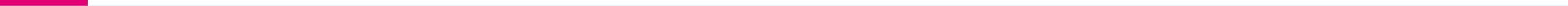


Education for All
IS THE WORLD ON TRACK?

Education for All: Is the world on track?



Education for All IS THE WORLD ON TRACK?

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Foreword

The aim of extending a basic level of education to all children, young people and adults around the world has captured the imagination of all nations. It was a major outcome of the World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien in 1990, and was reconfirmed in a series of summits throughout the following decade. The aim was re-specified as six major goals at the World Education Forum, held in Dakar in April 2000, two of which were adopted as Millennium Development Goals in the same year. Provision of basic education was thereby properly recognized as being a central part of the world's strategy to halve the incidence of global poverty within less than a generation.

At the Dakar Forum, a new resolution made plain that all parties should be accountable for their record in meeting the commitments they had made. National governments agreed to dedicate themselves to securing the goals, while international agencies pledged that no country thus committed would be prevented from achieving them by a lack of resources. One of the instruments for securing greater accountability for the implementation of these pledges was the establishment of the EFA Global Monitoring Report.

This Report has been produced by an independent international team based in UNESCO. Work began to be commissioned in July 2002, but the team was not fully in place until the beginning of September. Preparation of this report was thus extremely time-constrained. Longer preparation cycles of 12–18 months will become established in annual editions over the next few years. The Report charts progress against the six Dakar goals and targets, highlights effective policies and strategies, and alerts the global community to emerging challenges for action and cooperation. Drawing upon the latest available data, it sets out a challenging framework for reform.

The goals of EFA are of enormous significance. Without constant and steady progress towards them, development cannot be judged to be happening. The Report shows that the challenge faced by the nations of the world remains substantial. Although planning is under way, it needs to be strengthened. National commitment by both governments and civil society is the key to securing the goals, but costs and resources are crucial considerations, too. Although most countries will be able to meet these costs and find the necessary resources, the report shows that a significant minority will not if existing trends persist. In response, as yet, the international community has not adequately demonstrated its own commitment. In spite of grand promises, the aid record (both overall and for education) over the 1990s was both disappointing and worrying. Since Dakar, the question of education, especially basic education, has risen higher on the international agenda, but much remains to be done to ensure that aid flows are adequate, timely and well-targeted. Future practice has to be different from the past if our joint responsibilities are to be met and if the EFA goals are to be achieved. This Report is the first in a new tradition of reporting that will, I am confident, help us to secure those ends.



Koïchiro Matsuura
Director-General of UNESCO



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Summary

This Report is about opportunities to learn. Its primary purpose is to assess the extent to which the benefits associated with education are being extended to all children, youths and adults around the world and whether the commitments made two years ago in April 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar are being met. It offers an interim answer to the question as to whether the world is on track to achieve Education for All (EFA) in 2015.

The World Education Forum (2000) agreed on six EFA goals, which were considered to be essential, attainable and affordable given strong international commitment and resolve. The Dakar Framework for Action declared that by 2015, *all* children of primary-school age would participate in free schooling of acceptable quality and that gender disparities in schooling would be eliminated. Levels of adult illiteracy would be halved, early childhood care and education and learning opportunities for youth and adults would be greatly increased, and all aspects of education quality would be improved. In the same year, the Millennium Development Goals were agreed, two of which – universal primary education (UPE) and the elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education – were defined as critical to the elimination of extreme poverty.

The Report is presented in six parts. Chapter 1 reaffirms why Education for All is of such overriding importance. Chapter 2 updates our understanding of progress towards, and prospects for, achieving the six EFA goals. Chapter 3 examines the international response to the call for EFA National Action Plans, the engagement of civil society in planning, and whether the distinctive challenges of HIV/AIDS, and conflict and emergency are being confronted. Chapter 4 assesses the costs of achieving the EFA goals and the availability of the resources to secure them. Chapter 5 explores whether the international commitments made in Dakar, and subsequently, are being met and, if so, by what means. Finally, Chapter 6 pulls some of these threads together as a basis for looking forward and identifying opportunities for sustaining the momentum generated by the World Education Forum.

The Report draws on data from the statistical annex and from a wide range of other sources.¹ These data are essential to assessing whether progress is being made, in identifying serious gaps in our knowledge, and in calculating

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) relating to education

Goal 2. Achieve universal primary education

Target 3. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women

Target 4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015

Source: United Nations General Assembly, Resolution A/56/326, 6 September 2001.

The six Dakar goals

7. We hereby collectively commit ourselves to the attainment of the following goals:

- expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
- ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
- ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes;
- achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;
- eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality;
- improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Source: The Dakar Framework for Action, *Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments*, adopted by the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, 26–28 April 2000), Paris, UNESCO, 2000, para 7.

past trends and future prospects. However, the preparation of this Report has highlighted major gaps in our knowledge. For example, primary-school net enrolment data for 1999 are not available for well over seventy countries. Comparative analysis on education policies and plans is limited. Country-level information on the financing of education is weak. And the database on aid to education is still bedevilled by conceptual problems and reporting inadequacies. While it is still possible to arrive at informed judgements, better monitoring will require additional investment in the collection and analysis of data, and in policy-related research and evaluation.

1. The Annex provides the latest annual administrative data collected by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, namely for the school year starting in 1999.

Chapter 1. 'Education for All' is development

For those who work for, and benefit from education, its intrinsic worth is clear to see. For those who are confronted with making difficult choices about priorities, reforms and the allocation of resources, in national and state governments, and in international funding agencies, making the case for education explicit remains important. Are the six EFA goals, individually and collectively, genuinely of overriding importance? There are three important answers to this question.

