, taste and quality everywhere.

Commoditization. It's an ugly word that my spellchecker rejects. But it is a key process for bringing prosperity to ordinary people by giving them greater freedom and wider choice. Products that were once hand crafted and expensive become standardized, mass produced and inexpensive. Personal computers and cellular telephones used to be specialized items for the elite. Today they are mass-market consumer items.

When products become commodities there is fierce price competition between manufacturers and profit margins are squeezed. Producers hate this and industries often have to restructure, but consumers benefit greatly.

What are the implications for education? Is the commoditization of learning material a way to bring education to all? Yes it is, and open universities in a number of countries have shown the way. By developing courseware for large numbers of students they can justify the investment required to produce high quality learning materials at low unit cost.

Such materials can be used successfully outside their country of origin after local adaptation and translation. Commoditizing education need not mean commercializing education. The educational community should adopt the model of the open source software movement. We can imagine a future in which teachers and institutions make their courseware and learning materials freely available on the web. Anyone else can translate and adapt them for local use provided they make their new version freely available too.

In this way, teachers all over the world can be freed from the chore of reinventing the wheel of basic content. They can then concentrate on adapting the best material, helping students to study it and assessing their competence and knowledge. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has shown the way by making its own web materials available free. Let's hope this heralds a worldwide movement to commoditize education for the common good.

John Daniel  
Assistant Director-General for Education

# Greening China

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*Schoolchildren in Beijing experiment with waste water cleaning*

Parents are also following suit. Thanks to Tang Jiaqi's persistent nudging, her parents have stopped littering. "At the sight of litter in the street, I pick it up and put it into the dustbin," says Tang Jiaqi. "I think some adults need environmental education too." And the schoolchildren's new awareness of environmental issues is inspiring local residents. "We adults indeed have much to learn from them," says Huang Xuechun of a neighbourhood committee near the Baiyun Road Elementary School.

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## A UNESCO project on education for sustainable development is teaching 200,000 Chinese schoolchildren to protect the environment

Despite summer holidays, 8-year-old Tang Jiaqi already misses her school, the Baiyun Road Elementary School in Beijing. "I really miss our handicraft workshop. We can make things on our own," she says.

The handicraft workshop on the fifth floor of the school building is decorated with articles made by the children—cartoon animals, pencil sketches, greeting cards and cloth bags, all from old newspapers, odd bits of cloth and other waste materials. The workshop is part of the "green education centre" where pupils can watch fish and other creatures in an artificial pond and learn about water and the environment, or just sit around and take lessons about nature.

Liu Huazhou, Grade 5, says he loves to do experiments. His favourite one is to filter dirty water until it becomes clean. "It shows that waste water can be recycled and reused," he says. Schoolmaster Jin Yanpu explains that the centre helps to cultivate an awareness of the environment in pupils, who are expected in turn to sensitize their families and neighbourhood. Pupils' handicrafts carry environmental slogans such as "use cloth shopping bags, not plastic," or "used batteries cause pollution".

Yanpu introduced the environmental education programme into the school in 1998. His school is now part of a UNESCO project on education for sustainable development, running in 300 elementary and middle schools, and universities in Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Guangdong, Hunan and Shandong and the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. So far it has reached 200,000 students.

The project, which promotes environmental awareness, was created as an attempt to address China's considerable pollution problems. Beijing alone is faced with increasing air and water pollution, and desertification of grazing lands in nearby provinces results in frequent sandstorms.

The project provides nationwide training for school principals, teachers and curriculum specialists. In all, some 5,000 teachers and 700 headmasters have been trained since the project started in 1997.

After more than four years of hard work, the project has begun to pay off. Students at one school made their own investigation into the city's waste disposal system, visiting 27 dumping grounds. Their suggestions on how to improve it were highly praised by the mayor of Beijing.

## Learning the

### A UNESCO reading-for-all project in

Not even the brass band leading the passing wedding procession could attract 12-year-old John Seguya's attention. John was busy reading a storybook. An hour earlier, he had done a crossword puzzle and flicked through a picture book.

John is one of thousands of Ugandan school children currently benefiting from the country's Reading for All Programme initiated by UNESCO, the International Reading Association and other partners. Launched in 1999, the programme aims to promote critical thinking in the teaching of reading and to help children to access information. "The whole programme is about turning Uganda into a reading nation," says James Tumusiime, chairman of Uganda's National Book Trust, another partner in the programme.

"Reading in African primary schools is poor," says Winsome Gordon, chief of UNESCO's Section for Primary Education. Primary school teachers in many parts of Africa are incapable of detecting reading difficulties and of taking the necessary remedial action, she says.

# Empowering women

A UNESCO-backed project helps women in Malian villages take charge of their lives

Gori Gopela is over 500 km from the Malian capital of Bamako. In another world, in fact. The people of this little village, 25 km north of Kayes in the country's remotest area, till the soil and raise animals.

