

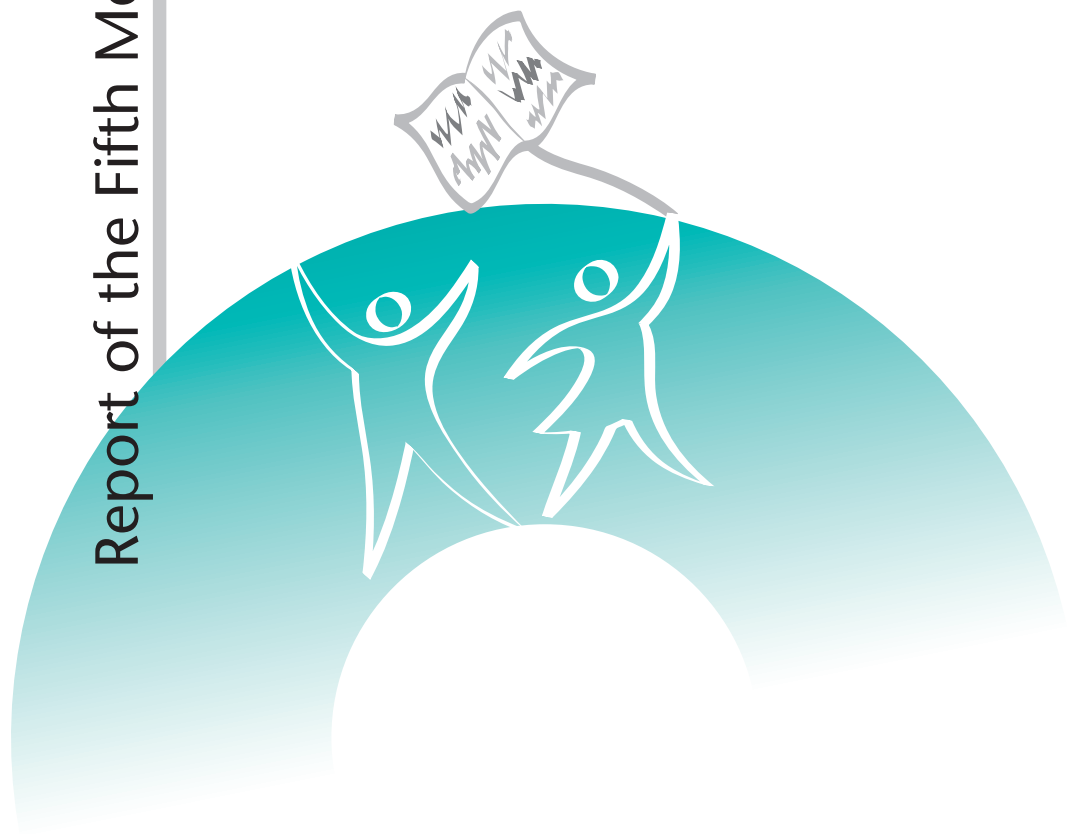
Report of the Fifth Meeting

of the Working Group on Education for All



UNESCO Paris
20-21 July 2004

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on Education for All



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The draft of this report was shared with all participants in the Fifth meeting of the Working Group on Education for All.

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Preface

I am particularly pleased to present this report of the Fifth Working Group on Education for All (EFA) because the meeting clearly demonstrated the growing commitment and concern to see progress in basic education. The clearest evidence for this was the large number, and above all the wide range, of participants. The meeting brought together not only representatives of governments, civil society, bilateral funding agencies and international organizations, but this time also representatives from the private sector and foundations, and colleagues from the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Task Force on Education and Gender.

What is the reason for this increase in interest and participation? It is surely the growing conviction, based on collective experience, that education lies at the heart of human development and that the realization of human potential provides the basis for social, economic and cultural development.

This conviction gave a strong focus to the Working Group debates. In discussing progress in obtaining good data and statistics, external funding, civil society engagement or partnership with the private sector, there was a concern to move to action. There is no time now for a mere rehearsing of issues – action must follow.

It was in this spirit that the agenda of the Working Group took up issues that the EFA High-Level Group, meeting in Delhi in 2003, had highlighted for attention. These included the timeliness and quality of EFA data, and the ongoing enhancement of the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI) as an external funding mechanism. The Working Group also made proposals for the agenda and structure of the next High-Level Group meeting in Brasilia in November 2004.

The presentation of the draft report of the MDG Task Force on Education signalled a particularly helpful way of building coordination across the international community. The comments of the Working Group from the wider EFA perspective will form useful and relevant input into the report, which the Task Force welcomed. This bodes well for greater coherence and efficiency in tackling basic education in today's world.

The EFA Working Group provides a forum for professional and technical exchange – this fifth meeting showed that it is also a crucible of collective resolve and commitment.

Aïcha Bah Diallo
Assistant Director-General for Education a.i., UNESCO

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1. Introduction

This meeting of the Education for All (EFA) Working Group – its fifth since the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000 – brought together the largest number of participants and observers yet. In addition to longstanding EFA partners such as governments, civil society, multilateral agencies and bilateral funding agencies, this year the meeting drew participants from the private sector, from foundations, from a Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Task Force and from an investment bank. This augurs well for growing understanding, cooperation and, above all, commitment in the cause of EFA.

Welcoming this larger number of stakeholders to Paris, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, laid stress on the growing spirit of collaboration in EFA – witness the fact that the Working Group meeting served as a hub for a range of other EFA-related conclaves taking place the same week. He noted that this meeting of the Working Group would take up some of the issues arising out of the meeting of the EFA High-Level Group in Delhi in 2003, namely questions of timely and reliable data and statistics, progress on external funding possibilities such as the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI), civil society engagement since Dakar and partnership with the private sector. On this last topic Mr Matsuura recalled the specific provisions of the *Dakar Framework for Action* that underlined the need for broadening partnerships.

Following the outcomes of the Oslo meeting of the FTI Donors Group in November 2003, the Director-General exhorted the Working Group to continue efforts to further improve the Initiative, as well as to search for new funding possibilities. Noting with satisfaction the engagement of civil society and NGOs in EFA processes, he also called for increased efforts to ensure their legitimate and sustained participation at national level, which in some contexts remains weak. The inclusion in the agenda of the interim education report from the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Task Force on Gender and Education gave the Working Group an opportunity to provide input into the 2005 United Nations review on progress towards the MDGs.

Mr Matsuura brought the Working Group up to date on progress in the Strategic Review of UNESCO's role in EFA, a process requested by the Executive Board in April 2004. He noted that 'UNESCO sees this exercise as an opportunity to enhance the effectiveness of its lead coordination role in EFA, notably in developing the use of the Working Group and the High-Level Group...' This process should not only lead to strengthened collaboration with EFA partners, but also to new and above all stronger action in UNESCO's programme areas, such as literacy, teacher training, education for HIV/AIDS prevention and quality. The Director-General concluded that success in these endeavours could only be assured on the basis of active dialogue and sustained, transparent partnerships. To this end, the comments and reactions of the Working Group will serve as important input into the review.

Organization of the meeting and the report

The Working Group met at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris over two days and was chaired by Mr John Daniel, formerly UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Education and currently President and Chief Executive Officer of The Commonwealth of Learning. To facilitate the Working Group's deliberations, a panel of presenters introduced each of the five substantive topics of the meeting, followed by debate in plenary session, and, for three of the topics, further discussion in smaller 'breakaway' groups. Feedback to the whole group gave opportunity to exchange ideas on these topics from a broader range of perspectives. Plenary sessions were each moderated by a different member of the Working Group. This report presents the proceedings of the meeting in accordance with the order of the agenda, which is appended. Following a synopsis of each of the panellist's presentations on each topic, the elements of plenary and group discussion are summarized briefly. In addition to the agenda, the Director-General's opening address and a list of participants are included in this report as appendices.



III. Monitoring Progress – Education Data and Statistics

High-quality data and statistics are the lifeblood of monitoring progress in EFA; not only are they indicators of achievements and needs, but they also provide essential input into formulating policy. Four years after Dakar, what progress has been made? With this question, Mr Christopher Colclough, Director of the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*, introduced the contributions of the four panellists.

A view from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics

Ms Denise Lievesley, Director of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), drew on a paper on this topic prepared for the Strategic Review of UNESCO's role in EFA, noting the fundamental reality that the heart of statistical data collection is at the national level. The role of UIS, whose move to Montreal hampered its contribution for two years or so, is to interpret such data within a framework of international comparability and ensure that statistics become visible through major reports such as the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*. Processing of data for these purposes results on occasion in countries no longer recognizing their own data or questioning the statistical

picture painted. In addition, other factors may complicate the picture, such as discrepancies in population data between national sources and the United Nations Population Division. UIS bases its analysis on population data provided by the United Nations Population Division while other international agencies may not use the same population data in this regard.