Where the right to education is guaranteed, people's access to and enjoyment of other rights is enhanced.

Education as a human right

The right to education is articulated clearly in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). This recognizes the intrinsic human value of education, underpinned by strong moral and legal foundations. Seen in this light, education is also an indispensable means of unlocking and protecting other human rights by providing the scaffolding that is required to secure good health, liberty, security, economic well-being, and participation in social and political activity. Where the right to education is guaranteed, people's access to and enjoyment of other rights is enhanced.

A rights based approach to education has gathered pace in recent years, providing the basis for comparative assessments of national progress against international commitments, including those made in Dakar. Providing the right to education is an obligation of governments and requires that they translate their international commitments into legislation against which their citizens have legal recourse. Without legislation it is difficult to monitor and enforce obligations, so mobilizing governments to develop and modernize national legislation is a critical element of implementing the Dakar Framework for Action.

Education and human capabilities

A significant shift in thinking about human development has taken place in the past 20 years, with Amartya Sen as one its leading advocates. To redress the narrow focus on growth in per capita incomes as the central indicator of successful development policies, a new framework has emerged which emphasizes the extent to which people's capabilities have been enhanced and their choices widened in order to enjoy the freedoms that make life meaningful and worthwhile. These freedoms encompass the rights of access to resources that allow people to avoid illness, have self-respect, be well nourished, sustain livelihoods and enjoy peaceful relationships.

In this framework, education is important for at least three reasons. First, the skills provided by basic education, such as being able to read and write, are valuable in their own right, as a fundamental outcome of development. Second, education can help to displace other more negative features of life. For example, free and compulsory primary education will reduce child labour. Third, education has a powerful role in empowering those who suffer from multiple disadvantages. Thus women who have benefited from education may simply survive better and longer than they would otherwise. Defined in this way, education that is universal, attained by all, regardless of class or caste or gender, has a powerful impact in addressing social and economic barriers within a society and is central to realizing human freedoms.

Education and other development goals

If all people have a right to education, and if the impact upon people's capabilities is intrinsically part of our understanding of development, it follows that the provision of a basic level of education for all people must be made universal. The case is clear and uncompromising. But this conclusion does not in itself answer the question how much education should be universally available. Here, there are neither easy nor universal answers. Country specific contexts are important. Nevertheless, understanding the

relationship between education and other development goals is helpful, especially in relation to whether education is defined as productive.

Despite a range of methodological problems, there is a compelling body of international evidence that demonstrates that schooling improves productivity in rural and urban self-employment. Many of these benefits stem from literacy, which requires a minimum of five to six years of full time primary education of good quality. Good primary education also has a positive impact on lower fertility rates, better diets and the earlier and more effective diagnosis of illness. The link between literacy and life expectancy is strong. Parents – particularly women – with greater amounts of schooling have healthier, longer-living children. This micro-level evidence reveals the interconnections between the constituent parts of human development and makes a compelling contribution to the case for investing in education. In addition, a new generation of economic growth models gives human resources a central position in increasing development returns.

A compelling triumvirate of arguments

Rights, freedoms and development benefits constitute a powerful triumvirate of arguments for Education for All. Together, they demonstrate that there is a fundamental identity between EFA and development and that each of the EFA goals brings separate opportunities for securing other gains. The challenge for individual countries is to recognize the validity of these arguments, define their own distinctive policy priorities and map their own routes to achieving all of the EFA and MDG education-related goals.

Chapter 2. Progress towards the goals

Is the world on track?

Progress towards EFA can be monitored in two main ways. The priority is to record and interpret progress at national level against each of the EFA goals and, if possible, for the set of six goals as a whole. However, it is also important to monitor the means to these ends, including legislation, policies, plans, resources, programmes and levels of international assistance, in line with the commitments of Dakar and other major agreements.

This Report re-confirms the diagnosis of the World Education Forum that almost one-third of the world's population live in countries where achieving the EFA goals remains a dream rather than a realistic proposition, unless a strong and concerted effort is made. High-risk countries are found primarily in South and West Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States and North Africa. The populous countries of East Asia and the Pacific are making some progress but will not achieve EFA without an intensified effort, while a number of countries in Central and Eastern Europe, with a rich education tradition, are in jeopardy of falling back from goals that had been attained.

If a combination of the three quantitative indices of primary net enrolment,² levels of adult literacy, and gender parity in primary school gross enrolment³ is analysed on the basis of distance from each of the goals using the latest available data, in concert with an assessment of trends and levels of progress over the 1990s, the following conclusions can be drawn for 154 countries for which data are available:

- 83 countries have already achieved the three goals or have a good chance of doing so by 2015.
- 43 countries have made progress in the 1990s but at least one goal is likely to be missed by 2015.
- 28 countries are in serious risk of not achieving any of the three goals.

Almost one-third of the world's population live in countries where achieving the EFA goals will remain a dream unless a strong and concerted effort is made.

2. The net enrolment ratio (NER) is the number of pupils in the official school-age group expressed as a percentage of the total population of that age group.

3. The gross enrolment ratio (GER) expresses the total enrolment of pupils in a grade or cycle or level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the corresponding eligible age group population in a given school year.

A high-risk group consists primarily of countries in sub-Saharan Africa but also includes India and Pakistan. It covers just over 25% of the world's population. This is where the overall challenge of EFA is greatest.

The first of these categories represents 32.4% of the world's population, including all of the countries in North America, Western Europe and Central Asia, 87% of countries in Central and Eastern Europe, 81% in East Asia and the Pacific and 69% in Latin America and the Caribbean. Four E-9⁴ countries are in the second group – Bangladesh, China, Egypt, and Indonesia – which in total represents 35.8% of the world's population. The third, high-risk group consists primarily of countries in sub-Saharan Africa but also includes India and Pakistan. It covers just over 25% of the world's population. This is where the overall challenge of EFA is greatest.