But over the last five years, it has also been the centre of an experimental literacy project. The women, most of whom have never been to school, have been taught to read and write their language, Khassonké. They have also taken part in projects to make them more economically independent.

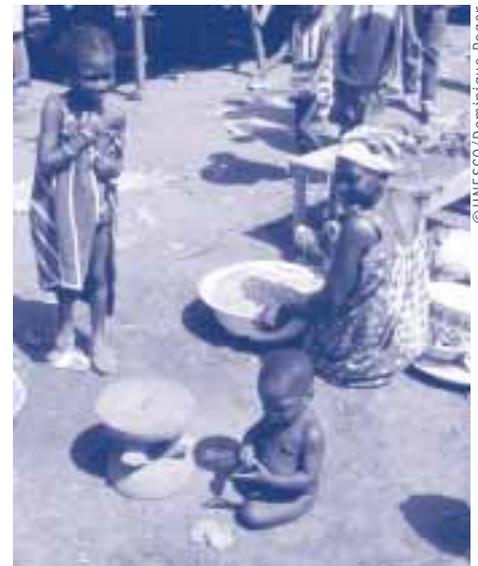
These changes have been brought to Gori Gopela by the \$950,000 UNESCO-Mali project, funded by the Norwegian government. The project has brought the women of the village into a single association.

"Our husbands had never thought of that and now we're strong," says the association's president, Sindy Kanté. "We've put together a stock of seeds, the only one in the village, and we now grow vegetables over more than two hectares."

These operations are run collectively, overseen by officials elected by the literacy centre, who turn out to be the keenest of its pupils. A total of 42 volunteers have been trained this way. "Thanks to this," says Fodé Boubou Konate, who runs the Stop-Sahel project, "these women have understood the importance of going to health centres. They have also learned dye techniques, how to keep accounts, and how to process local fruit and vegetables."

Armed with their reading and writing skills, the women of the village are now much less opposed to the idea that their daughters should drop their duties around the home to go to school. In 1996, before the project started, just over 100 children attended the village's only school. Now there are 420, including 150 girls, attending classes every day.

Dafa Kamissoko became a symbol of this success when this June she became the first girl in the village to get a baccalaureate (graduation certificate).



© UNESCO/Dominique Roger

*Boosting social and economic development by educating women in Mali*

But resistance to the project remains and some cultural traditions, such as very early marriages, die hard and sometimes get in the way of efforts to push the education of girls.

Gori Gopela is not the only village getting this kind of help. Thirty-five others in the region are covered by the project. A similar programme has also started in the central region of Mopti with the same goal of boosting social and economic development there by educating women.

The Gori Gopela experiment has been publicized through radio and television and could provide lessons for the future. This is the hope of women in neighbouring villages who have not yet been touched by the project.

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## joy of reading

Uganda focuses on teaching reading more effectively

Teacher-training sessions encourage use of the mother tongue and involving older siblings and parents to assist young learners with reading and writing in the language spoken at home. Such training sessions have taken place in the teacher colleges in Shimoni, Bushenyi, Canon Apollo and Canon Lawrence.

"We found the aspect of engaging in play acting to learn to read quite enriching" recalls Richard Ahimbisibwe, 28, who was trained at the Bushenyi training college.

Teaming up with the Uganda Library Association, the programme also organizes reading camps during which children are brought together to engage in poetry, song and dance, and provided with books, drawing and painting materials. "These camps are full of the things children love: stories, games, flights of fancy and pictures of places," says Erisam Magara, Chairman of the Uganda Library Association, adding that later children associate these delights with books. Five such reading camps have been organized in different districts.

Enthusiasm for this Reading for All Programme has led to the creation of the Book Development Council of Uganda to build capacity in textbook production. "We target authors, publishers, printers, book suppliers and distributors," says Anastazia Nakkazi, Secretary-General of the Uganda National Commission for UNESCO.

Despite the success of the programme, all is not rosy. "A lack of committed teachers is frustrating efforts to achieve reading for all," says Yunia Obua-Otoa of the International Reading Association. "We need to train many more teachers" she says. Obua-Otoa also sees the need for a library in every primary school to enhance children's reading. The lack of reading materials in the mother tongue makes this challenge even more acute.

A similar programme has started in the United Republic of Tanzania and the ultimate aim is that children like John in other African countries can also experience the joy of reading.