Ms Lievesley also commented on the need to improve data collection at sub-national levels, so that a more finely nuanced assessment of local realities may be made. National averages reflect a bias in national data collection, and there is a particular concern that disadvantaged and marginalized groups are not fairly or fully represented in the data. Obtaining credible and recognized data of integrity at national level must include consistent collection of data on sub-national disparities – this is particularly important for large countries with considerable regional diversity.

UIS has noted the increasing demand for new information on education and seeks to respond both by improving its own data collection and processing, as well as by building the capacity of educational statistical systems at country level. Increasing complexity in terms of information needs and stakeholders, and the higher

expectations and tighter timetables implied in working towards the EFA targets make the role of UIS and the further development of its potential a central part of EFA endeavours.

A view from Africa

Representing the ADEA Working Group on Educational Statistics, of which he was previously the moderator, Mr Wim Hoppers gave an overview of EFA statistical work in Africa. Progress, although slow, has been real. The National Education Statistical Information Systems (NESIS) programme was set up specifically to address gaps in data and in statistical capacity, in such a way that statistical evidence could be made more useable by decision-makers. With a focus on building capacity among statisticians and statistical services at national and subregional level, the emphasis has not been principally on techniques of data collection, but on the use of statistical data as relevant input into decision-making, for the purposes of planning, management and implementation. On the basis of this experience, it emerges that the particular challenges of EFA data collection and processing in Africa include:

- ▷ development of appropriate instruments
- ▷ elaboration of indicators suitable to the African region
- ▷ disaggregation of data for subregional and local analysis
- ▷ extending data collection to early childhood learning and non-formal education
- ▷ strengthening African statistical capacity and networks
- ▷ facilitating use of data by non-specialists, such as policy-makers and civil society

A view from China

Evoking the enormous challenge of EFA in China, Mr Han Jin, Deputy Director of the Development and Planning Department of the Ministry of Education, highlighted the progress in the extension and financing of education since 2000. Annual monitoring of education has revealed a number of areas requiring specific attention. Compulsory education now extends to nine years, but some economically disadvantaged provinces in the west of China have not yet been able to implement this policy fully. Educational financing was another area highlighted by the monitoring process. In this respect, the Chinese government follows a three-pronged policy in respect of further educational development; this foresees:

- ▷ an annual increase in the education budget which is higher than the increase in the general budget
- ▷ a gradual increase in spending per student
- ▷ a gradual increase in teachers' salaries and in administrative expenses per student

While this policy is now included in budgets, its implementation is not yet monitored systematically in annual accounts – this process was however set in motion in 2003.

A view from civil society

Introducing the perspective of civil society, Mr Thierno Aliou Diaouné of Aide-et-Action (France) identified data and statistics as key tools in holding the international community to account for their EFA commitments. As part of this process, full participation must be a basic principle, extended to all stakeholders and applying to decisions of policy and implementation: needs identification, analysis, planning, monitoring and evaluation. Among essential actions for the best use of data and statistics he noted:

- ▷ making available appropriate data collection methods and instruments to local bodies, so that they can use them in the planning and evaluation of their own development plans
 - ▷ enabling decision-makers to have access to reliable statistics as a basis for sound decisions and choices
 - ▷ ensuring that national data take full account of local realities and are transparent enough for all to use them in making decisions
 - ▷ demystifying statistics and making them more easily understandable by communities
 - ▷ widening the field of data collection so that marginalized groups are included, using context-sensitive indicators
 - ▷ strengthening capacity in data collection and use
- Mr Diaouné concluded with three recommendations to the Working Group: first, to strengthen local, community-based participation in data collection and analysis; second, to make the most of existing systems where these work well; and third, to strengthen local cooperation with government departments to develop adequate and relevant indicators.

Key themes

Discussions both in plenary debate and breakaway groups drew attention to key themes requiring particular

attention in efforts to make data and statistics of maximum usefulness to EFA.

Quality data: the Working Group was in complete agreement on the necessity for data of high quality in the EFA monitoring process. The quality and integrity of data cannot be compromised as otherwise the picture of progress in EFA and subsequent decisions would be distorted. Indeed, it is crucial to demonstrate how using quality data saves resources and forestalls other difficulties such as misguided or ill-informed policies. Quality and integrity depend on consistent data collection methods and on adequate institutional capacity, particularly at national level. Only data that avoid gaps and inconsistencies will provide a sound basis for assessing EFA progress at national and international levels. Improving the quality of data will also include developing the capacity of civil society to collect data on activities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs).

Timely data: in the four years since Dakar it has often been remarked that the data available as the basis of assessing progress are relatively old. There is a time lag of up to three years between the period to which the data refer and the date of dissemination. Some have expressed concerns that international reports using such data cannot therefore give an up-to-date picture of a national situation. How can data be collected, processed and published in a more timely manner, without sacrificing quality and integrity? UIS will continue to address this problem, both through ongoing efforts to strengthen national capacity and by looking at the possibilities of greater use of information technology. The World Food Programme shared experience of using the ARGOS satellite technology system effectively with a number of schools around the world, collecting clean monthly data. Other ways forward may include sharing systems across countries, and outsourcing of data collection and processing.

Using data: as well as the use of data to assess progress, the Working Group was equally concerned that good, accurate and reliable data should form the basis for policy development and evidence-based decision-making. Again, the capacity to analyse statistical data is crucial and this must include the ability to present data in accessible forms to governmental and non-governmental decision-makers. Transparency and clarity must be twin aims in making data available to non-specialists and to those whose decisions depend on a sound understanding of a national or local situation.

A strategy for statistics: this was not the first occasion on which these concerns have been addressed, and the Working Group expressed an urgent desire to see action in improving capacity and timeliness in data collection and analysis in EFA. The consensus was that there is a need for a strategy for statistics, for which the following suggestions were made:

- ▷ the appointment of a champion – an influential standard-bearer, preferably from a developing country (and a non-statistician!) who could bring the urgency of this need to the High-Level Group and, for example, to the G-8 meetings
- ▷ a harmonization of requests for data from countries, to avoid duplication and reduce demands; this may include the sharing of data among agencies and acceptance of agreed indicators
- ▷ attention to the overall statistical system of a country, rather than optimizing small parts of it; this includes building capacity of both government and civil society, with consideration of new approaches, for instance modular capacity-building and the recognition that ‘one size does not fit all’

The discussion concluded with a call for ‘a major surge of resources, energy and commitment to improve the data at national and international levels’.



III. External Funding for EFA

'Is the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI) living up to its potential?' This was the provocatively worded sub-title of the session devoted to external funding. Moderated by Mr Laurent Fontaine, Sous-Directeur, Développement Humain, at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, four panellists brought the perspectives of the World Bank, which houses the FTI secretariat, a developing country engaged in the FTI process, a bilateral donor and civil society.

FTI progress to date

Ms Rosemary Bellew, Head of the FTI secretariat at the World Bank, informed the Working Group of developments in FTI as a result of its meeting in Oslo in November 2003 following the EFA High-Level Group meeting. Two aspects signal a major evolution of the idea:

- ▷ FTI has moved from a concept of a vertical programme to a clear recognition that action takes place at the national level; this means that FTI must be structured in ways to give best support at that level.
- ▷ FTI is now open to all low-income countries – this will have implications for how it goes about endorsing countries' participation in FTI.

These two developments underline the nature of FTI as a compact between countries and funding agencies, along the lines of the Monterrey consensus which foresaw 'increased aid for results.' Ms Bellew listed the three ways in which the FTI was expected to generate increased resources for education:

- ▷ a 'virtual fund' mobilizing increased aid through the normal bilateral and multilateral channels; this is likely to be the principal means of raising extra money
- ▷ a 'catalytic fund' providing resources for those countries where few funders are committed. Five countries have received funds in this way, and at least five bilateral funders have together pledged \$250m
- ▷ a fund for programme preparation, still on the drawing board; the aim is to provide assistance to countries to prepare education plans which would meet the criteria for FTI funding

FTI is not just about funding and includes efforts to harmonize funding procedures across aid agencies, with the development of an indicative framework of parameters to assess their performance. Four working groups have been established covering donor harmonization, finance (how to account for budget support, assessing the financing gap), communications,

and the fund for programme preparation. Ms Bellew concluded by noting the challenges that remain as FTI develops:

- ▷ increasing the predictability of external financing, without which countries find it difficult to enter into a compact
- ▷ extending FTI from 12 to a possible 40 low-income countries
- ▷ supporting country-level processes
- ▷ collecting adequate data for monitoring both country and funding agency performance

Benefiting from FTI

The Minister of Education of Honduras, H.E. Mr Carlos Avila Molina, offered a testimony of his country's experience in entering into FTI. Tracing the history of the process since the invitation to Honduras in 2002 to participate in FTI, the Minister noted that the national education plan was approved by all the funders, resulting in the signing of the final memorandum of understanding in May 2004. This has meant real international cooperation among funders for the first time, reducing complexity and enhancing the effectiveness of aid. Commenting that FTI 'is a real solution for many countries', the Minister stated that Honduras is now exporting its experience to neighbouring countries.