Universal primary education (UPE)

The UPE goal can be interpreted and monitored in more than one way. The most demanding interpretation would be that by 2015, all children in the relevant age-cohort should be enrolled in, and complete, the final year of primary school. This would require universal Grade 1 enrolment in 2009, for a six-year cycle, with neither drop out nor repetition in subsequent years. The least challenging interpretation would be that from 2015, all children should be able to join, and subsequently complete, primary schooling. The requirement that primary education should be free, compulsory and of good quality also deserves monitoring. The indicators selected for monitoring the Millennium Development Goal for UPE are the achievement of NER *and* Grade 4 completion rates of 99%, which is close to the first interpretation given above.

Based on 1999 data, the latest year for which statistics are available, an estimated 115.4 million school-age children were out of school, of which 56% were girls. Thus, there is little or no change to the figure of 113 million, cited in Dakar, for 1998. Some 94% of these children were living in developing countries. Least developed countries accounted for one-third of the total, while 49% were in the E-9 countries. Just over one-third of the children were in sub-Saharan Africa, a further third in South and West Asia, and 13% in East Asia and the Pacific.

In the 1990s, rapid enrolment growth resumed in South and West Asia, the Arab States and North Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean, remained slow in sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia, while levels fell in some Central and East European countries. By the end of the decade, countries with GERs below 70% were concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa. Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Eritrea, Guinea, Niger, Sierra Leone, Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania reported particularly low enrolments. But for 85 countries worldwide, GERs were in excess of 100%, indicating late enrolment and high rates of repetition.

Net enrolment ratios (NERs) exclude children older and younger than a country's official school-age group. In Central and Eastern Europe where economic decline and the erosion of social capital have hit some countries hard, the NER is only slightly higher than that of developing countries. But the most serious enrolment problems occur in some Arab States and in sub-Saharan Africa. Of the 25 countries that have recorded NERs below 70%, 18 are in sub-Saharan Africa.

One of the key criteria for UPE is the achievement of NERs close to 100. Only countries with high intake levels of children of official school age will achieve the goal in these terms. Systems that have high over-age intake tend to have high rates of drop out before Grade 5. Countries, such as Uganda and Equatorial Guinea, with survival rates⁵ of 45% and 16% respectively, illustrate how education systems with large numbers of over-age entrants have difficulty in keeping children enrolled. This is particular true of girls. In reverse, countries, such as Djibouti, Burkina Faso and Niger have high survival rates but serve only a small proportion of the primary school age children.

What are the prospects for achieving UPE? Analysis of net enrolment data for 128 countries⁶ shows that 50 have NERs of 95% and over and can be said to have achieved UPE. Of the balance of 78 countries, four scenarios can be developed. For those with NERs of 80% or more and able to sustain the progress they were making in the 1990s, there is a good chance of achieving UPE.

4. Nine of the world's high-population countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan. Together these countries account for more than 50% of the world's population.

5. Survival rate is the percentage of a pupil cohort that enters together in the first grade of primary education and that reaches a given grade (e.g. Grade 5) or the final grade of an education cycle with or without repeating a grade.

6. This survey used annual administrative data collected by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics for the school year starting in 1999 and the data from the EFA 2000 Assessment.

However, 16 countries where there was progress in the 1990s but where NERs are below 80%, have a low chance of achieving the goal. For 20 countries that moved away from the goal in the 1990s despite having NERs of over 80% there will have to be renewed efforts. Twenty-one countries face the greatest challenge with NERs below 80% and moving in a direction that takes them further away from UPE.

Gender equality

Worldwide, girls' enrolment in primary school improved in the 1990s. Girls' GERs increased by 3 percentage points, from 93.1% in 1990 to 96.5% in 1999 while over the same period, GERs for boys fell from 105.5% to 104%. The Gender Parity Index (GPI)⁷ improved in all regions and in nearly two-thirds of the 92 countries for which data are available. But overall the GPI remained below 0.9 and in favour of boys in South and West Asia, the Arab States and sub-Saharan Africa.

If a Gender Parity Index of between 0.97 and 1.03 is taken to represent the elimination of gender disparities, 86 countries out of 153 for which disaggregated gross primary enrolment data are available have achieved the goal. Of the remaining 67, only 18 have a good chance of attaining the goal by 2015 (but not 2005) based on their level of progress in the 1990s and their relative distance from the target GPI in 2000. Of the remaining 49, just fewer than 50% are in sub-Saharan Africa. There are also a number of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean where the GPI is in favour of girls.

Gender-disaggregated data on secondary education is less readily available. The participation rates for girls are increasing but it remains true that where there are major gender disparities in primary education, this is amplified at the secondary level; hence some of the lowest levels of secondary enrolment for girls are in Central and West Africa.

The goal for 2005 is particularly challenging. However, policies are available that can have significant impact on the enrolment and retention of girls in school over the short term. These are issues that will be a central theme for the 2003 Global Monitoring Report.

Adult literacy

The meaning of literacy has developed radically since the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien in 1990. Conceived now in the plural as 'literatecies', and embedded in a range of life and livelihood situations, literacy differs according to purpose, context, use, script and institutional framework. But its conceptual advancement has not been matched by the priority accorded to it in policy and resource allocation, in part because many governments perceive the expansion of primary education as the main driver for the eradication of illiteracy.

