Chapter 1

Rights, equality and Education for All

'Education for All' means what it says. The international community has committed itself, in the Dakar Framework for Action, to having all eligible children attending fee-free primary schooling by 2015. In addition, adult illiteracy is to be halved, early childhood education and programmes for out-of-school youth are to be increased, and the quality of education is to be much improved. 'All children' includes, of course, boys and girls. However, both the Framework and the Millennium Declaration emphasize that gender disparities in primary and secondary schooling are to be eliminated by 2005, and that equality throughout education is to be achieved within a further ten years. Gender equality, then, is given major prominence in the Dakar and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Why is this?

In no society do women yet enjoy the same opportunities as men. They work longer hours and they are paid less, both in total and *pro rata*. Their choices as to how they spend their time, in both work and leisure, are more constrained than they are for men. These disparities generate substantial gaps between how much women and men can contribute to society, and how much they respectively share in its benefits. In most countries, a fundamental aspect of these disparities, which is both one of their causes and one of their continuing consequences, is inequality in access to and performance in education. These inequalities are deep-seated, and will require special attention and commitment if they are to be removed within the time-frame envisaged by the Education for All (EFA) goals. Accordingly, this report focuses on the main dimensions and causes of these educational inequalities and identifies strategies whereby they can be overcome.

Educational inequality is a major infringement of the rights of women and girls.

The continuing prevalence of educational inequality is a major infringement of the rights of women and girls, and it is also an important impediment to social and economic development. This first chapter is concerned not with philosophical questions about the appropriate nature or extent of these 'rights'. Rather it documents the extent to which such rights are already accepted as legally binding on states by virtue of international treaty, or are promised by international declarations which governments have approved. The important developmental case for securing educational equality is also briefly discussed.

Chapter 2 provides an assessment of the world's recent progress towards achieving the six EFA goals, giving particular attention to gender and to the ways in which it affects the implementation of all of Dakar's educational aims. Chapters 3 and 4 focus upon the causes of gender inequality in education and upon potential solutions, respectively. The following two chapters adopt a broader agenda – assessing progress with national EFA strategies in Chapter 5 and examining the extent to which international commitments in support of EFA are being met in Chapter 6. The final chapter pulls together these strands, outlining the major elements of national and international strategy towards achieving a genuinely equitable education for all.

Rights to education: legal obligations versus political commitments

In November 1948 the nations of the world made a declaration about the nature and extent of human rights which was remarkable in its detail. Amongst many others, the right to education was acknowledged for all people. Furthermore, it was declared that elementary education would be free and compulsory and that the higher levels of education would be accessible to all on the basis of merit (United Nations, 1948, Article 26). The task of transforming these undertakings into reality has continued to inspire and inform international action ever since.

Such action has taken two main routes. The first of these has used treaties as instruments to secure human rights observance. Between 1976 and 1990 a series of international covenants and conventions was promulgated which provided a comprehensive legal basis for required measures to protect and deliver human rights. Those which most affect education, and gender equality within it, are indicated in Box 1.1 and more detail is provided in Appendix 1. The earliest two of these, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), together with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, have been proclaimed by the United Nations to constitute the International Bill of Human Rights. They contain the provisions on compulsory and free primary education, and non-discrimination in education, that were first set out in the 1948 Declaration. The two more recent conventions – the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) – contain the most comprehensive sets of legally enforceable commitments concerning both rights to education and to gender equality.

The first of these, CEDAW, includes wide-ranging provisions for ending gender discrimination. As indicated in Appendix 1, it says that there shall be no distinction in the extent of educational provision for women and men, that there will be equal opportunity for scholarships, for continuing education, literacy, sports and physical education, and that stereotyping in curricula

shall be eliminated. Further, it recognizes that special and unequal resource allocation, introduced for the express purpose of ending inequality, is not in itself discriminatory provided that such special measures are ended once equality has been achieved. By mid–2003, 173 countries had ratified this Convention. The exceptions notably included Bahrain, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United States.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most widely accepted human rights treaty and contains strong guarantees of the right to education. It reaffirms the right of every child, 'without discrimination of any kind' to free and compulsory primary schooling, and states that the higher levels shall be 'accessible to all'. Furthermore, it protects the child from exploitation, including from work that would otherwise interfere with education (Articles 32.1/32.2). The CRC has been ratified by all the nations of the world, with the exception of the United States and Somalia.[1]

The process of ratification is important, as it accords the treaty an internationally recognized legal status which obliges ratifying countries to implement its provisions. Accordingly, the great majority of countries in the world – as a consequence of having ratified – are legally obliged to meet the provisions for gender equality and for universal access to education which are set out in these two treaties.

