



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

What is the

Education for All Global Monitoring Report

*An annual
accounting of the
world's progress
towards meeting its
commitment to
achieving Education
for All (EFA)*



**EFA
GMR** EDUCATION
FOR ALL
GLOBAL
MONITORING
REPORT

1 What is the Education for All Global Monitoring Report?

In 2000, at the World Education Forum in Dakar (Senegal), 164 countries committed themselves to achieve six goals by 2015 that would vastly improve learning opportunities for children, youth and adults.

International agencies pledged that no country engaged in this effort would be hindered by a lack of resources. Governments recognized that regular and rigorous monitoring was required to track progress towards the six goals, identify strategies that make a difference and hold governments and donors to account for their promises.

The *EFA Global Monitoring Report*, produced annually, is a critical part of this process. It assesses how well countries and regions are doing in reaching these EFA goals:

1. Expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education
2. Ensure universal access to and completion of free and compulsory primary education of good quality
3. Improve learning opportunities for youth and adults
4. Increase adult literacy rates by fifty percent
5. Achieve gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and gender equality by 2015
6. Improve all aspects of the quality of education

Goals 2 and 5 also appear in two of the eight UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that aim to halve world poverty by 2015. The MDGs were adopted by 189 countries in 2000.

2 Does the report target a specific audience?

The report aims to inform and to influence education and aid policy through an authoritative, evidence-based review of progress and a balanced analysis of the most critical challenges facing countries. The publication sets out an ambitious agenda for reform. Decision-makers – ministers, policy-makers, parliamentarians and education planners – are a prime audience.

Just as crucial is the broader constituency of civil society groups, teachers, non-governmental organizations, university researchers and the media: by enriching understanding of education issues, the report is a springboard for debate, knowledge-sharing and advocacy.

4 Who funds the report?

The Report is financed through the generous support of Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and UNESCO.

6 Where do the data come from?

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) plays the lead role in providing the report team with extensive data on students, teachers, school performance, adult literacy and education expenditure.

The Institute, based in Montreal (Canada), collects data from over 200 countries and territories. Serious limitations exist in data coverage, however, making it difficult to monitor such dimensions of EFA as public financing to education. To accelerate data collection, UIS is working closely with governments to strengthen their own systems and analysis capacities.

The report also draws on data from other sources, including national household surveys and specially commissioned studies.

Ten frequently asked questions about the report

3 The report is published by UNESCO but recognized as being independent. Why?

The six Dakar goals do not emanate from one single United Nations agency: they are the result of a collective agreement and partnership. As such, the report does not represent the voice of one organization; rather, it is an international project that tracks the performance of governments, civil society, bilateral donors and international agencies.

Reflecting this spirit of partnership, the report's editorial board, which meets yearly, includes representatives from all these key constituencies.

5 How is the report prepared?

An international team of research officers and policy analysts based at UNESCO headquarters in Paris (France) draws upon a wide range of expertise to prepare the report. The team synthesizes specialized literature and commissions background papers from researchers and institutes around the world.

An editorial board gathering specialists and practitioners from different regions provides guidance on the special theme chosen for each report.


Since 2005, online consultations have also been organized in order to broaden the scope and content of the report.

7 Why do countries often claim that they have more up-to-date data than appear in the report?

The report publishes quality-assured data compiled so that statistics are internationally comparable for the majority of countries, using the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). However, not all countries use the same classification systems, sometimes leading to discrepancies between national data and those published internationally.

Differences can also stem from national population estimates: to calculate several indicators, the Institute uses estimates from the United Nations Population Division. These sometimes differ from those published by individual countries.


More generally, the quality assurance process entails a time lag between the collection (and often the publication) of data by national governments and their release by UIS for use in this and other reports. Where possible, the report identifies discrepancies and data gaps.



8 Can the performance of countries be ranked?

The Education for All Development Index (EDI), developed by the report team in 2003, is designed to provide a rounded picture of progress towards the four most measurable EFA goals: universal primary education, gender parity, literacy and quality, using a proxy for each one.


This composite indicator strikingly demonstrates the tight linkages between each of these goals. Poor quality in learning outcomes, for example, can hinder progress towards universal primary education.



9 How is the report shared and disseminated?

Media launches organized throughout the year in all regions generate strong press coverage and local interest. Besides these events, launches are increasingly accompanied by policy seminars to engage decision-makers and parliamentarians in debate on EFA issues. The report's findings are also shared during ministerial meetings, international academic conferences, training courses for education practitioners and the media, seminars involving governments, donors, researchers and teachers.

Summaries of the report are available in the six UN languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Russian) as well as several others (including Bangla, Bahasa Indonesia, German, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Portuguese, Thai and Vietnamese). The full report is also available in the official UN languages. All versions, together with background papers and statistical data are viewable on the website at www.efareport.unesco.org.



10 Are these goals reachable?

Education is a right, yet it is still denied to 72 million children who are out of school and to 774 million adults who are not able to read and write. There is some progress in providing care and education for very young children, but not enough, despite the clear benefits. Great strides have been made since 2000 to improve access to primary school, but a wide gap remains between enrolment and completion rates, especially for children from the poorest households and marginalized groups. The gender parity goal, set for 2005, has been missed, and concerns about the quality of education are emerging everywhere.

The 2008 report's mid-term review shows that the comprehensive vision of the Dakar agenda is in danger of being lost. Countries are paying only minimal attention to adult literacy needs and to ECCE, and many fees and indirect costs remain a major obstacle to schooling for the poorest children.

To reach EFA efforts need to be accelerated and more focused, with donors also making greater effort to harmonise procedures and align themselves with national policies. Public spending on basic education clearly needs to increase, but so does international aid.

EFA Reports



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2 0 0 6

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(release late 2009)

2 0 1 0

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The website includes all reports published to date, all background papers, regional overviews and statistical annexes.



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CD-ROMs containing the reports and background papers are available upon request.

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