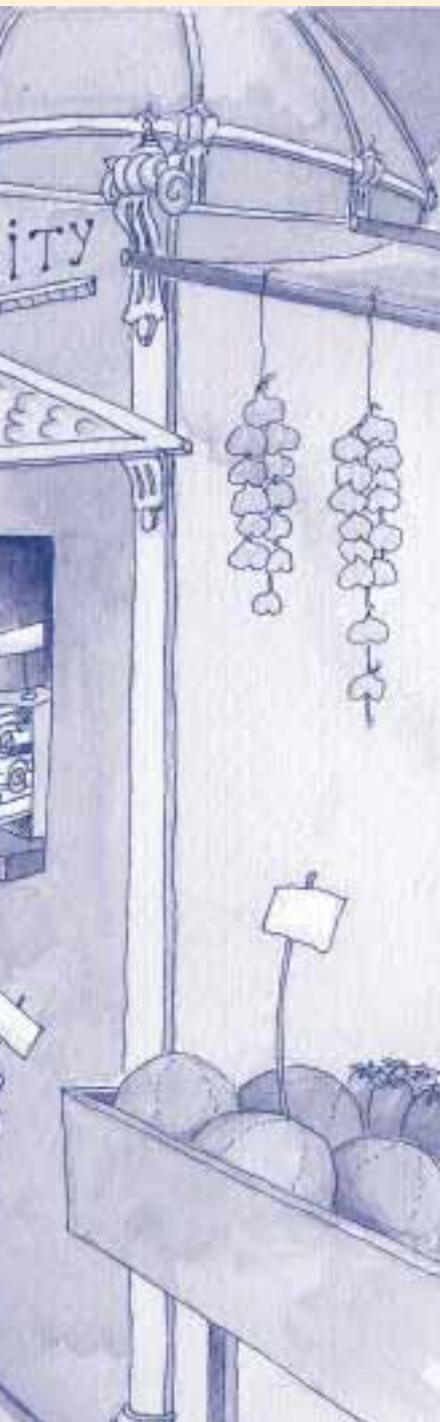
# Higher education

Like other public services, higher education is slowly being drawn into the world of the market. free to choose the best courses and there is big money to be made by private firms. But will this of giving as many people as possible access to knowledge?



# for sale

Students are now consumers,  
clash with education's main goal



In a few months' time, students in Mumbai, Dakar or St. Petersburg will be able, at the click of a computer mouse, to download the content of classes being taught at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The renowned American university, with funding from two private foundations, has decided to put some of its courses online for the benefit of students and teachers all over the world.

This is very generous. But an exception, because higher education is moving towards increased rivalry and profit. It has not escaped the demands of globalization any more than other sectors have. Lecture halls are no longer simply places where courses are taught. Students are now consumers, free to choose the best course they can find in a "market" that has become worldwide.

## Promising market

This market is promising. OECD says fee income from foreign students studying in member countries topped \$30 billion in 1999. The massive spread of higher education means even more money can be made in the future. United States investment bankers Merrill Lynch predict today's total of 80 million students will have doubled by 2025.

Another sign of the way things are going is that two of the biggest firms selling higher education in the United States, Apollo and Sylvan Learning, are now quoted on the stock exchange. So it is no surprise that the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has turned its attention to this lucrative sector. Since 1994, the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) has included education, especially higher education, on a list of services to be privatized. This means that by the time negotiations are completed in 2005, member states must have reached agreement on facilitating the flow of stu-

dents and educational resources, and establishing colleges and campuses in foreign countries (see box p. 7).

But the opening up of universities to foreigners is nothing new. People have always gone abroad to perfect their knowledge of a language or complete their training. "Erasmus travelled and Oxford University was founded by English students who could not study at the Sorbonne," notes UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, John Daniel. "So it isn't so much revolution as evolution that's happening now."

"The higher education market has been around for a very long time too, even if it wasn't called that," according to Kurt Larsen, Principal Administrator of the OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation.

What has changed, though, is how education is delivered. New technology has revolutionized distance learning. Even though its share of world trade is still very small, online courses and educational CD-Roms will continue to grow. The irony is that while you can now educate yourself from home, students can move around more easily than ever before. OECD says there were 1.3 million foreigners studying in its member countries in 1998, rising to 1.5 million the following year.

## Boom in adult education

Some regions draw more foreign students than others. English-speaking countries – the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia – lead the way. France and Germany, where fees are very low, are also popular.

The increase in the number of private colleges and campuses over the past 20 years has also changed the situation. "This is partly because of the boom in adult education," says Stamenka Uvalic-Trumbic of UNESCO's Higher Education Division. Careers are much →

# Education for sale

→ less straightforward now as more people resume studying at the age of 30 or 40 to complete earlier training or to switch careers.

“This is the core of the market,” says Larsen. “Since most adult education students are wage-earners, often partly funded by their employers, they’re very profitable.” But private firms are also gaining ground over public education, especially in poor countries.

In Romania, where higher education was entirely in state hands until the early 1990s, private colleges now draw nearly a third of all students. Some developing countries see the availability of private education as a way to make up for the failings of the state.

In Cameroon, for example, only two-thirds of last year’s 30,000 secondary school graduates managed to find places in a state-funded university. The rest had to turn to the private sector, at home or abroad.