Nevertheless, progress towards higher proportions of literate men and women over the age of 15 is taking place, albeit slowly. From roughly 70% adult literacy in 1980, the figure increased to 80% in 2000. In absolute numbers, the gains are modest, from 870 million people defined as illiterate in 1980, to 862 million in 2000, reflecting high rates of population growth over the last 20 years. The gender gap is wide and narrowing only slowly. Two-thirds of the illiterate population are women.

Of the estimated 862 million illiterate people in 2000, over one-third live in India. China, Pakistan and Bangladesh combined, accounted for a further 27%, so that 61% of people who lack literacy live in four of the world's high-population countries. Based on current trends it is estimated that these four countries will have an almost identical share of the 800 million people that it is projected will remain illiterate in the year 2015, assuming that policies and contexts don't change.

If the analysis is restricted to youth literacy (15–24 years olds) and even assuming expansion in primary education, it is projected that there will be 107 million young people who will be illiterate in 2015 (of which 67 million will be female) compared with 140 million in 2000 (86 million female).

Based on an analysis of 97 countries with adult literacy rates of below 95% in 2000, 18 have a high chance of meeting the Dakar goal based on the rate of progress achieved in the 1990s. Of the remaining 79, 40 have literacy rates below 70%

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Of the estimated 862 million illiterate people in 2000, over one-third live in India.

7. The gender parity index (GPI) is the ratio between boys' and girls' enrolment ratios. Parity = 1.

The forthcoming United Nations Literacy Decade (2003–2012) is an important opportunity to focus on literacy and to improve assessment and monitoring.

and on recent rates of progress will not achieve the Dakar goal. Twenty-two of these countries are in sub-Saharan Africa, eight in the Arab States and North Africa and four in South and West Asia.

The forthcoming United Nations Literacy Decade (2003–2012) is an important opportunity to focus on literacy and to improve its assessment and monitoring. Work on a common international approach would represent an important advance in mapping progress against the objective agreed in Dakar.

Early childhood care and education

The extent of early childhood care and education (ECCE) is still relatively uncharted territory. This is a highly diverse area of learning which lacks good comparative data and widely accepted indicators. It includes learning opportunities that range from formal pre-schools in the national education system, via kindergartens and other centres, where care, play and education go hand in hand, to more informal, often home based activities. Most national ECCE policies focus on expanding and improving access to pre-primary care and education for children aged three and over, based on the knowledge that the learning outcomes of primary education are improved when learning during the early years of life precedes regular schooling.

While ECCE continues to be strongly identified with those with full time employment in urban areas, increasingly it is being seen as a process of social inclusion for disadvantaged children and their mothers. Where resources are scarce the more likely it is that provision is home or community based.

From a limited database, which is primarily descriptive of government-administered programmes, it is clear that some countries do accord ECCE high priority in their education strategies. An analysis of enrolment in undifferentiated ECCE programmes in 124 countries in 1999/2000 shows 25 states with GERs of over 50%, 36 countries under 20%, and a further 20 below 5%, three quarters of which were in sub-Saharan Africa.

While there is some evidence to point to an increase in ECCE in both developed and developing countries, a major and worrying trend during the 1990s was the decline in enrolments in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Kazakhstan had a GER of 72.3% in 1990 but 11.4% in 1999; Bulgaria fell to 67.2% from 91.6% and Georgia from 59% to 37%.

Learning needs of all young people and adults

The Dakar goal covers a kaleidoscopic area of learning, with close links to the goal on literacy and continuing education for adults. A comprehensive picture of what is happening worldwide is not yet possible, in part because there are unresolved conceptual issues. While the nature of lifelong learning has been elucidated for many years, the meaning of life skills remains the subject of much debate. In addition, typologies of programmes, levels of participation and assessments of learning outcomes are limited and, understandably, are usually specific to individual countries.

However, there is a growing body of knowledge on learning for sustainable livelihoods, and on the importance of generic skills including communication and problem-solving. There is also a much clearer recognition that it is essential that adult learning and life-skills programmes draw their *raison d'être* from a well defined demand that reflects people's wishes to lead more fulfilling and productive lives.

Monitoring this area of the Dakar Framework requires work to analyse the results of topic, target group and country-specific studies of the sort to which this Report makes very brief reference.

Education quality

This composite goal is designed to ensure that the quality of education receives the attention that many feel that it failed to receive during the 1990s. Encompassing all of the Dakar goals, it is intended to give new impetus and weight to the promotion of quality in education. However, at present the ability to monitor the quality of

Early childhood care and education is a highly diverse area of learning which lacks good comparative data and widely accepted indicators.

education is limited and there is a heavy reliance on proxies as distinct from a true assessment of learning outcomes. In this context, this Report restricts itself to a very preliminary look at the quality of primary schooling.

Levels of investment in primary education give a partial insight into the attention which quality is receiving. A comparison of levels of current expenditure and primary enrolments over the period 1975–1999 suggest that additional investment in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia has been devoted primarily to expanding enrolments whereas in Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia and the Pacific, and the Arab States and North Africa, additional resources have been spent on higher levels of spending per student. In this second group, pupil teacher ratios have dropped and stabilized at around 25. In South and West Asia there has been a downward trend from approximately 45, while in sub-Saharan Africa a downward trend has been reversed, rising towards 40 students per teacher. These figures hide enormous variations across and within countries.

Well-trained teachers are critical for good quality primary education and more are needed. Estimates of the number of additional teachers that will be needed worldwide to achieve UPE by 2015 range from 15 to 35 million. A minimum of 3 million is needed in sub-Saharan Africa. But the number of teachers that it is possible to employ depends in part on cost, which is mediated by salary levels. If salaries are too high this will constrain capacity and if they are too low then access, equity and quality all suffer.