Each of the human rights treaties listed in Box 1.1 entails a reporting procedure, which requires the government's periodic self-assessment of its compliance. Following ratification, an initial report from the government provides a baseline review of its conformity with the human rights guarantees. It also includes an assessment of the obstacles to implementation and specification of a strategy whereby they can be overcome. This product is issued as an official United Nations document, and is discussed with the relevant United Nations treaty body. Subsequent reports monitor progress or retrogression and, again, identify constraints and means of overcoming them. Governments are expected to publicize these reports, and to involve civil society institutions in both their production and dissemination.

These procedures are, in principle, robust. However, if governments do not submit reports, no information is made available to the treaty bodies whereby objective assessments about implementation can be made. In the case of CEDAW, for example, the reporting process obliges each state to submit an initial report within four years of ratifying the Convention, followed by periodic reports at least every four years. However, of the 173 countries that had ratified the convention, initial reports had not been received from 60 of them by mid–2003 (Tomasevski, 2003). Not surprisingly, those governments that are in breach of their reporting obligations are often also in breach of the treaty provisions themselves.

The purpose of the reporting process is to secure both domestic and international accountability of governments for implementing measures to guarantee human rights. Nevertheless, implementation of the rights to education and to gender equality within it is patchy, and the process of regulation, via reporting requirements placed on governments, though firm, has proved to be avoidable by about one-third of states.

The second route towards securing acceptance of and compliance with human rights obligations has been to use the declarations of international conferences, convened by the United Nations, as additional instruments. The outcomes of four of these – the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993), the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) (1994), the World Summit for Social Development (1995), and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) – are also summarized in Box 1.1. Each of them reaffirmed (in different ways and with different emphases) the gender equality provisions in education to which states were already committed by the earlier human rights conventions.

The educational commitments made in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have also been reaffirmed on many occasions over the intervening years. Most notably, during the 1960s a set of regional conferences convened by UNESCO established target dates for the achievement of universal primary education (UPE) by 1980 in most of the developing regions of the world. By 1990, however, there was still far to go, and the World Conference on Education for All, held that year in Jomtien (Thailand), set out

The Convention on the Rights of the Child contains strong guarantees of the right to education.

1. The United States has taken the view that economic, social and cultural rights are goals that can only be achieved progressively, rather than guaranteed. Consequently, it is not party to human rights treaties dealing with economic and social rights, or gender discrimination.

Box 1.1. The 'gender commitment' instruments

There are two types of instrument that indicate international commitment to gender equality in education: *international treaties*, which are intended for ratification by individual countries giving them legal weight, and '*political promises*', developed by international consensus to be a further stimulus to promote 'action'. The following instruments (in chronological order) demonstrate the evolution of specific gender commitments in education. Appendix 1 provides more detail for each of them.

International treaties

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

Adopted – 1966; came into force – 1976;
Number of countries which have ratified – 144

This instrument, the ICCPR (below), and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, have together been proclaimed by the United Nations to constitute the International Bill of Human Rights. This particular instrument has six entries in Appendix 1. Its commitment to non-discrimination is affirmed. It commits states to economic measures for free primary education and financial support, educational and other forms of support for families, and support for teachers.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

Adopted – 1966; came into force – 1976;
Number of countries which have ratified – 148

One of the three instruments to make up the International Bill of Human Rights, this international treaty has limited coverage of gender and education.

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Adopted – 1979; came into force – 1981;
Number of countries which have ratified – 173

Unlike the two previous treaties, CEDAW was developed specifically with gender in mind. Its eleven entries in Appendix 1 indicate an emphasis on *rights to education* with provisions covering primary, secondary, higher education, non-formal education, sports education, and family planning information.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

Adopted – 1989; came into force – 1990;
Number of countries which have ratified – 190

The CRC ensures the rights of the child and includes provisions to guarantee rights to education. The CRC has twelve entries in Appendix 1. Like its predecessors, it reaffirms human rights in a context that does not discriminate based on sex. It contains a strong emphasis on measures to promote free primary education and financial support, human rights education, sex education and reproductive health information, educational counselling, and a gender-aware curriculum.

Political promises

Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action – 1993

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action was drafted at the World Conference of Human Rights as a reaffirmation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There are eleven entries in Appendix 1 spanning all relevant areas. The Vienna instrument places a strong emphasis on the state's obligations to promote gender equality, including in education.

International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) – 1994

The International Conference on Population and Development was held in order to assess progress in reaching the objectives of the 1974 World Population Plan of Action, to increase awareness of population issues within the international agenda, and to adopt a set of recommendations for the next decade. The nineteen entries span all areas of Appendix 1, demonstrating an increasing level of awareness of gender issues.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – 1995

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action reaffirms the fundamental principle set forth in the Vienna Declaration, that the human rights of women and of the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. As an agenda for action, the Platform seeks to promote and protect the full enjoyment of all human rights and the fundamental freedoms of all women throughout their life cycle. There are twenty-two entries related to gender and education, which span most relevant areas.