## Not a simple product

“Since our universities can’t meet the demand, why should we close the door to foreign-supplied education?” asks Emmanuel Tonye, technical adviser to Cameroon’s Higher Education Ministry. “It isn’t a problem because we have laws stipulating how these foreign universities can set up shop here.” The catch is that the annual cost of a private education is about ten times the 50,000 CFA francs (\$70) charged by a state-funded college.

Another problem is foreign recognition of diplomas. How can you tell if the education you get at a newly-opened college is worth anything or if the economics degree or MBA you get will be recognized elsewhere? There are some regional agreements – such as the 1997 Lisbon Convention, for Europe – but no international accreditation authority. This is a big obstacle to privatizing higher education.

But the obstacles are not just technical or financial ones. Education, like other social services such as health, is far from being a simple ‘product’. “The forces of supply and demand can’t be the only factor taken into account here, because education is a right recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” says Francisco Komlavi Seddoh, Director of UNESCO’s Division of Higher Education. “Universities must be open not just to those who can pay but to all those who deserve to go there.”

“Higher education isn’t something you buy like bananas or cars,” Daniel points out. “Any structural agreement on international trade assumes countries are going to yield a bit of their sovereignty.”

## Drive for profit

Teachers oppose wholesale privatization of education and point to its defects. Business people do not always act in the public interest. In the long run the drive for profit can push private universities to emphasize subjects and courses directly linked to the market, such as commercial studies or marketing, so as to attract stu-

dents, to the detriment of less “profitable” subjects such as philosophy, psychology or history. “And what will become of pure research in a world ruled only by profit?” asks Monique Fouilhoux, Education Coordinator of Education International, the world’s biggest teachers’ union.

This short-term vision, dictated by industry’s need for manpower, leaves little room for meeting the challenges of the future. We cannot predict what kind of knowledge will be needed tomorrow. “When the oil crisis hit Europe in the early 1970s, some countries, like France and the Nordic states, realized how little they knew about the Arab world, so university courses

## A CONTROVERSIAL

### For

Pierre Sauv , who works in OECD’s Trade Directorate, says increased trade in higher education can help everyone, starting with developing countries that do not have the resources to meet all their students’ needs.

#### What are the benefits of commercializing higher education?

Technological advance allows us to spread knowledge further, so it makes sense to think about how we can maximize the possible benefits especially since we’ve long known that investment in human capital goes hand in hand with economic development. So we should be glad to see increased trade in higher education. However, for the past few years, it seems to have become almost impossible to utter the word “trade” without setting off loud protests. We should remember that trade enriches nations. The mobility of students, teachers and ideas can be important in bringing cultures closer together.

#### The problem is that here, as elsewhere, the North seems to have much more to gain than the South...

But would the countries of the South be better off if we didn’t allow their young people to study at the best Western universities? Some developing countries just don’t have enough money to provide the training their citizens need. A number of African countries have agreed to privatize education within the framework of WTO because they want to see foreign suppliers set up operations in their countries to add to the amount of education provided by local private or government suppliers.

#### But isn’t there a risk of making education too uniform?

Policies exist to avoid this. For example, an Indonesian law that requires education to be given in this or that language can be extended to foreign suppliers of education. So it’s mostly a matter of regulation and local political choice. Nobody’s forcing WTO member states to make any commitment in the field of education and if they do, they’re free to use local suppliers. ●

sprung up to teach the subject,” says Sjur Bergan, head of the Council of Europe’s Higher Education and Research Committee. “This is why the widest possible range of subjects must be offered.”

The role of universities is not just to train managers. Their role is also to turn out enlightened citizens who go on to play leading roles in their countries. “In Mexico, higher education used to be seen as a social and political programme in itself,” comments Sylvie Didou Aupetit, a researcher at Mexico’s National Polytechnic Institute. “You expected to get something back in terms of

the country’s development. But nowadays, a society-friendly approach like that is giving way to a commercial attitude.” On top of this, students from developing countries do not all return home after getting their education abroad.

### Need for dialogue

All this makes the commercialization of higher education a delicate subject involving very complicated issues. Some European countries, such as France and Germany, are being stubborn about moving towards it, but are big exporters of education themselves.

## Four areas for negotiating education

WTO recognizes four kinds of cross-border trade in services.

1. In education, “**consumption abroad**” is the most important of the four. Studying abroad is considered an export of educational services. Here, advocates of privatization want to remove curbs on the movement of students (such as visas and non-recognition of diplomas).
2. “**Cross-border supply**” means the sale of courses on the Internet or in the form of CD-Roms and DVDs.
3. “**Commercial presence**” means opening private training schools run by foreign firms.
4. “**Presence of natural persons**” means employing foreign teachers. ●

Developing countries are divided over the benefits to be had and their ministries of Trade and of Education often have conflicting interests.

This is why the international community has turned to UNESCO to do some thinking on the subject. “UNESCO isn’t for or against globalization,” says John Daniel. “What’s important is that it’s a place where people can discuss things impartially and the different parties involved can talk to each other.”