High levels of grade repetition and drop out point to low levels of system efficiency and quality of learning. In more than 50% of countries in sub-Saharan Africa, more than one student in ten repeats at least one grade in primary school.

And many studies show that repeaters do not learn from duplication and either keep on repeating or drop out.

These and other input and process indicators are important, but of growing significance is comparative evidence of learning outcomes, expressed in terms of standards, attainment and what students really learn. It is surveys⁸ of the

last of these that offer the most promising source of policy-relevant information, particularly when they are fine-tuned to the particular policy challenges of the countries involved. This type of evidence will be critical to the future monitoring of quality, not only in formal systems but also across the full spectrum of EFA.

Chapter 3. Planning for EFA

EFA national action plans

If the expectation from the World Education Forum was that there would be a set of finely honed, comprehensive national EFA action plans by the end of 2002, that would provide the basis for an early dialogue with international agencies for enhanced levels of funding, then that target has not been met. Based on evidence that should be treated with the utmost caution, 22 countries, 50% in sub-Saharan Africa, are reported to be completing national EFA action plans by the end of this year, although these are not necessarily plans that have been adopted by governments as the basis for budgetary allocations to the education sector, nor are they necessarily comprehensive in nature.

If a broader interpretation of planning for EFA is used, whereby countries are revisiting their goals and targets for EFA, building on existing plans and strategies, and promoting EFA in other planning processes, including Poverty Reductive Strategy Papers (PRSPs), then there is a stronger story to be told in a much larger group of countries.

In some instances, separate EFA planning that draws its legitimacy from the World Education Forum appears to run the risk of duplicating or running parallel with existing education planning processes. Conversely, in some cases, Dakar has given impetus to EFA being given greater priority in national development debate and policy development.

An analysis of sixteen full PRSPs indicates that UPE is clearly delineated in all but one case but that only seven countries retained the EFA/MDG

Separate EFA planning that draws its legitimacy from the World Education Forum appears to run the risk of duplicating or running parallel with existing education planning processes.

8. For example; TIMSS: Third International Mathematics and Science Study; PIRLS: Progress in Reading Literacy Study; SACMEQ: Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality; PASEC: Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Educatifs des pays de la CONFEMEN; MLA: Monitoring Learning Achievement; PISA: Programme for International Student Achievement.

goal for eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education. Learning opportunities for youth and adults was ranked second in importance. A separate analysis of recent education EFA and sector plans for thirty-one countries comes to a similar pattern of conclusions.

Whether in EFA plans, sector plans or PRSPs, there is often a weak link between the diagnosis of education and poverty on the one hand and the education outcomes and actions that are proposed on the other. This is particularly noticeable in relation to gender. It is also true that detailed costing for education is relatively rare in PRSPs and in EFA and/or sector plans.

The World Education Forum was clear that governments should engage with a much wider constellation of people in shaping policy and planning for EFA. Work is under way by international NGOs to assess whether this is happening. It is certainly not easy to make judgements from government documentation alone. While there is some evidence to suggest that there has been an increase in formal set-piece consultation, including through the establishment of EFA Forums, it is much less clear whether this technical engagement with civil society is extending to a much more open and ongoing political process. Where this is occurring there are valuable lessons to be learned.

Planning for HIV/AIDS

There is increasing evidence that planning to achieve the EFA goals must take account of HIV/AIDS and that the spread and intensification of the pandemic will not be prevented in the absence of progress towards EFA. This is an extremely important message in a world where 40 million adults and children live with AIDS, and where the number of orphans will continue to grow from the estimated level of 14 million children in 2001.

There is an important and expanding international resource to facilitate new ways of planning including the work of the UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team on Education, new planning tools and resource units in sub-Saharan Africa and innovative non-governmental alliances.

Planning to combat conflict, disaster and instability

At least 73 countries are undergoing an internal crisis or are engaged in post-crisis reconstruction. Planning workable strategies for EFA in these circumstances is demanding and highly context-specific. It includes not merely the sustenance of damaged school systems, but also the development of skills for conflict resolution and peace, and preparing for reconstruction and social and economic development.

The experiences of Afghanistan, Argentina, Kosovo, the Palestinian Autonomous Territories and East Timor indicate the need for well-designed emergency planning and programming to meet immediate and short-term needs, as well as strategies to prepare the ground for longer-term reconstruction and development. As yet, international agencies have not found it easy to bring together these two interrelated strands of education planning and practice, nor to embed this work in the wider processes of conflict resolution.

Nevertheless, there is an important and growing body of work designed to support planning for education in crisis situations. The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and the work of UNICEF and UNHCR on the ground are important in this regard.

Credible planning, credible plans

At the World Education Forum it was agreed that no country seriously committed to education for all will be thwarted by a lack of resources. The existence of a credible plan was posited as one indicator of commitment, and a prerequisite for external funding.

Six significant aspects of credibility are gaining ground, partly as a result of the World Education Forum. The first is that if planning is conceived as a purely technical and apolitical process it is unlikely to serve poor and disadvantaged people well. Second, planning should not be circumscribed by age, the differential income of learners or by a particular cycle of education. Third, gender responsive planning is essential. Fourth, planning must be inclusive and

At least 73 countries are undergoing an internal crisis or are engaged in post-crisis reconstruction.

responsive to demand and to diversity. Fifth, priorities should be set and strategies fully-costed. Finally, dialogue with funding agencies increasingly focuses upon outcomes (rather than activities), requiring well-defined indicators that can be monitored and evaluated jointly.

Different agencies have different priorities and approaches to planning. UNESCO promotes the EFA national action plan. The World Bank prioritizes UPE and is focusing on strategies for its attainment. Some bilateral agencies prioritize the MDGs, using projects or budget support. This lack of international consensus is a handicap for the effective dialogue needed at country level.