Bilateral concerns

Mr Scott Walter of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) emphasized that FTI is not just about funding, in spite of initial perceptions and a misleading name. While financing is a crucial part of the initiative, it is more centrally about the quality, efficiency and equity of basic education. It is also about ending fragmentation in the processes surrounding aid to education. 'FTI', he said, 'is synonymous with a single national planning process and development of a national education sector plan.' Government leadership is a *sine qua non*, as are coherent procedures on the part of aid agencies.

Credible and sustainable educational plans must be based on the benchmarks of the indicative framework in order to avoid unit costs that are too high, and thus inefficient and unsustainable. He noted that FTI claims to have mobilized \$200m for the first seven countries, with the further commitment of \$250m to the Catalytic Fund;

however, this must be seen in the light of the estimated \$4-\$5bn per year which are needed to achieve universal primary completion in the least developed countries. In the coming years, FTI will be about perseverance and learning by doing.

FTI: what kind of potential?

Rephrasing the initial question of the debate to read 'Does FTI have potential at all?', Ms Anne Jellema of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) quickly answered that it has the potential for a breakthrough and is the only EFA financing initiative launched after Dakar. The notion of a compact is central to its success, implying a more highly coordinated and streamlined way of delivering aid. A transparent agreement between countries and funders will encourage better performance on both sides. The case for education must be made ever more strongly as a way of maximizing the political opportunities of 2005 – the United Nations review of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the development-oriented G-8 summit. Returning to the original question, Ms Jellema felt that FTI is not in fact living up to its potential currently, recognizing that only twelve countries are part of it four years after Dakar. Some suggested steps are:

- ▷ tell the success stories where funding and systemic change have brought real progress
- ▷ pay attention to those countries on the margins of FTI, assisting with plan development
- ▷ stress the mutuality of the compact, thus avoiding the impression that FTI is a 'donors' club'
- ▷ strengthen monitoring of funder performance through further work on the 'donor indicative framework'

She concluded by underscoring the importance of the other EFA goals in achieving universal primary completion, including new and bolder steps to integrate adult literacy into education plans and budgets.

Rich debate

These four presentations gave rise to a lively and rich debate in the plenary session and the breakaway groups; participants raised a wide range of issues regarding the nature, scope and progress of FTI.

Capacity: If FTI is now about the efficiency and effectiveness of aid as much as about increasing resources, then the question of capacity is crucial. Organizational or institutional capacity and absorptive capacity are most

frequently mentioned as areas which constrain the use and management of aid. Capacity-building for EFA includes educational planning capacity, but must go beyond it to address human resource management, public sector management, budget planning and procurement – some expressed this as a concern for governance more broadly. In order to put governments in the driver's seat and ensure strong and sustainable institutional capacity, funders must avoid setting up ad hoc structures such as parallel project units; this may involve taking more risks on their part. In addition, there must be full clarity about the nature of the plans which are the basis for FTI funding: is it a national EFA plan for all six EFA goals, or one concentrating on primary education alone? As FTI becomes increasingly a country-led process, these issues will be the subject of negotiation.

Tracking performance: The Working Group clearly agreed that the performance both of countries and of funding agencies should be tracked as an integral part of monitoring FTI implementation. There were nevertheless questions: what is the relationship between the FTI indicative framework and the 18 EFA indicators used in the EFA assessment for Dakar in 2000? There is need for country-by-country discussion of how the parameters of the indicative framework can be adapted and applied. In addition, there are ongoing concerns about monitoring the whole of the EFA agenda: how far will FTI include the other EFA goals, beyond primary education, in financing and in tracking?

Other sources and modes of finance: The decision of the European Investment Bank to lend money for education has brought another major source of financing

into the arena – out of a fund for human capital investment of €6.7bn, €4bn are allocated to education. There is a need to work out the relationship of this fund with FTI. In terms of doing things differently, funding agencies should consider frontloading investment in innovations or other more risky strategies where they are necessary for achieving a breakthrough in progress towards EFA.

Donor harmonization: Although domestic and legal constraints make it difficult for some funders to harmonize their procedures with others, there is a great need to do so. Joint planning and reporting (financial and substantive) would be significant steps, reducing considerably the transaction costs on developing countries. Other harmonization initiatives, such as that of OECD DAC, could provide a framework for harmonization in EFA funding. The High-Level Group meeting 2004 should move forward concretely in this area.

At the end of the debate the Working Group posed further questions which are as yet unanswered:

- ▷ If the FTI is a nationally driven process, how far will funding be made available for nationally determined EFA priorities, including goals other than primary education?
- ▷ As UNESCO undertakes a strategic review of its role in EFA, what is the best way to structure its involvement at national level with regard to FTI?
- ▷ Will external funding in fact make a real difference to EFA in national contexts, when what is needed is the political will of each government to allocate adequate budgetary resources to education? ◇

EFA partners – complementary roles

Noting that FTI is about effective and efficient support to EFA, a participant neatly articulated the following cameo of the value each EFA partner adds:

Government	→	perseverance and commitment
Civil society	→	innovation and flexibility
International community	→	policy support

NB: all partners bring resources

IV. Civil society Engagement in EFA since Dakar

Moderated by Mr Abhimanyu Singh, UNESCO's Director of International Coordination and Monitoring for EFA, the session asked what value civil society has added to the EFA movement since the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000. The four panellists introduced perspectives from civil society coalitions, UNESCO, a bilateral donor and the government of a developing country.

Roles of civil society

Drawing on a paper prepared by the CCNGO/EFA on the experience of civil society engagement in eight developing countries in different regions, and as the coordinator of the African Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA), Mr Gorgui Sow listed the major roles of civil society in EFA as:

- ▷ alternative service providers
- ▷ critical thinkers and innovators
- ▷ advocates
- ▷ policy partners

He zeroed in on the role of policy partner and emphasized a number of pre-conditions that enable policy dialogue to take place between government and civil society; these included strong mutual commitment to EFA, an

open and clear government policy on cooperation, and a democratic and stable political system, as well as a recognized mechanism for structuring dialogue. In addition, the capacity of civil society frequently needs strengthening if it is to become a useful dialogue partner on policy. Given this kind of supportive environment, civil society has been able to make significant contributions in the policy arena; Mr Sow listed five areas:

- ▷ coalition building, networking and exchange of good practice among civil society: bringing increasing coherence to the messages at national level
- ▷ policy dialogue with governments and other EFA partners: working in technical committees around specific EFA goals as well as participating in sector-wide forums
- ▷ campaigning and lobbying: both nationally and internationally, for example through the annual EFA Week
- ▷ building civil society capacity: with the help of international NGOs, UNESCO and others, capacity to undertake policy and dialogue has increased
- ▷ independent monitoring and watching: regional networks undertaking research or case studies on implementation of particular EFA goals

Such activity has not, however, been without its challenges. In particular, there is still progress to be made in seeing civil society become a full partner in policy dialogue at national level – too often governments consult civil society only for information purposes or on technical matters. Further, in some contexts a basic question must be addressed: how can civil society participation become a guiding principle and not a favour?

Dialogue with UNESCO

The engagement of UNESCO with educational non-governmental organizations (NGOs) dates back to 1984 with the creation of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on Literacy (CCNGO). Describing these early days of dialogue with civil society, Ms Susanne Schnüttgen, Programme Specialist with UNESCO's Basic Education Division, noted how CCNGO's brief broadened to EFA in 1990 and again in 2000 to include a policy role. From this time, the CCNGO also adopted a new regional structure and opened up to all NGOs active in the field of EFA. This enabled the network to grow to over 650 organizations currently. CCNGO has enabled civil society to express its collective view in international forums and to promote policy dialogue with governments; to this end CCNGO identified funding for an NGO/CSO capacity-building programme in sub-Saharan Africa, encompassing eleven countries to date.

What has UNESCO learnt from this process of dialogue with civil society? Ms Schnüttgen noted four lessons:

- ▷ a better understanding of the changing role of civil society
- ▷ deeper knowledge of how to enable EFA policy dialogue
- ▷ understanding diversity and creating new alliances
- ▷ a stronger belief in the value of ongoing dialogue in shaping educational strategies

Making the most of comparative advantage

Echoing and adding to the earlier list of civil society roles in EFA, Mr Desmond Bermingham, Senior Education Adviser of the UK Department for International Development (DFID), gave four headings:

- ▷ Advocacy: in donor countries where lobbying has resulted in significant new initiatives, the United Kingdom for example, and developing countries where education has become a higher political priority.

- ▷ Calling partners to account: civil society has talked with governments and with members of parliament to challenge them on delivering on their commitments.
- ▷ Protecting opportunities for alternative voices: as donors relate more to central governments, there is a danger that other groups, such as children, parents, teachers and marginalized populations are excluded from the dialogue. Civil society often includes them.
- ▷ Service provision: for example in Africa and South Asia where civil society, including faith-based organizations, are crucial non-state providers of educational opportunities.