This is the spirit behind the first Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education that will be held at UNESCO headquarters on 17 and 18 October. Teachers, students and representatives of the private sector and international organizations will meet to discuss how to ensure better international acceptance and recognition of training qualifications and how to promote fair trade in this field. The meeting promises to be a heated one. ●

## DEBATE

### Against

Nico Hirtt, a Belgian teacher and essayist, attacks privatization of universities as ensuring dominance of the Western educational model and widening social inequality.

#### How has higher education changed in the past 20 years?

Economic interests are now exerting great pressure on public services to adapt to their requirements. Schools are being asked to be more flexible so as to respond faster to the demands of the labour market. At the same time, government funding, on which universities mostly depend, has fallen.

#### What part does the World Trade Organization play in all this?

The commercialization of education is going to happen however the negotiations turn out. Decisions at an international level will simply accompany the trend. Market forces will lead the way. Preparatory meetings before the 1999 Seattle Summit showed how few obstacles there are to this liberalization. The only real brake to it is the issue of international recognition of diplomas.

#### What could be the medium-term results of this liberalization?

The danger is a “McDonaldization” of higher education, with the spread of a single formula and copy of the Western model. Faced with increased competition, universities are tempted to invest in subjects that are going to be most profitable for them, to the detriment of less profitable ones such as human sciences. They will also be tempted to move more and more towards doing research that pleases their funding sources. In the future, parents will have to spend a greater part of their income on their children’s education and that will only increase social inequality.

#### So what’s the answer?

We can’t resist this trend if we just stick to education because all the most human aspects of our societies are being commercialized. It’s a worldwide battle we have to wage against the excesses of economic modernization. ●

# 250 million children at work

Governments are shying away from tackling child labour, says Lead Manager of UNESCO's Dakar Follow-up Unit



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When his father became an alcoholic, fell into debt and was in no position to work, 11-year-old Veeramallu Kesaboina Biksham from India had to leave school to become a bonded labourer.

Veeramallu is not an isolated case. Today there are more than 250 million working children aged 5 to 17 in the world, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO). This means that one out of every six children is working instead of going to school, with nearly three-quarters (180 million) exposed to work that is dangerous not only to their health, but also to their personal development. Alarminglly,

the phenomenon is growing. In India, for example, the number of child labourers is increasing by 12 per cent a year, according to the Centre for Communication and Development.

"Governments are shying away from tackling child labour because it's a very complex political and socio-economic issue," says Abhimanyu Singh, Lead Manager of UNESCO's Dakar Follow-up Unit. "But the bottom line is that all children have a right to education. So if we want to achieve Education for All, the issue of child labour must be taken more squarely into account," he says.

All regions are not equally touched by the problem. The majority of working children live in the Asia-Pacific region (60 per cent of the world total or 127 million under age 14).

Sub-Saharan Africa has about 48 million working children and Latin America and the Caribbean about 17 million. Some 2.5 million working children live in developed countries.

What are the reasons for this deplorable situation? Alphonse Tay of UNESCO's Section for Combatting Exclusion through Education points to the lack of resources and political will to fight child labour. "We are only dealing

with the symptom without tackling the root causes of the phenomenon that have to do with societal dysfunction," he comments.

Governments are under pressure to abolish child labour and get the children into formal schooling. One example is the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, involving more than 50 countries working towards the gradual elimination of child labour.

Governments, NGOs and development partners are also coming up with education alternatives for working children, such as night schools. In Rajasthan, India, for instance, over 15,000 working children have passed through the night school at the Barefoot College. But is a child who has worked hard the whole day fit to learn?

## 3 questions to abolish

Any child out of school is a child  
M. Venkatarangaiya Foundation

### 1 How important is the issue of child labour within the Education for All drive?

It's absolutely crucial. We need to establish the link between child labour and EFA because anyone attempting to deal with one without taking into account the other is bound to fail. We consider every form of work done by children as child labour whether it be hazardous occupations like carpet weaving or more acceptable forms such as grazing cattle. Any child not in school is a child who will sooner rather than later be put to work. We believe that all kinds of child labour must be abolished and that all children must attend full-time formal school.

## The High-Level Group meets

A key event on this year's EFA agenda will be the second High-Level Group Meeting on Education for All to be held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 19 to 20 November 2002. The meeting will assess the international community's commitment and progress towards the Education for All goals.

The launch of the EFA 2002 Monitoring Report will provide participants with the latest and most comprehensive analysis of progress made to date and the barriers still to be overcome.

Keynote speakers include UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal, Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF, and Jeffrey D. Sachs, Special Adviser to the Secretary General of the United Nations on the Millennium Development Goals. The High-Level Group is expected to adopt a Communiqué outlining concrete steps to advance EFA.