Chapter 4. Resource requirements for reaching EFA

The costs of achieving the EFA goals and the availability of resources to secure them are likely to have a decisive influence upon whether the goals are reached. To understand the level and the nature of these costs requires careful country-by-country analysis, but the available resource requirement projections are inadequate as even a rough guide to assess overall public expenditure needs and the levels of external aid that will be required. For some of the EFA goals the data are very weak or simply not available.

For UPE and the elimination of gender disparities

However, studies to estimate the resource requirements of achieving the UPE goal in developing countries have been completed in the last two or three years by UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank. Each of them utilized country-level data but their assumptions and approaches to estimating required public expenditures on primary schooling differed. For 46 developing countries included in each study, the World Bank's projected additional required expenditures are some 70%–95% higher than the other two studies and amount to some US\$8.4 billion.

The Bank study is the only one of the three to provide estimates of levels of external funding required to achieve UPE by 2015. It projects that the requirement will run at an average level of US\$2.5 billion over the fifteen-year period (although it will peak at US\$4.5 billion in 2015). Sub-Saharan Africa will require 85% of this assistance. Five countries⁹ are estimated to have financing gaps of more than US\$100 million per annum which represents 42% of the external funding requirement. Another seven¹⁰ are projected to require, on average, US\$50–\$100 million per annum. These calculations are based in large measure on the ability of developing countries to generate resources through economic growth and fiscal reform. Some of these assumptions appear to be optimistic. If this proves to be the case the resource gap in 2015 could be at least double the Bank's estimate.

Each of the studies focuses upon the supply side. However, the removal of gender inequalities requires a strong demand-side response, especially for the poorest households in low-income countries. Effective incentive programmes for girls – or more generally, children from poorer households – might add at least 5% to the average unit costs of primary schooling which, if applied to the World Bank's analysis, would translate into US\$1.3 billion extra public spending by 2015, adding about US\$0.4–\$0.6 billion to the average annual expenditures required.

For HIV/AIDS

The HIV/AIDS pandemic also has implications for the level of resources needed for education and for household costs. HIV/AIDS is likely to reduce the overall resource envelope for education and affect the allocation of available resources within the sector. It has cost implications for learners, for educators and for the development of new education programmes responsive to HIV/AIDS. Additional costs are likely to be incurred from the training and the salaries of additional teachers, the provision of death benefits, introducing HIV/AIDS throughout the school curriculum, managing systemic change, increasing counselling services and providing incentives to attend school.

Lack of international consensus is a handicap for the effective dialogue needed at country level.

The resource gap in 2015 could be at least double the World Bank's estimate.

9. Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Sudan.

10. Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania.

The cost implications of HIV/AIDS are so extensive and so pervasive that they may serve better than anything else to demonstrate the urgency of using the potential of education to extend greater protection to society.

The World Bank's UPE analysis does demonstrate that HIV/AIDS adds substantially to overall education costs. It suggests that in countries such as Rwanda, Malawi and Zambia the incremental costs due to HIV/AIDS will increase recurrent budgets by more than 45%. However, it is probable that the budgetary impact of AIDS is even more dramatic. This Report estimates that the total additional annual costs of the epidemic for the achievement of universal primary education as US\$975 million per year, compared to US\$560 million estimated in the Bank's simulations. The cost implications of HIV/AIDS are so extensive and so pervasive that they may serve better than anything else to demonstrate the urgency of protecting the education sector against the ravages of the epidemic and of using the potential of education to extend greater protection to society.

For conflict, disaster and instability

Recent history would suggest that at least four or five countries are likely to face major complex humanitarian emergencies during the course of the next decade, with many more experiencing disaster, conflict and other types of instability. In all of these countries the costs of achieving the EFA goals will be greater than what is currently predicted, as infrastructure, supplies and human resources would be diminished. Moreover, the means of meeting these costs will be reduced by declining income flows, by human death and displacement, and by the reallocation of potentially available resources from education to other, equally pressing, demands.

If the impact of such events were to increase the additional annual costs of reaching UPE by 25% in four or five countries, between US\$0.4–US\$0.5 billion would be added to the average annual costs of UPE across all countries. This would increase the projected total costs by 2% to 3%, but if the affected countries were among those that are expected to face financing gaps, it would represent an increase in the Bank's projected funding requirement by around one-fifth.

The impact of introducing a less demanding agenda for domestic revenue growth and fiscal reform in recipient countries increases the annual average external financing gap projected by the World Bank study from US\$2.5 billion to US\$4.2 billion. The inclusion of the further resource requirements for enhancing girls' enrolments, and the costs of HIV/AIDS and of support to education in countries experiencing conflict and emergency increase the magnitude of the external resources required by an additional US\$1.4 billion, to a total of US\$5.6 billion per year. This estimate is for only one – albeit the most costly – part of the EFA agenda and is based on an analysis of 47 countries. Although these included almost all of the most educationally disadvantaged states, some others are likely to require assistance in order to achieve the EFA goals.

Chapter 5. Meeting international commitments: the response to Dakar

The Dakar Framework for Action is a collective commitment. Partners to this commitment comprise governments and civil society institutions, working with regional and international agencies. The latter are expected to mobilize additional resources underpinned by a new global initiative and to work in a coordinated way with other partners in support of EFA plans. The challenge is judged to be greatest in sub-Saharan Africa, in South Asia and in the least developed countries. Countries in transition and those affected by conflict and crisis are deserving of strong support.

UNESCO has a strong mandate to continue to coordinate EFA partners and maintain their collective momentum, including through the work of an annual, small and flexible High-Level Group, and to facilitate the preparation of an annual report to monitor progress on the EFA goals.