Mr Bermingham went on to issue three challenges to civil society and NGOs:

- ▷ They should be clear, coherent and consistent in their messages to EFA partners.
- ▷ With an increasingly assured place at the EFA table, they should use their influence responsibly. For governments, accountability mechanisms already exist, and NGOs need to demonstrate accountability also.
- ▷ As increased investment in education and in development generally becomes available, civil society should concentrate its efforts to call for ways of spending that lead to sustainable development, ensuring that people's voices are heard.

Engagement with government

Mr Salum Mnjagila, the United Republic of Tanzania's EFA Coordinator, described the way in which dialogue developed between the government and civil society since the Dakar Forum in 2000. After noting the twin reasons of advocacy and voluntary service delivery for civil society's engagement in EFA, he highlighted the processes of decentralization which led to improvements in government-civil society partnership. An EFA Implementation Follow-up Task Force was created, leading in turn to the establishment of various other fora for collaboration, for issues of policy, and basic and vocational education. The civil society Tanzania Network for Education (TEN-MET) was the key partner in these processes. Rather than maintaining a critical stance from a distance, civil society networks and organizations became genuine partners in tackling the challenges of EFA. On its part, the government recognized that it needed civil society's cooperation in both policy development and the provision of services.

This increasingly positive process now requires strategies along the following lines:

- ▷ Tight control on the part of government and civil society has to be dismantled, with increasing democratization of society and education, and the devolution of financial responsibility and management to local communities through local government, schools and non-formal education centres.
- ▷ Mutual communication and transparency are essential between government and civil society, with the latter being equally open about funding flows as government is about its budgets.
- ▷ Management structures and communication mechanisms must be established at each level.
- ▷ NGOs need to extend their actions into rural areas where the marginalized populations are – currently their work is concentrated in urban areas.
- ▷ CSOs should avoid working in isolation, but cooperate with civil society networks and with government.
- ▷ Democratic management must characterize CSOs, avoiding the appearance of personal ownership which some convey.

These clear and focused presentations led into wide-ranging discussions in plenary session and in the breakaway groups, of which a summary follows.

Towards integrated partnerships

The thrust of much of the discussion was towards the integration of civil society organizations (CSOs) as partners in all the processes and at all levels of EFA. The processes include the early stages of policy formulation, through planning, budget allocation and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. The levels of EFA include community, national, regional and international levels. Currently the good level of participation in international forums is not matched by integration into national-level dialogue.

Shared social responsibility:

If CSOs are to be better integrated, there is a need for a greater understanding of the diversity of civil society, how it relates to itself and others, and how the notion of shared responsibility in EFA translates into reality across different contexts.

Institutionalizing participation:

Currently civil society is not strongly present in policy-making forums, particularly at national level. To address this, civil society should make proposals, appropriate to the context, on mechanisms for ongoing dialogue and participation, and governments should systematically support an agreed institutional framework.

Independent monitoring:

CSOs have a role, not always taken up, in monitoring the implementation of EFA, especially at national level. Transparency within CSOs and in government, as well as between them, is a crucial condition of this function.

National coalitions:

the impetus of the Global Week of Action must be grasped by following up legislators and traditional leaders. The voice of civil society will be clearer and more coherent when CSOs come together in coalitions, which funding agencies should support.

Partnership with unions:

As key elements of civil society, unions, particularly teachers' unions but also workers and employers organizations, are essential dialogue partners.

Sharing experience:

As well as civil society networks for mutual support and exchange, funding agencies and multilateral agencies should develop networks of communication and exchange about their relations with civil society, with a view to learning from experience and strengthening their civil society cooperation. South-south cooperation is a useful channel to exchange country experiences.

Developing capacity:

Funding agencies and governments should support capacity-building for civil society, especially at local levels, to improve the scope and effectiveness of their participation, particularly in the area of advocacy and policy formulation, but also regarding the use of statistical data or the qualitative improvement of their services. This implies a commitment to the institutional development of CSOs so that they can fulfil their full role as EFA partners.

Service provision:

CSOs continue to fill gaps and improve education (see box). Governments and funding agencies should recognize

and support the comparative advantage of CSOs, especially with regard to reaching vulnerable and marginalized groups. Outsourcing to CSOs (e.g. faire faire) also represents an opportunity, but should include civil society input into the design stage.

Channelling funding: there is a need to explore the implications for CSOs, including international NGOs, of pooled sector funding and budget support.

The debate concluded with a suggestion that a global framework may be useful in enabling civil society participation in EFA, and in providing impetus and ideas to sustain partnerships in specific contexts. It might also serve as a forum where the complex mutual expectations of civil society and other EFA partners could be discussed. In summing up, the moderator of the session, Mr Abhimanyu Singh, noted that progress in relations between civil society and governments involves – and is already marked by – genuine partnership, transparency, trust, and a reduction of the physical and psychological distance between them. ◆

Civil society – government cooperation

Kenya: In 2003 the government introduced free primary education, leading to an influx of 1.5 million children into the system, with the need to provide teachers and materials, in over-crowded classrooms. Other issues quickly emerged, such as: water, feeding programmes, sanitation, advocacy about free education particularly among the poorest sections of society. Civil society came in to meet some of these needs and to work with schools to see that resources were properly used. Whereas the government had previously seen civil society as an adversary, from last year a new form of transparent and positive cooperation has developed.

Bangladesh: Government constraints in educational provision are severe, and civil society provides essential services, both manpower and finances. Innovations by CSOs have been replicated at national level, and civil society has demonstrated instances of both quality and cost effectiveness. Civil society has also enhanced government capacity by training trainers and officials.

V. MDG Education and Gender Task Force:

Interim Report on The Goal of Universal Primary Education

This session, moderated by Ms Ruth Levine of the Centre for Global Development, aimed to inform the Working Group of the findings of the draft report of the MDG Education and Gender Task Force, as well as solicit their input as the report moves towards its final version towards the end of 2004. In addition to the coordinator on education, at least nine members of the Task Force participated in the Working Group meeting.

Interim findings

Ms Amina Ibrahim, Nigeria's national EFA Coordinator and a coordinator of the Task Force, prefaced her remarks by noting that the Task Force worked on two reports, on education and gender respectively. The education report focuses on the content of the second MDG, namely achieving universal primary education. Before introducing the principal messages of the report, Ms Ibrahim stated two fundamental perspectives:

- ▷ Making current systems bigger will not be enough
- ▷ Transformational actions are needed in order to
 - ◇ make sure schooling adds up to an education
 - ◇ address gender inequality in education
 - ◇ educate vulnerable and marginalized children

The Task Force proposes to send six clear messages:

1. **Mothers matter most:** educated mothers make more strategic educational choices for their children, they have more resources to devote to their children's education and they keep their children in school longer.
2. **A little education is not enough:** enduring benefits from education depend on up to nine years of education, with five or six required for mastering basic competencies. Post-primary education is critical for lowering fertility and mortality. It should also be noted that the world now has the largest-ever cohort of adolescents.
3. **Parents, and other citizens, have the right to know:** local, national and international accountability

depend on generating and disseminating better information – about budget systems, school resources and performance, economic trends, policies and aid effectiveness.

4. **More money, better spent:** additional resources, however significant, will not be adequate to reach universal basic education, because more spending does not always lead to better performance. Capacity, governance, management and absorption are all critical issues.
5. **Focus on the hard-to-reach:** reaching the remaining out-of-school children will require more than merely scaling up – specific actions will be needed, for example: elimination of school fees, conditional cash transfers, school feeding and health programmes and girl-friendly learning environments.
6. **Think holistically:** education alone will not lead to significant poverty reduction – sound, broad-based economic reform must accompany it.

In order to support the practical implications of these messages, the report lists six recommendations:

- ▷ Donor funding should be linked to government action: a 'dedicated facility' of at least \$1bn should be set up under FTI.
- ▷ Funding for post-primary education should be expanded, keeping adolescents in school and motivating parents and children so that the latter complete the primary cycle.
- ▷ Robust monitoring must accompany implementation of changes and improvements in education system performance – this implies ways of providing relevant information and expanded indicators of performance.
- ▷ Robust monitoring of donor performance is essential under a common framework of reporting on commitments, disbursements and harmonization, potentially using FTI processes.
- ▷ Support for innovative, demand-side interventions to facilitate the schooling of the poorest populations.
- ▷ Genuine evaluation is crucial in order to learn what works, with a minimum of 5% of resources applied to this purpose and using sound methodologies and guaranteeing dissemination of findings.

Comments and feedback

As input into the further work of the report, Working Group participants raised some issues that need to be addressed. These include: children with disabilities,

children in situations of conflict, post-conflict or other crises, countries farthest from reaching the EFA goals, HIV/AIDS as a contextual issue, the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as a capacity-building instrument and the issue of quality in relation to parents' willingness to send their children to school or to keep them there.