## Educating rural people

Some figures speak for themselves. Like the 1.2 billion poor people in the world. More than two-thirds of them live in rural areas, often with little access to basic services such as education, healthcare and communications because they are isolated.

To try to break this vicious circle, UNESCO and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have joined forces. On 3 September this year, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, they launched a flagship programme as part of the Education for All movement.

Their aim is to narrow the gap between town and country, and give rural people more access to basic education and better quality schooling. Governments, other international organizations and NGOs are invited to join this partnership.

At national level, countries will draw up action plans – with technical help from the partners – to boost basic education in rural areas. Internationally, the focus will be on lobbying and recruiting new partners, and encouraging the exchange of experiences and knowledge about educating rural people.

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## World tour

→ Just three months before the deadline for the completion of National EFA Action Plans, seven of the forty-six sub-Saharan African countries have neither a national education and training plan nor a National Plan of Action. Six have a first draft of their national EFA plans and only nine have succeeded in attracting external funding. Five countries did not provide information.

→ UNESCO, the World Bank and the focal point of the Collective Consultation of NGOs for EFA in Africa, the Africa Network Campaign on Education For All (ANCEFA) launched phase 1 of a capacity-building programme for NGO and civil society involvement in EFA, in Dakar from 12 to 14 June 2002.

→ To build capacity in key areas related to Education for All, ARABEFA, the body that coordinates EFA activities in the Arab region, organized, between April and June 2002, a series of workshops on quality education (April, Doha), early childhood education (May, Amman), girls' education and literacy and adult education (Cairo, June).

→ Latin American Vice-Ministers of Education met in August in Santiago, Chile to discuss the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2002-2015, and to plan for the upcoming Meeting of Education Ministers, in Havana, Cuba on 14 and 15 November.

→ UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and the Moldovan Ministry of Education organized a three-day national seminar in September to introduce education specialists to modern techniques of strategic planning and results-based management for EFA.

## about the need child labour

labourer, says Shantha Sinha, Secretary Trustee of the (MVF), a non-governmental organization in India

**2** But many people believe that poor families need their children's income in order to survive?

The answer to this question depends on how you frame it. If the question is "Is it not true that if a family is extremely poor then the parents need to send their child to work?" Then the answer of course is "YES". But if the question is "Are all families now sending their children to work so poor that they need their child's income in order to survive?" the answer is an emphatic 'NO'. The argument is simply flawed because rural areas are full of examples of children belonging to very poor families who are in school while their relatively better off counterparts are working.

**3** You stress the state's responsibility to abolish child labour. Is this the only way to achieve EFA?

Yes. We have to learn from Europe and other countries where they have achieved universal primary education. This was possible only because the state took the responsibility of protecting children's rights to education and abolishing child labour. I don't believe in setting up non-formal delivery systems to give working children a chance to learn. They shouldn't be working in the first place!

## Peace in the Korean Peninsula

In July 2002, a cargo ship docked at the Nanpo Port on the west coast of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and unloaded 200 metric tons of printing paper. The paper was shipped directly from the Republic of Korea to be used to print English textbooks for middle school students. It was donated by the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (through an Education Fund sponsored by SAMSUNG Electronics) and Hankook Paper Mfg. Co., Ltd., based in Seoul.

"This project is the first of its kind and it contributes to the ongoing process of reconciliation between DPR Korea and the Republic of Korea," says Dr Yersu Kim, Secretary-General of the Republic of Korea National Commission for UNESCO.

UNESCO has been facilitating the negotiation process and an agreement was reached in early 2002. In August, workers in a Pyongyang printing shop were busy running off 600,000 copies of English textbooks for the 2002/2003 school year.

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## Decline in teacher numbers

Relentless population growth, declining working conditions and low salaries are creating a severe shortage of teachers, according to a new UNESCO-ILO global survey of teaching conditions worldwide. The survey "Statistical Profile of the Teaching Profession" is based on the most extensive data ever gathered on the teaching profession. Results indicate that developing regions, where demand for teachers is highest, are the most touched by the shortage. Other results show that, in industrialized countries, the lack of young recruits and low pay are becoming serious threats to the quality of education.

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## HIV/AIDS preventive education online

In line with UNESCO's priority on HIV/AIDS preventive education, the Organization has launched two new portals on the Internet. The UNESCO HIV/AIDS web portal, created in partnership with UNAIDS, provides information on UNESCO's strategy and action in preventive education (<http://portal.unesco.org/aids>).

The second portal concerns the new clearinghouse on the global HIV/AIDS impact on education, which aims to bring together the wider education community to share information on the disease. It is managed by UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) with the assistance of ministries, non-governmental organizations, researchers and development agencies ([www.unesco.org/iiep](http://www.unesco.org/iiep)).