Aid flows for EFA

The mobilization of aid flows to basic education should be set within the wider context of aid to developing countries. Between 1991 and 2000, the real value of all grants and concessional loans to developing countries had fallen by one-sixth, from US\$60 billion per annum to US\$50 billion per year. In 2000, 70% of total aid was from bilateral agencies, while the World Bank and the European Community provided 64% of all multilateral assistance. Over the whole decade, approximately two-thirds of total development assistance went to sub-Saharan Africa, South and Central Asia and the Far East.

The trend of bilateral flows to education was also downwards, from around US\$5 billion at the start of the decade to US\$4 billion at its end. The most dramatic decline occurred in 2000, when commitments fell to US\$3.5 billion, representing a 30% decline in real terms from 1990 and accounting for 7% of total bilateral aid.

Reliable information on the composition of aid to education is difficult to obtain because of under-reporting and because a significant proportion of education aid straddles each of the subsectors and therefore cannot be allocated to just one of them. However, estimates based upon direct surveys of funding and technical assistance agencies suggest that by the mid-1990s, 20% of bilateral aid was committed for basic education, which is consistent with OECD DAC data.

Sub-Saharan Africa received 47% of all education aid commitments in 2000 compared with 37% of its share of total development assistance. In South and Far East Asia the figures were 23% and 34%. Some 50% of all new bilateral aid commitments to sub-Saharan Africa in 2000 were to basic education.

Multilateral aid to education also declined sharply over the period 1991 to 2001. World Bank IDA loans appear to have been roughly halved since the mid-1990s, falling to US\$0.4 billion in 2001. However, the proportion allocated to basic education was higher than bilateral commitments and was maintained over the decade at about 40%. The European Union allocated some two-thirds of its education assistance to basic education.

The external funding to basic education of US\$1.45 billion in 2000 is approximately equivalent to one quarter of the additional external assistance that is likely to be needed each year to 2015, to achieve the two Millennium Development/EFA goals. Aid to primary schooling would need to be quintupled, with much of it concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa.

New levels of support for EFA?

A number of new international commitments and initiatives have been announced in support of education since the World Education Forum. Education was an important part of the debate at the World Summit on Children and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. It has been a significant item on the agenda of G8 countries, most recently at Kananaskis (Canada) where a series of recommendations were adopted to assist developing countries to achieve UPE and equal access to education for girls, with a special emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa.

Education also received attention in the context of a new global approach to financing development put together at the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development at Monterrey, 2002, through the work of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and in the redesign of the European Union's strategies for education for all.

However, it is not easy to assess the extent to which the commitments that have been set out at recent international conferences and in individual and bilateral agency statements measure up to the financial challenge facing developing countries. If the Monterrey commitment of US\$12 billion by 2006 were to be spent in the same pattern as the current average across all sectors, US\$1 billion would be made available to the education sector, of which US\$0.3 billion would be allocated to basic education. A further US\$1.2 billion additional annual assistance was pledged during 2002 by the World Bank, Japan and non-EU bilaterals. Thus the G8 pledges would need to meet around US\$4.4 billion of the US\$5.6 billion anticipated in this Report as the external aid requirement to achieve the UPE and gender goals by 2015.

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The Fast-Track Initiative (FTI) was launched at the meeting of the Development Committee of the World Bank in April 2002.

This provides an indication of the extent to which the US\$0.3 billion sum mentioned above would need to increase.

Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief was an important source of additional finance for education in 26 countries in 2002. It seems that around US\$400 million should be available for education over the period 2001–2005. But it is not clear what proportion of these funds represent genuine new resources to the nations concerned, if not to their education sectors.

Thus, very considerable increases in aid finance to basic education will be needed for the achievement of EFA. G8 pledges are currently insufficient to meet the likely shortfalls. Some redirection of aid from other education sectors will be needed (since basic education currently receives only 30% of the support to the sector as a whole). Nevertheless, overall, additional aid will be required.

The Fast-Track Initiative

The Fast-Track Initiative (FTI) was launched at the meeting of the Development Committee of the World Bank in April 2002. A first group of 18 low-income and low-enrolment countries, each having a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, were selected as recipients for early external assistance in achieving the education MDGs. This initiative is reflected in the recommendations of the G8 education task force and the new European Union draft policy statement on education. It has three main goals: deeper commitment to education policy reform and the efficient use of resources in developing countries; increased and better coordinated aid from industrialized countries, to be provided within the framework of PRSPs; and improved assessment based on better data.

FTI has been welcomed and supported by UNESCO and UNICEF, by bilateral agencies, by regional organizations such as the European Union and by the Global Campaign for Education. It has injected some necessary urgency into international dialogue and action. Nevertheless concern has been expressed at the speed and the extent of domestic policy reform required to improve efficiency and raise revenues; the danger of ignoring countries that do not fulfil the criteria; and its exclusive focus on the MDGs. Of the 28 countries identified in this Report as being at greatest risk of not achieving any of the three quantifiable EFA goals, only six are on the Fast-Track list. It has also been questioned as to whether the FTI lives up to the Dakar commitment to a Global Initiative. Without a medium- to longer-term perspective the Initiative may limit governments in their ability to plan with flexibility. It also runs the risk of being dominated by the concerns of a minority of core partners rather than necessarily reflecting the broader consistency, coordination and coherence sought by Dakar.

International coordination

The World Education Forum gave UNESCO a major technical and political challenge in sustaining international commitment and support for EFA. It provided the organization with an opportunity to demonstrate international leadership at a critical point in the global effort to realize the right to education and eliminate poverty.