There was a feeling that the report of the Task Force should be integrated with other reports on EFA and with the EFA movement in general. The report should set its findings in the context of EFA progress and debate. Further, it will be important to connect this report with those on the other MDGs, since they cannot be met without an educational investment. In particular, MDGs 1 (poverty reduction), 4 (reducing child mortality), 5 (improving maternal health) and 6 (combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) have clear links to the education and gender goals. Networking with other Task Forces will be valuable in ensuring that education is in clear focus with reference to the other MDGs and is highlighted in their reports.


In response to a request from the Task Force for specific feedback, the Working Group gave input on:

- ▷ **The justification for giving priority to adult literacy:** does becoming literate as an adult result in parents being more likely to send their children to school, as is the case with schooled parents? Participants strongly endorsed the need for adult literacy, particularly for women. This need is pressing in rural villages – literacy is the basis for further learning of all kinds. However, some countries hardly ask for resources for such work, sensing donor reluctance to fund it. Funding agencies must be more open to such requests and must show that they are.
- ▷ **The need to look beyond primary schooling:** this issue needs discussion in local contexts to understand the balance between investments at different levels. However, there is clearly a need to address education beyond the primary level, or there will be an exodus to other countries for secondary and higher education, resulting in a brain drain. Without ongoing educational opportunities, EFA becomes education for frustration. With such opportunities the drive to universal primary completion will be strengthened.
- ▷ **The idea of a global facility or fund:** opinion was divided on the wisdom of this idea, with some participants feeling that it had found little positive

response in earlier discussions. Others felt that the lessons of FTI were not reflected in the report, emphasizing the need for country-led and country-based processes.

Other comments questioned the lack of government representation on the Task Force, or stressed some of the key messages of the report for the EFA movement. Among these were the fact that the largest-ever number of adolescents is now with us, looking for ongoing educational opportunities and work prospects, the need

to focus on hard-to-reach groups and the request to think holistically. In this regard, the MDG of primary education must be put into a larger context in order to avoid the watering down of EFA merely to universal primary completion.

Mr John Daniel concluded by underlining the importance of the session as a way of bringing all the actors together and of rooting the work of the MDG Task Force in the broader context of EFA. 

VI. Partnership with the Private Sector in EFA

The moderator of this session, Mr Philipp Müller-Wirth, UNESCO Programme Specialist for New Partnerships, noted that UNESCO has for some time sought to forge cooperative and mutually beneficial relationships with the private sector. In the context of the EFA Working Group, however, this was the first occasion on which the private sector participated in the deliberations. Under the banner of 'forging new alliances', the four panellists brought perspectives from educational planning and business networks in the USA, India and South Africa.

An Educational Perspective

Setting partnership with the private sector in the context of schooling, Mr Serge Peano, of the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), listed parents, communities, NGOs and companies as bodies and groups who cooperate in the provision of education. Examples of the involvement of parents and communities in their children's schooling abound – mostly through their financial participation. However, all these groups may be engaged with education not only through funding, but also in management and in providing expertise or facilitating connections with the wider socio-economic environment.

In Benin, for example, parents and communities provide 24% of the total funding of basic education. Similar situations pertain in other developing countries where the principle of free education at primary level has not yet been put into operation. NGOs may also be important channels of resources (Benin 6%). Companies, on the other hand, have tended to concentrate on technical, vocational and adult training, with some student sponsorship schemes through foundations.

In terms of management functions, communities may take the initiative to set up schools, as for example in Mali, Niger, Chad and Togo, while non-governmental agencies, such as churches, may have a major role in running schools (eg 82% of private primary schools in Cameroon). In both cases, the issue of government support is of concern, with a wide variety of funding systems. Schools owned and operated by private individuals tend to create a dual system for rich and poor.

Partnership in context 1: USA

Mr Charles Kolb is President of the Committee for Economic Development, a business network in the USA which is committed to the promotion of education.

He addressed the session on the nature and range of partnerships that the business sector maintains with education. The larger context of business – labour force, democracy and reform, macro-economic issues – means that educational policy issues are of great importance. Why would business leaders wish to develop contacts with the educational world? Three factors are central:

- ▷ self-interest: engagement with the community can enhance image and relationships
- ▷ change: companies are interested in and open to change in their strategies and practices and are keen to support relevant change
- ▷ impatience: companies often want to see tangible results and impact quickly

Mr Kolb gave examples of business engagement with a healthcare and educational programme in kindergarten, as a result of issues faced by the employees, and of a successful lobbying campaign by business leaders to restore state funding for early childhood care. In their relationships with the business sector, educators would do well to adopt five principles:

- ▷ be goal-oriented and tangible
- ▷ be broad but flexible, with contextualised aims
- ▷ look for ways to maximise the number of players
- ▷ be efficient and accountable for resources
- ▷ do not take business for granted, but work to engage them strategically

Partnership in context 2: India

Building on this presentation, Mr Madhav Chavan, Programme Director of Pratham in India, emphasized that EFA is a societal mission, not the preserve merely of government. Pratham has created an interface between government and the private sector, currently raising \$2.25m annually for educational purposes. One of the principles of this engagement has been to support existing government schools, not seek to set up new ones; thus grants to individual schools were mostly for three to four years, with a view to strengthening capacity and performance: 'The main task in India is to provide government schools and make them work'.

Mr Chavan felt that business likes to be involved with solutions that are widely replicable, and the best way to engage with business is through chief executive officers (CEOs). It is at the CEO level that commitments are made and networks built across the business sector. There may be a mix of motivations: corporate responsibility, social

commitment, concern for national development and emergence. However, the ideological stance taken by some NGOs may not appeal to business which will often avoid taking an explicit stance on social and political issues. In India, the key need in education is not policy development – policies abound! – but implementation. This coincides with the concern of business to achieve tangible results.

Partnership in context 3: South Africa

Speaking as President of the South African Liberty Foundation, Mr Hylton Appelbaum noted that the education system in that country continues to suffer from the effects of the 'deliberate undereducation' of the majority of the population during the apartheid years. There is a need for urgent action and innovation to stimulate change. For this reason, the Liberty Foundation has espoused a sustainable development model of intervention, with a clear focus on new educational solutions. This model involves high risk, high innovation and high impact, is conceived as strategic involvement, and influences critical partners and other resources. This suits the business approach which looks for concrete results and which wishes to see its modest resources used to achieve the maximum positive change. This model also takes risks with shareholders' money in a way that governments cannot do with tax receipts.

Against this background, Mr Appelbaum described the development of the Mindset Network Channel as a case study of partnership. This initiative was a response to the regrettably low performance of South African students in science and mathematics; it centres around the delivery of educational content to school, community, health centres and homes through a combination of television and video, print, internet and interactive links. Starting with the upper grades of mathematics and science, the initiative is expected to expand to six television channels covering large areas of the primary and secondary curricula, plus health information for patients and clinics.

This growing programme has acquired partnerships with a wide range of actors:

- ▷ satellite companies: offering free space for transmission of programmes
- ▷ newspapers: carrying the print support materials regularly free of charge
- ▷ other corporate sector partners: providing funding

- ▷ foundations: leveraging further contacts and providing funding
- ▷ government departments in health and education: giving public support to the initiative
- ▷ bilateral funders: supporting the research and evaluation components of the initiative in order to ensure sustainable quality
- ▷ local firms and individuals: providing training and equipping local schools to participate in the initiative

In this way, funding, expertise and experience, knowledge of local environments and networks of contacts all together make a complex project feasible and effective. According to Mr Appelbaum, in this multi-faceted partnership...

Each partner brings value to the initiative and most enjoy added advantages over and above the obvious benefit to the country. Most importantly, each is doing good, and is seen to be doing good by its stakeholders – its customers, staff, shareholders, unions and the government.


In the light of such experience, he concluded that 'the business community can, and should, form alliances with 'Education for All'.

Pondering the issue

This input on what was a new topic for the Working Group gave rise to a vigorous and dynamic exchange of views which can best be summarised as a series of questions:

- ▷ The private sector must not be used simply because the public sector is weak, so how can private involvement best be made complementary to public involvement?

- ▷ Will private sector funding turn out to be a predictable source of funding for the long-term needs of EFA?
- ▷ What can we learn from existing partnerships such as the World Food Programme's (WFP's) corporate programme in school feeding operations?
- ▷ How far can the private sector go in meeting the enormous funding gap in EFA?
- ▷ In the search for genuine, goal-centred alliances, can educators and EFA partners learn to speak the language of business?
- ▷ Since it would be a mistake to imagine that there are people waiting to sign cheques and give money, can the EFA movement develop partnerships with the private sector around a shared vision and common goals?
- ▷ Where companies want to see tangible results, how will EFA partners rethink what the real outcomes may be at country level and at agency level?
- ▷ As companies that wish to cooperate are brought into EFA, what kind of an approval process will be used to vet them? What do they wish to promote?
- ▷ How can interested companies be linked with EFA partners, and what criteria will determine which ones?
- ▷ Can EFA partners now engage with the private sector on the same basis with communities and governments?