Contacts: A.-M Hoffmann, UNESCO Paris and Alexandra Draxler, IIEP  
E-mails: [am.hoffmann@unesco.org](mailto:am.hoffmann@unesco.org) and [a.draxler@iiep.unesco.org](mailto:a.draxler@iiep.unesco.org)

## ICT for teacher training portal

A new web portal developed by UNESCO Bangkok is demonstrating how new information and communication technologies can reduce the digital divide in the Asia-Pacific Region. The new portal ([www.unescobkk.org/ips/ict/ict.htm](http://www.unescobkk.org/ips/ict/ict.htm)) deals with topics of direct interest to teachers. "They learn what this new technology is, how it is used in education, their role as users and how to integrate it into classroom teaching," says Carmelita Villanueva of UNESCO Bangkok, who developed the portal. Teachers also have access to lessons on science and mathematics as well as to interactive virtual laboratories meant for schools not equipped with science laboratories.

Contact: Carmelita Villanueva, UNESCO Bangkok.  
E-mail: [c.villanueva@unescobkk.org](mailto:c.villanueva@unescobkk.org)

## More literate women than ever before

More women are gaining access to education and at a faster rate than men. New figures from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics show that the proportion of illiterate women aged 15 and over fell from 28.5 per cent to 25.8 per cent from 1995 to 2000. The trend is evident in all regions, but is particularly encouraging in Africa where, for the first time, the majority of women are now literate.

The Institute also reports a steady fall in the overall number of illiterate adults from an estimated 872 million in 1995 to 862 million in 2000. Almost 80 per cent of the world's population aged over 15 is now literate.



*For the first time, the majority of African women are now literate.*

The new figures were released on International Literacy Day, celebrated throughout the world on 8 September and at UNESCO headquarters on 9-10 September. This year's prizes for outstanding efforts to fight illiteracy were awarded to the Division of Adult Education in Eritrea, the Regional Centre for Adult Education in Egypt, the Literacy and Adult Basic Education Project in Uganda and to the Bunyad Literacy Community Council in Pakistan.

More on International Literacy Day at the: [www.unesco.org/education/ild](http://www.unesco.org/education/ild)  
The latest literacy figures at [www.uis.unesco.org](http://www.uis.unesco.org)

## Working together for sustainable development

UNESCO used the occasion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in Johannesburg 26 August – 4 September, to launch three new partnerships with public, private and inter-governmental groups.

Advertising companies, including the multinational agency J. Walter Thompson, agreed to set up a coalition to spread the word about the urgency of sustainable development. A second partnership was on bringing education to rural people, launched by UNESCO and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (see p. 9). A third involved major world university bodies working together with UNESCO to change some university courses to address the issue of education for sustainable development.

The place of education in the drive for sustainable development has clearly changed, says Mary Pigozzi, Director of UNESCO's Division for the Promotion of Quality Education. "Previously focus was on environmental education but today education is considered an essential tool in tackling such development challenges as poverty and inequity".

During the Summit, UNESCO also launched a CD-Rom called "Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future". This training course for teachers, accessible on UNESCO's website, provides 100 hours of training. [www.unesco.org/education/tlsf](http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf)

Contact: Miemen Legesse, UNESCO Paris.  
E-mail: [m.legesse@unesco.org](mailto:m.legesse@unesco.org)



### John Daniel receives award

UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education John Daniel was awarded the Commonwealth of Learning

Excellence in Distance Education Award during a prize-giving ceremony held during the 2nd Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning in Durban, South Africa on 1 August. This honour recognizes the leading role Mr Daniel has played internationally over three decades in the development of distance learning in universities.

## OCTOBER

5

**World Teachers' Day** • Contact: [r.halperin@unesco.org](mailto:r.halperin@unesco.org)

17–18

**Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education.** UNESCO Paris, France  
Contact: [s.uvalic-trumbic@unesco.org](mailto:s.uvalic-trumbic@unesco.org)

21–25

**Workshop on Comprehensive School Health and Nutrition** organized by UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Bureau for Education and the UN World Food Programme. Chiang Mai, Thailand • Contact: [lc.gregorio@unesco.org](mailto:lc.gregorio@unesco.org) or [Judit-Katona-Apte@wfp.org](mailto:Judit-Katona-Apte@wfp.org)

28–29

**A Seminar on Ministerial Responsibility for Early Childhood** organized by UNESCO Cambodia and the Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO Phnom Penh, Cambodia • Contact: [s.tey@memo.unesco.org](mailto:s.tey@memo.unesco.org)

30–4 November

**International Sub-Regional Workshop on Information and Communication Technologies in Teacher Training in Central and Eastern Europe**  
Kiev, Ukraine • Contact: [m.patru@unesco.org](mailto:m.patru@unesco.org)

## NOVEMBER

5–6

**First American Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Education** organized by UNESCO Santiago and the Latin American Parliament • São Paulo, Brazil  
Contact: [machado@unesco.cl](mailto:machado@unesco.cl)