UNESCO is pro-active in promoting the importance of good data for effective policy through the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in arguing for EFA plans and in establishing and contributing to thematic Flagship programmes. The implications of EFA are being integrated throughout its regular programmes and in UNESCO's specialized institutes. Some 41% of UNESCO's regular programme budget for education is now assigned for basic education.

However, it is finding other aspects of its international role more challenging. This is partly because the objectives of exercising major influence on the world's political leaders and of mobilizing significant international resources are intrinsically difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, over the period 2000–2002, UNESCO's interpretation of its mandate has been conservative with an emphasis on facilitating dialogue and promoting partnerships rather than attempting to provide strong international leadership. Partnerships and alliances are important, but in the context of recent international events, UNESCO has had the opportunity to be more openly proactive in analysing and arguing the case for global action in support of EFA.

It is doubtful whether UNESCO can play this type of international role unless it is better resourced, in ways that harness strong technical capability and authoritative policy analysis as the basis for exerting influence. Well-coordinated, in-house capacity is needed to analyse international developments, changing aid modalities and requirements, and comparative experience of education reforms. Their implications need debate in forums having a real opportunity to make things change. The High-Level Group is potentially important in this respect.

Overall, while recent international commitments, initiatives and programmes demonstrate that a cooperative spirit exists across the international community, translating these into real resources directed towards priority ends, and turning the language of coordination into practice remains some distance away. It remains doubtful whether the international partners are yet working according to a commonly interpreted agenda as opposed to the separate mandates and strengths of their individual organizations.

Chapter 6. Prospects and opportunities

Progress, planning, costs and resources

Progress towards the goals is insufficient: the world is not on track to achieve EFA by 2015. Twenty-eight countries are at serious risk of not achieving any of the three quantifiable goals by 2015. The absence of Education for All both infringes the human rights of the excluded and prevents their capabilities being enhanced in ways they value. In cases where the absolute number of people excluded is rising, it is difficult to judge whether development is occurring.

Planning for EFA takes diverse forms and not necessarily in ways that respond directly to the call for national EFA plans made in Dakar. It is constrained by the lack of good data, particularly financial and demand-side information. Alternative reform strategies need exploration. The engagement of civil society remains characterized by token consultation in too many countries. The demands placed on governments by international agencies to prepare plans for different purposes can be dysfunctional. Potential overlaps and conflicts need to be resolved both generically and in national dialogue.

The *costs* of achieving EFA are large, but not beyond the means of most states, but the level of aid *resources* has been underestimated, partly because the costs associated with addressing demand-side issues – especially gender – and those of HIV/AIDS and of supporting education in circumstances of conflict and emergency have been omitted or underplayed. Country-level financial analysis using nationally verified data is essential for a sound assessment of funding requirements.

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International cooperation

There was a startling decline in the real values of both total and education aid in the years 1991–2000, which was particularly heavily felt in sub-Saharan Africa. However, in the new millennium there are indications that the climate for policy reform is better than during the 1990s, with governments being more willing to initiate policy dialogue. New aid instruments, especially where these are designed to support long-term education sector development, have the potential to have real impact on the achievement of the EFA goals. The most critical ingredient in national plans for EFA, whether in the Fast-Track Initiative, or in the context of broader agency support, is the extent to which governments genuinely embrace a process of national reform. There remains a concern that national governments may agree to reform proposals based on financial appraisals with neither the political nor the technical capacity to implement them. It will be critically important to take planning processes well beyond the level of a costing exercise, if the past gaps between plans and implementation are not to recur.

Improving the availability and quality of data

The limitation of the coverage and reliability of data is a significant problem. Major efforts are needed to improve the coverage of internationally gathered information on public spending on education. There is also an acute need to improve the availability and quality of much national data, and their comparability with the pre-1997 UNESCO database needs to be secured. In addition, the information available to monitor aid flows to education remains open to considerable improvements in quality and coverage. If donor commitments and disbursements in support of EFA goals are to be monitored effectively, more efforts in reporting complete and consistent information are urgently required.

EFA and the Millennium Development Goals

It would be entirely counterproductive if the EFA goals and the MDGs were perceived to be in any way in conflict with one another. The overall MDG framework provides an opportunity to argue the case for EFA in the collective endeavour to eliminate poverty. UPE and the elimination of gender disparities are major priorities, but a broader EFA case can be made for the contribution of basic education to sustainable livelihoods, the reduction of child mortality, improvements in maternal health, the fight against HIV/AIDS, and a sustainable environment. In this context the development of the Fast-Track Initiative affords a chance to promote the broader objectives of EFA rather than interpreting the specificity of the MDG targets as a constraint.

Future monitoring challenges

This Report has sought to initiate a sense of accountability towards commitments made at the World Education Forum. It will be important in future years to map – much more clearly than has been possible here – the extent to which a significant shift in policy and practice in support of EFA is taking place. In particular, more weight will need to be given to the achievements and the progress of individual countries, policies and strategies that are making a difference, and the evidence of national monitoring processes as well international analyses. Shifts in the policy and practice of development agencies will also deserve attention.

Since the World Education Forum, there has been some ambiguity as to whether EFA underpins a global movement or whether it is primarily a vehicle for focusing on developing countries, to help the excluded and most disadvantaged to benefit from a basic education. The balance has been more towards the latter than the former, and this emphasis is reflected in this Report. However, many of the challenges of EFA extend well beyond developing countries. The needs of those living in poverty in industrialized societies, issues of quality and relevance, of gender equality, of literacies responsive to the revolution in communications technology, and the challenge for education posed by drug dependency, are all issues deserving of international attention. If EFA is treated as an issue specific to a particular group of countries, it runs the risk of being separate or partial. Future Global Reports will begin to redress this imbalance.