Recognizing the need to engage in further dialogue to clarify questions such as these and to pursue effective partnerships with the private sector in EFA, a panellist remarked in closing that an oyster does not produce a pearl without friction! 

VII. Towards Brasilia 2004: Planning for the EFA High-Level Group

The EFA Working Group plays a key role in preparing and planning for the annual meeting of the High-Level Group which was established by the Dakar World Education Forum as a “lever for political commitment and technical and financial resource mobilisation” and “composed of highest-level leaders from governments and civil society of developing and developed countries, and from development agencies” (Dakar Framework for Action §19). In order to realize these goals in the most effective way possible, the Working Group was called upon to discuss the nature, agenda and scope of the forthcoming High-Level Group (HLG) meeting scheduled for Brasilia, 8 – 10 November 2004. Mr John Daniel, as moderator of the session, gave input to the Working Group from the so-called ‘Sherpas’ group which met on 20 July. Six key concerns emerged from that meeting:

- ▷ The HLG should address issues relating to the forthcoming United Nations review of the MDGs planned as a summit in 2005, with the gender equity goal particularly in focus; clear statements on EFA will serve to capture political space for education ahead of the development-oriented G8 summit.
- ▷ The HLG should highlight positive progress since Dakar in relation to: elaborating EFA plans, defining and implementing FTI, civil society engagement, prospects of private sector partnerships.
- ▷ The HLG should serve as an umbrella for related meetings taking place in Brasilia, such as the UNGEI meeting and the Teachers’ Parliament, providing an over-arching vision and coherent framework for them.
- ▷ The HLG should attract the highest level representation from around the world, in order to make the most of the possibilities offered by the timing and agenda of the meeting.
- ▷ The HLG should promote the wider dimensions of equity in education. As well as the focus on gender, broader attention to the excluded must embrace the poorest and most disadvantaged, the countries and communities most affected by HIV/AIDS and populations marginalized by geography, language, religion or ethnicity.
- ▷ The HLG should link EFA clearly and directly to the MDG agenda.

The debate that followed took up a number of these points and addressed the wider concerns of the function of the HLG.

Mr Abhimanyu Singh, UNESCO’s Director of International Coordination and Monitoring for EFA,

offered an overview of the HLG process thus far, noting that there is some indication that it is evolving into a more effective mechanism as part of the EFA movement, due to a number of factors:

- ▷ the holding of the HLG in developing countries has attracted media interest; all of the venues since 2002 have been in E-9 countries, as will be the 2005 meeting (China)
- ▷ the agenda is more focused and the discussion more interactive
- ▷ the communiqué is much sharper and clearer
- ▷ the HLG is attracting other events

However, a key concern is the need to draw in representation at the highest level: Heads of State and Ministers from both developing and industrialized countries. Defining the role of Heads of Agencies more clearly will also encourage attendance at that level. The meeting must guard against mere token attendance at an opening ceremony, but seek to engage high-level participants in building political momentum. While technical support to these participants is welcome, it is not a meeting of technical experts. If the agenda of the HLG is focused on the big issues and is action-oriented, then it is more likely to attract participants of the highest levels.

An outline agenda for the 2004 HLG was provided for participants with the request for input. The Working Group highlighted the need to put key global issues on the agenda, such as the devastating impacts of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the impact of education on the economy, the role of the private sector, the importance of elimination of child labour and, above all, the connections with the global security situation which is drawing resources away from EFA. A further key concern is the slowness with which new resources are being generated, given that four years have already passed since Dakar. UNESCO welcomed these suggestions, remarking that the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*, which will provide input into the HLG discussions, will include many of them, particularly HIV/AIDS and adult literacy. The question of broader partnerships with the private sector will also be discussed.

Plans for an FTI meeting consecutive to the HLG were questioned, with a number of participants expressing the opinion that the two should be integrated into a single event, rather than holding a separate donors' meeting. Support for this proposal came from a number of bilateral

agencies that wish to see the whole event coordinated under the leadership of UNESCO. Participants also welcomed the focus on teachers, through the Teachers' Parliament, as key actors in ensuring effective progress in EFA. Under the overall banner of EFA, there were also calls to integrate the meeting on UNGEI planned for the same period. There is a need to ensure that the various meetings are more effectively integrated and share a common agenda. The Working Group referred these possibilities, which underscore the umbrella function of the HLG, to the consideration of UNESCO's Director-General.

In order to structure the agenda of the HLG to the best advantage, and with an eye to the most effective participation of Heads of State and Ministers, participants proposed a number of formulas for expanding the meeting to a three-day event, leading to discussions on how to implement the decisions and directives taken by these leaders. The specific suggestions will form part of the planning process.

The need to demonstrate clear and concrete outcomes for achieving the education MDGs was highlighted. This includes commitment to action on girls' education, greater international coordination and increasing resources for education.

In considering the role of EFA structures such as the HLG and the Working Group, full account must be taken of the current Strategic Review of UNESCO's post-Dakar role. It is hoped that this will clarify roles in the international system and lead to greater leadership and advocacy for EFA by UNESCO. It should also assist in strengthening and streamlining cooperation in the multilateral system, as well as enabling better assessment of UNESCO's results in terms of 'real world outcomes'.

In bringing the debate to a conclusion, Mr Abhimanyu Singh, UNESCO's Director of International Coordination and Monitoring for EFA, summed up with two questions and two exhortations:

- ▷ How can we follow up the HLG output with light, flexible and informal mechanisms?
- ▷ How can we give a message of urgency and hope to all participants?
- ▷ The HLG should aim to be ambitious and influential.
- ▷ The HLG must be consistent and coherent in its vision.



VIII. Making Connections – A Concluding Comment

One of the expected outcomes of the EFA Working Group is the ‘strengthening of the global alliance for achieving the Dakar and Millennium Development Goals’. Fundamental to this goal is the making of connections – among people, among institutions, and between the issues which are raised.

These connections need to become ‘thick and dense’, to use the language of social networks, rather than ‘thin and sparse’. Meeting together enables this process to happen, or at least to start. ‘Thick’ connections depend on stakeholders sharing multiple parts of a common agenda, so that progress by one is of direct benefit to another. ‘Dense’ connections come about through multiple relations, where stakeholders increasingly know one another, and know others whom other stakeholders also know. Simply put, sharing a range of common concerns and moving in relevant circles provides a good basis for the kind of alliance that EFA needs. There were signs of movement in this direction at the meeting of the Working Group.

More connections

There were more participants at the meeting of the Working Group than ever before. This is not only an

indication of the strength and breadth of commitment to EFA in its various aspects. It is also a sign of increased expectations – both of the EFA movement in general and of a stakeholder meeting such as this one. However, what is perhaps more telling is the increased range of participants. As this report details, the private sector was represented for the first time, putting into the ring the varied experience in supporting education. These efforts include commitment to pre-school provision, distance education, reaching the excluded and strengthening the public school system, are clearly at the heart of EFA, and these actors constitute valuable partners in the EFA movement.

Associating the members of the MDG Task Force on Education and Gender with the deliberations of the Working Group brought in a range of actors, such as foundations, an investment bank and research centres, who bring with them their own networks of contacts and supporting constituencies. They also enhance the link between the forums of the United Nations where the MDG processes are carried forward and the larger EFA alliance. For governments and others often bemused by the plethora of international initiatives, it is crucial to know that those responsible for such undertakings

are talking to each other and seeking to coordinate and harmonize.

More connections should mean a greater likelihood of follow-up and cooperation in the wake of the meeting. However, numbers alone cannot guarantee this. It is when participants carry back to their institutions a determination to devote greater energy to communicating and linking with old and new partners – in fact to expand the shared parts of their agendas – that relationships will begin to bear visible fruit.

Better connections

The Working Group provided a place to improve connections between the central issues of EFA. As the UNESCO Director-General's opening speech made clear, the meeting picked up on specific issues raised by the High-Level Group. This speaks for a more coordinated approach at an international level and presents an opportunity to forge a consensus on how to work for common solutions. However, the meeting also demonstrated the organic links between many of the issues.

The quality of data and statistics, for instance, has a direct bearing on funding for EFA, whether through FTI or in other ways. As the timelines and reliability of data improve, agencies have greater confidence in identifying the gaps and needs which require funding. Governments, too, have a clearer picture of their educational scene, enabling an improvement in targeted budgeting and a sounder basis for generating public and parliamentary support, as well as for engaging the private sector. Equally, a stronger participation of civil society in policy forums, particularly at national level, broadens the ownership and appeal of resulting plans and processes.

The Working Group made clear how important the connections are between EFA and the MDGs, with calls for vigorous linking of education with all the MDG goals and a solid understanding that the whole of the EFA agenda must be part and parcel of efforts to achieve the full range of MDGs, not merely the one relating directly to education.

Further connections?

There are still further connections to be made. Efforts must continue to bring in other stakeholders at all levels.