6–9

**European Regional Conference on Lifelong Learning in the Pursuit of EFA Goals and CONFINTEA V Agenda** organized by the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE), UNESCO Headquarters and the Bulgarian Ministry of Education Sofia, Bulgaria • Contact: [c.medel-anonvevo@unesco.org](mailto:c.medel-anonvevo@unesco.org)

13–15

**World Forum of UNESCO Chairs** • UNESCO Paris, France

14–15

**Meeting of Ministers of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean** organized by UNESCO Santiago Havana, Cuba • Contact: [machado@unesco.cl](mailto:machado@unesco.cl)

19–20

**2nd Meeting of the High-Level Group on EFA**  
Abuja, Nigeria • Contact: [abh.singh@unesco.org](mailto:abh.singh@unesco.org)

## DECEMBER

2–6

**Eighth Conference of Ministers of Education of African Member States (MINEDAF VIII)**  
Dar-es-Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania  
Contact: [a.parsuramen@unesco.org](mailto:a.parsuramen@unesco.org)

21–23

**Secondary Education for a Better Future: Trends, Challenges and Priorities** organized by Oman and UNESCO Muscat, Oman  
Contacts: [moetosd@omantel.net.om](mailto:moetosd@omantel.net.om) or [s.bahri@unesco.org](mailto:s.bahri@unesco.org)



● **Technologies for Education: Potentials, Parameters, and Prospects** edited by Wadi D. Haddad and Alexandra Draxler. The potential and power of technology in education is great, and demand is high. But what is its impact on education systems throughout the world? This monograph looks at how technology can promote improvements in reach and delivery, content, learning outcomes, management of systems, teaching

and pertinence. It is intended to help educational decision-makers survey the technological landscape and its relevance to educational reform. A UNESCO/Academy for Educational Development (AED) book. Online edition: [www.aed.org/publications/TechEdInfo.html](http://www.aed.org/publications/TechEdInfo.html).

● **The Challenge of Achieving Gender Parity in Basic Education, a Statistical Review, 1990-1998.** This report provides an analysis of the progress towards gender parity accomplished since the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990) and looks at how different aspects of disparities are relevant for different regions. It also proposes a baseline for assessing future progress towards the new goals set at the World Education Forum (Dakar, 2000).

● **International and National Trends in Local Governance of Education** by Noel F. McGinn. This publication identifies major changes in the way education is governed and current trends towards increased autonomy for local schools. It concludes that reforms today are more complex and involve more actors than those of previous decades. Available from UNESCO Publishing, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP. 36 pages, 9.14 Euros. To order: <http://upo.unesco.org>

● **Current WWW Information Systems on Information Technologies in Education.** This survey offers developers of web-based information systems and educators a description and analysis of internet websites on information technologies in education. Available from the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE), Moscow. To order: [www.iite.ru](http://www.iite.ru). \$25. E-mail: [info@iite.ru](mailto:info@iite.ru).

● **Women and Management in Higher Education.** Despite improvements during the past two or three decades, access to higher education remains a problem for women in many countries. This handbook brings together examples of international, regional, national, institutional and classroom strategies and practices that advance and strengthen women's participation in higher education.



● **Gender Equality in Basic Education.** This 48-page document provides a strategic framework for UNESCO's actions within the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) and provides Member States with guidelines for the development and reinforcement of their national plans and programmes designed to achieve education for all.

● **Towards an Open Learning World, 50 years, UNESCO Institute for Education.** This book, published on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the UNESCO Institute for Education (Hamburg, Germany) offers a fascinating overview of the institution from its beginning until today.

● **Examples of Best Practices of Non-Violent Conflict Resolution In and Out of School: Some Examples.** This 79-page document aims to provide teachers, educators, parents, youth and students with concrete pedagogical tools to prevent and transform the violence with which they are confronted on a daily basis. It is the outcome of an initiative to collect and disseminate "best practices" in the field of non-violent conflict resolution.

UNESCO National Commissions, NGOs, associations, schools, research institutions and universities contributed by sending examples of their experiences in the prevention and transformation of conflicts.



● **Education et formation au Tchad: Recueil d'études thématiques** by G.-C. Chang and M. Radi. The case studies in this document about education and training in Chad provide insight into the factors that affect the internal and external efficiency of education systems. Apart from their interest for Chad, these studies will also interest those involved in development and in the problems and difficulties faced by most developing countries. French only. (Education Policies and Strategies, 4, UNESO doc. ED-2002/WS/12)

● **Innovative Teaching on a CD-ROM.** In a UNESCO/African Development Bank project, experienced teachers from selected countries were mobilized to renew curricula and develop guidelines for innovative teaching in secondary-level scientific and vocational and technical disciplines. The new training materials have been placed on CD-ROM, currently being distributed in Chad and other countries with similar education needs. In French only.

*Unless otherwise stated, all publications are available free of charge from UNESCO's Documentation and Information Service, Education Sector. E-mail: [sdi@unesco.org](mailto:sdi@unesco.org)*