Focused thinking and detailed work must continue so that the conceptual, organizational and practical links between the facets and connections of EFA are cogently articulated and persuasively argued. Two particular areas emerged where further connections must be made:

- ▷ **Policy formulation at national level:** participation in this process needs strengthening. Although civil society is fully engaged at international levels in EFA forums, such participation is patchy at national levels. Commitment to wide-ranging dialogue must extend to civil society partners and must include discussions and negotiations around policy, not merely around the modalities of implementation. There is, of course, the ongoing need to improve communication among different government Ministries that are stakeholders in EFA.
- ▷ **Implementing the whole Dakar agenda:** during the Working Group presentations and discussions, the overwhelming emphasis was on implementing EFA Goals 2 and 4: universal primary completion, and gender equality respectively. These are the only EFA goals included in the MDGs. Reference to the other four EFA goals tended to be cast as support to Goal 2: in other words, in order to meet Goal 2, the other goals must also be met. This, however, raises the real danger of relegating the other four EFA goals to mere supports for effective universal primary completion with the accompanying risk of ignoring the need to resource them. We must remind ourselves that the whole agenda needs to be implemented: the young children who deserve a decent start to their learning, the adolescents and young people who desperately need skills which enable them to function productively in society, the adults who are still waiting for the opportunity to benefit from written communication, the requisite quality of all learning opportunities without which the whole system makes little sense. In terms of planning, cooperation, implementation, financing and monitoring there must be far greater efforts to build the necessary connections, conceptual and institutional, which will enable all six goals to be achieved. ◇

IX. Appendices

Opening Address of The Director-General of UNESCO

Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by extending to you all a warm welcome to UNESCO and to the fifth meeting of the Working Group on Education for All (EFA). Let me also welcome back Sir John Daniel, the former Assistant Director-General for Education, and thank him for accepting my request to return to Paris and chair this meeting of the Working Group. Sir John (which I now feel free to call him since he is no longer a UNESCO staff member) has made important contributions to EFA and no doubt in his new capacity he will continue to do so. I am sure we all wish him well in his new role as President and Chief Executive Officer of The Commonwealth of Learning.

Since its first meeting in November 2001, the Working Group has gradually established a strong identity among EFA international partners and Member States. It has demonstrated its ability to provide guidance on technical matters as well as to take account of the outcomes of the preceding meeting of the High-Level Group and to prepare for its next meeting. This strengthening of the Working Group has been made possible through professionally well-prepared and effective meetings, which have benefited from wider consultation with and better participation of key partners.

I am particularly glad to note the increasing interest of the international community in EFA, as shown by the growing participation in this meeting, especially of representatives of developing countries and civil society. I am encouraged by the positive feedback on the last meeting of the Working Group in July 2003 and the increasing number of requests for participation in this present meeting.

It is also heartening to note the growing spirit of collaboration evident among EFA partners in the preparation of the meeting of the Working Group and

during the meeting itself. As one can observe, the Working Group is becoming a hub for other multi-stakeholder EFA-related meetings and activities. A series of EFA meetings has been planned to take place this week around the Working Group, taking advantage of the presence of many EFA partners. This is the case for the meetings of the FTI Steering Group, the MDG Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, the United Nations Literacy Decade International Resource Persons Team Meeting, and the Round Table on Emergency Education.

This fifth meeting will address a number of cross-cutting issues raised in the third meeting of the High-Level Group in New Delhi, India, namely, the quality of data and statistics for monitoring progress towards EFA; external funding for EFA in light of recent developments of the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI); civil society engagement in EFA in the post-Dakar period; and partnership with the private sector on EFA. A session will also be devoted to the presentation and discussion of the Interim Report on Achieving the Millennium Development Goal of Universal Primary Education. This will provide an opportunity for the Working Group to contribute to the Millennium Review of MDGs in 2005. This agenda, along with the participation of all major EFA constituencies, will provide effective linkages between the work of this Group, the High-Level Group and the FTI Partners Group.

The question of data and statistics for monitoring progress towards EFA has been at the centre of international debates following the launch of the Global Monitoring Report and especially since last year's meeting of the High-Level Group in New Delhi. In view of the growing demand for global monitoring, especially in regard to the MDGs and the EFA goals, the production of internationally comparable, good quality EFA statistics that are up-to-date, accurate and reliable is proving to be a big challenge that needs to be addressed collectively, particularly for the benefit of countries with weak statistical systems.

The New Delhi Communiqué underlined the need for the international funding and technical assistance agencies to fulfil the commitments they made at Dakar and Monterrey. In particular, the High-Level Group meeting last year in New Delhi called for “a clear framework to improve the effectiveness of the FTI and to mobilize resources for endorsed countries.”

The subsequent FTI Donors Group meeting held in Oslo, Norway, on 20-22 November 2003, responded by calling for the following three actions: first, the extension of the FTI to all low-income countries; second, the establishment of a multi-donor Catalytic Fund to assist those FTI countries that do not have an adequate donor presence; and, third, the setting up of a Facility for Programme Preparation to assist countries without an education sector plan to prepare one.

It is vital that the Working Group appreciates the implications of the new FTI framework and explores ways to improve the FTI’s effectiveness in mobilizing resources for EFA. At the same time, we have to continue our joint efforts to explore new funding initiatives, particularly for non-FTI countries.

I am pleased to see the increasing participation of civil society in EFA. This meeting provides us with a good opportunity to reflect upon this important trend since Dakar. In addition, we must seek to identify areas in which we can do better at the global level as well as the country level, especially where NGOs are still denied their legitimate role and place in contributing to EFA.

Here I should make a special mention of the annual EFA Action Week, which is going from strength to strength in raising awareness of the importance of EFA. It is an excellent example of the joint efforts of the Global Campaign for Education, UNESCO and other partners. Advance planning is in hand for the organization of the 2005 EFA Action Week, whose aim will be to focus attention on the imminent goal of gender parity in primary education.

The Dakar Framework for Action, in paragraphs 10 and 46, underlined the need for broadening the partnerships in EFA to include the private sector. This meeting offers an opportunity to bring together international expertise to discuss conceptual issues and problems as well as the potential for enhanced private sector partnerships and alliances in education, especially EFA. I appreciate the efforts of USAID in stimulating and preparing the session. We should build on its outcomes in the future.

You will note that we have included a brief session on “Strategies for the future” to encourage all partners to assume shared responsibilities and tasks to follow up the deliberations of this meeting. We shall seek to do this not through new mechanisms but by using a ‘light’, flexible and informal consultation process to address emerging issues.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me take this opportunity to update you about a process that UNESCO is presently undertaking. On the request of the Executive Board at its 169th session last April, UNESCO is currently conducting a Strategic Review of its post-Dakar role in EFA. UNESCO sees this exercise as an opportunity to enhance the effectiveness of its lead coordination role in EFA, notably in developing the use of the Working Group and the High-Level Group to ensure that all partners are basically working towards a shared set of goals in a coherent, consistent and constructive manner. This is particularly relevant when EFA partners, including UNESCO, are required to play a subsidiary or contributory role in international initiatives and EFA flagships.

We have been working intensively during the past two months on the Strategic Review and, early last week, I provided an interim report when I spoke to the delegations of our Member States. Copies of my speech have been made available to participants in this meeting. The initial reaction I received was positive and encouraging. The final version of my report will be completed shortly, in readiness for its presentation to the next meeting of the Executive Board in the autumn.

My hope and my intention is that this Strategic Review will strengthen our collaboration with our EFA partners, namely, developing countries, donors, multilateral agencies and civil society organizations. While the operation of the coordination mechanisms and their effective linkage are a core concern, so too is the need to contribute more to EFA advocacy, to EFA debates at international, regional and national levels, and to the mobilization of national efforts and international support. In addition, we shall be looking at our own programming with a view to pushing for stronger action by UNESCO in such areas as literacy, teacher training, HIV/AIDS prevention education and quality. But we are clear that our enhanced efforts require partnerships and support if they are to succeed.

To this end, it is important that we engage in active dialogue with our multilateral EFA partners and our civil society partners concerning the direction that the Strategic Review is taking us. We welcome your advice and we need your feedback. Tomorrow afternoon, UNESCO’s Deputy Director-General, Marcio Barbosa, who has been chairing the UNESCO Task Force on the EFA Strategic Review, will begin to elicit your responses. The views of the different EFA constituencies are important for us in order to understand your expectations, therefore let us have your reactions so that we can better serve the whole EFA movement.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It remains for me to wish you a rewarding and constructive meeting during the next two days. I look forward to the outcomes of this meeting with keen interest.

Thank you.

Agenda of the Meeting

Expected Outcomes

- ▷ Coordinated planning for the fourth High-Level Group Meeting and the back-to-back meeting of FTI partners; strengthening linkages between the Working Group, the High-Level Group and the FTI partners meetings; addressing issues related to the effectiveness and follow-up of these meetings;
- ▷ Overview and common understanding of key issues related to the production of internationally comparable data and indicators, their implications for EFA monitoring and recommendations to improve the quality of statistics;
- ▷ Addressing issues and challenges related to external funding for EFA in the light of international initiatives based on the Monterrey Consensus, in particular the Fast-Track Initiative;
- ▷ Enhancing the continued engagement of civil society in EFA, based on a review of its role and contribution in the post-Dakar period;
- ▷ Sharing information and knowledge on and promoting private sector engagement in EFA;
- ▷ Feedback on the Interim Report on Primary Education, prepared by the MDG Task Force on Education and Gender Equality; and
- ▷ Strengthening the global alliance for achieving the Dakar and Millennium Development goals.

Key issues will be presented by a panel in plenary sessions from different perspectives: multilateral agencies, bilateral donors, NGOs and developing countries. The Group will aim at reaching a common understanding and will formulate recommendations with a view to accelerating progress towards EFA.

The meeting will be chaired by UNESCO's former Assistant Director-General for Education, Mr John Daniel (President and Chief Executive Officer of The Commonwealth of Learning). Each plenary session will commence with a lead presentation on the theme, raising important issues and suggesting ways of addressing them (15 minutes). Respondents will reflect critically on the presentation (10 minutes) from the perspective of the constituency they represent. The moderators will facilitate the debate, offer summaries on the principal areas of consensus or disagreement, and orient the debate towards actions and recommendations in the light of the expected outcomes.

Tuesday 20 July

8:30 – 9:15 am	Registration
9:30 – 9:45 am	Welcome to participants and Overview of EFA (Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO)
9:45 – 10 am	Overview of the Working Group on EFA John Daniel
10 – 10:45 am	Education Data and Statistics for Monitoring Progress: What are the frequently raised issues and possible solutions? Panel presentation led by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (Denise Lievesley), with Wim Hoppers (Former Chair of the ADEA Working Group on Education Statistics), China (Han Jin), Aide et Action (Thierno Diaouné) Moderator: Monitoring Report Team (Chris Colclough)

The availability of timely and accurate data and indicators on education systems is critically important to the process of monitoring progress towards the EFA goals. UIS has been constantly working to improve the quality and availability of educational data, especially those required for the monitoring of EFA. The panel will address questions frequently raised regarding the time lag and gaps in the production of internationally comparable data and indicators and their implications for the EFA monitoring process, and make recommendations to improve their quality.

10:45 – 11 am	Coffee Break
11 – 11:45 am	Discussion on Education Data and Statistics
11:45 am – 12:30 pm	External funding for EFA: Is FTI living up to its potential? Update on recent developments on Fast-Track Initiative (FTI) Panel presentation led by the World Bank (Rosemary Bellew), with Honduras (H.E. Carlos Avila Molina), Canada (Scott Walter), Global Campaign for Education (Anne Jellema), Mauritania (Mohamed Lemine Ould Moulaye Ahmed) Moderator: France (Laurent Fontaine)

The FTI Donors Group meeting (Oslo, 20-22 November 2003) marked a breakthrough in the development of the Initiative, resulting in: the extension of FTI to all low-income countries; the establishment of a multi-donor Catalytic Fund to assist those FTI countries that do not have an adequate donor presence and a Facility for Programme Preparation to assist countries without an education sector plan to. The panel will discuss the implications of the new FTI framework and ways to improve its effectiveness in mobilizing resources for endorsed countries. It will seek to raise concerns regarding FTI and suggest ways to address these.

12:30 – 1:15 pm	Discussion on external funding for EFA
1:15 – 2:30 pm	Lunch
2:30 – 3:15 pm	Civil society engagement in EFA after Dakar: What has been the value added? Panel presentation led by the Collective Consultation of NGOs (Gorgui Sow), with UNESCO (Susanne Schnuttgen), DFID (Desmond Bermingham) and the United Republic of Tanzania (Salum Mnjagila). Moderator: UNESCO (Abhimanyu Singh)

Since the inception of the EFA Movement (Jomtien, 1990), civil society organizations have been active partners, bringing their critical voices and concrete experiences to promote EFA. In accordance with the Dakar Framework for Action, UNESCO strengthened the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA to enhance partnership with civil society organizations and facilitate their engagement and participation in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for EFA development. The panel will discuss lessons learned, opportunities and challenges for civil society participation in EFA.

3:15 – 4 pm	Discussion on civil society engagement in EFA after Dakar
4 – 4:15 pm	Coffee Break
4:15 – 5:30 pm	Breakaway Groups* on: (1) Education data and statistics; (2) External funding for EFA; (3) Civil society engagement in EFA after Dakar.

Major issues raised in the plenary sessions will be summarized by the Rapporteurs for elaboration and further discussion in the breakaway groups which will recommend a set of strategies to address challenges. Each breakaway group will be chaired by the lead panellist. Other panellists will serve as resource persons. Each group will nominate a Rapporteur who will present the Group Report in the Plenary. Presentation of each Group Report in plenary will be 15 minutes by Power Point followed by a brief discussion.

7 – 8 pm	Reception hosted by UNESCO
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Wednesday 21 July

9 – 9:30 am	Presentation of the Interim Report on Achieving the Millennium Development Goal of Universal Primary Education. (Amina Ibrahim).
9:30 – 10 am	Discussion on the Interim Report on Achieving the Millennium Development Goal of Universal Primary Education. (Moderator: Ruth Levine)
10 – 10:15 am	Coffee Break
10:15 – 11:45 am	Groups report back to Plenary (15 minutes each) followed by discussion on each group report (15 minutes)
11:45 am – 12:30 pm	Partnership with the private sector on EFA: Forging new alliances Panel presentation led by the International Institute for Educational Planning (Serge Peano), with Committee for Economic Development, Washington DC (Charles Kolb), Pratham, India (Madhav Chavan) and Liberty Limited Group, South Africa (Hylton Appelbaum). Moderator: UNESCO (Phillip Muller-Wirth)

It is widely recognized that broad partnerships are required in order to achieve the EFA goals. The involvement of the private sector in education is a growing trend. Their contributions range from establishing, managing and financing educational institutions to delivering educational services. The corporate sector is becoming increasingly aware of its social responsibilities. Nevertheless there are concerns regarding commercialization, globalization and equity. The panel will bring together international expertise that will discuss conceptual issues and problems as well as the potential for enhanced private sector partnerships and alliances in education, including EFA.

12:30 – 2 pm	Lunch
2:00 – 2:45 pm	Discussion on Partnership with the private sector on EFA
2:45 – 3:00 pm	Planning for the Fourth High-Level Group and the back-to-back meeting of FTI partners (Abhimanyu Singh)

The Government of Brazil will host the fourth HLG meeting on EFA (Brasilia, 8-10 November 2004). This will be followed immediately by a meeting of the Fast-Track Initiative Partners Group. The agenda of the Brasilia HLG meeting will be closely aligned to the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005 on the theme of quality in EFA. Coordinated planning, with wider consultation with key partners, should take into account the experience of previous HLG meetings and concerns regarding its effectiveness and political impact. Ways to forge more effective linkages between the Working Group, the High-Level Group, the FTI Partners Group and other relevant forums may be explored.

3 – 3:30 pm	Discussion on the High-Level Group
3:30 – 4pm	Strategies for follow-up

The meeting should result in the formulation of recommendations on the role and responsibilities of participant constituencies on follow-up to Dakar, and in accelerating progress towards EFA and MDGs.

4 – 4:15 pm	Concluding remarks (John Daniel)
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X. Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
ANCEFA	African Network Campaign on Education for All
CCNGO	Collective Consultation of Non-Governmental Organizations
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
E-9	Nine high-population countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan
EFA	Education for All
FTI	Fast-Track Initiative
G8	Group of eight of the world's leading industrialized nations: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HLG	High-Level Group
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
TEN-MET	Tanzania Network for Education
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
WFP	World Food Programme

The Fifth meeting of the Working Group on Education for All (EFA), held at UNESCO in Paris on 20 and 21 July 2004, demonstrated the expanding partnerships of the EFA movement. As well as representatives of government, civil society, bilateral and multilateral agencies, the 2004 meeting drew in partners from foundations, the private sector and the Millennium Development Goal Task Force on Education and Gender.

Eager to improve the coherence and effectiveness of international support for EFA, participants shared perspectives on urgent issues:

- ▶ improving educational data and statistics
- ▶ enhancing external funding
- ▶ civil society engagement
- ▶ partnership with the private sector
- ▶ input into the MDG Task Force Report on Education
- ▶ preparing for the High-Level Group meeting in Brazil in November 2004

Throughout the discussions participants were concerned to confront challenges directly and propose specific action. In a spirit of transparency and dynamic debate, panellists presented ideas from a variety of perspectives which were complemented by extensive exchanges on the floor.

The Working Group serves the important function of facilitating international dialogue on EFA at professional and technical levels. In doing so, it provides a platform for clarification of issues and positions, in-depth exchange of views and for building consensus on the way forward. The prominence of EFA, and its effective implementation on the ground, will be a measure of its impact.