World Summit for Social Development – Copenhagen 1995

The World Summit for Social Development represented a new consensus on the need to put people at the centre of development. Among the decisions made were ten commitments, two of which affect gender in education. These are: (a) to achieve equality and equity between women and men; and (b) to attain universal and equitable access to education and primary health care. The instrument results in nine entries in Appendix 1, reflecting that this instrument does not only address gender and education but social development in a much broader context.

an 'expanded vision for education' and restated the UPE goal for achievement by the year 2000. Although great progress had been made in most regions this, again, was not fully realized by all countries. Accordingly, in 2000, the Dakar Framework for Action and the Millennium Declaration respecified both the education and the gender goals in a more formal way (Box 1.2).

All these restatements of the rights to education have indicated their equal applicability for all people, without distinction of race, sex or nationality. However the notion of gender equality was increasingly emphasized over the years, and the achievement of gender parity and equality in education was given separate importance in the most recent statements of the development goals.

Box 1.2. The Dakar Framework and Millennium Development Goals

EFA Dakar goals

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

Millennium Development Goals

Goal 2. Achieve UPE

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

Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women

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

Extending the agenda

It is clear that human rights legislation has had only partial success in delivering equality in education. Perhaps, then, the benefits of separately securing government commitment to honour these same rights, using conference declarations as instruments, should be questioned. In what ways can these measures help, given that 'declarations' and other conference instruments carry merely political rather than legal authority? One short answer to this question is that, precisely because legal and political processes are distinct, it is more likely that implementation will be secured if they result in mutually consistent messages, rather than in contradiction.

In addition, however, both the Jomtien Declaration and the Dakar Framework – and the declarations from the other major United Nations conferences of the 1990s – provided some flesh for the rather minimalist bones of existing human rights legislation. They can thus be seen as not merely reconfirming a commitment to the treaties, but also as initiatives which go beyond them – sometimes substantially so.

The human rights treaties themselves mainly focus on the provision of free and compulsory primary schooling and the elimination of gender inequalities throughout education. It is notable that these two aspects are taken up as Goals 3 and 4 of the Millennium Declaration and that they, in turn, comprise the second and fifth of the Dakar goals (Box 1.2). The MDG targets for education, however, are cautiously phrased – they omit mention of 'free and compulsory' primary schooling, and restrict themselves to seeking the elimination of gender disparities in education rather than to achieving the more demanding gender equality espoused by the Dakar Framework. In these respects these two goals are, in fact, rather less fully reflective of human rights commitments, as set out in the relevant treaties, than are the Dakar goals.

Literacy is not mentioned in the MDGs, whereas there is a commitment to provide 'fundamental education for those who have not completed primary education' in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 13.2). This too is reflected in the Dakar

Framework (Goal 4) which seeks a substantial improvement in literacy and in access to adult basic education. On the other hand, Dakar goes much further. In seeking to expand early childhood education (Goal 1), life skills programmes for all young people and adults (Goal 3) and an improvement in the quality of education at all levels (Goal 6), the Dakar Framework extends the agreed education commitments beyond those that are implied by human rights treaties. Accordingly, this represents an extension of the agenda, rather than merely its reconfirmation.

The Dakar goals go well beyond those set out in the human rights treaties: they establish a more ambitious agenda.

Time-bound targets

A further way in which the Dakar goals and the MDGs differ from state commitments under human rights legislation is that they include time-bound targets. This is useful in a number of ways. First, it softens the judgement of 'being in default' which is implied for those countries where some human rights targets have not yet been achieved. By introducing a dynamic dimension, it shifts attention from whether or not human rights are being violated, towards consideration of how they will be met over a discrete period of years. This allows space for planning and implementation and for the notion that what really counts is making progress towards the goals, rather than whether or not particular countries are currently in default of their obligations.

Second, it facilitates a potentially more inclusive process. Although those states that have not met their reporting obligations under the conventions are most likely to be recalcitrant in other ways, those furthest from guaranteeing human rights to their peoples are likely to be those which have not ratified the Conventions in the first place. In recognition of this, the Dakar goals are potentially able to facilitate dialogue with all governments, irrespective of whether they are signatories to CRC or CEDAW.

Third, time-bound targets make the process of goal achievement more tangible and they facilitate more explicit monitoring of progress. As this report demonstrates, it is thereby possible to anticipate how well regions and countries are doing, and to indicate priorities for national or international action in support of their efforts. A related, but important advantage of such an approach is the extent to which international as well as national agents can be held to account. The international community has consistently indicated that no country with a credible plan for achieving EFA will be prevented from implementing it owing to a lack of resources (UNESCO, 2000*f*). Accordingly the actions of aid agencies in providing resources can be judged in comparison with what is required, in ways that would be difficult if there were no notion of a target date for achieving the goals. In this sense, time-bound targets allow their responsibility to be more explicitly shared between developing and more developed countries, than would otherwise be allowed by a dependence only on the human rights legislative instruments.

In summary, the Dakar goals reflect the substance of government education commitments contained in four core human rights treaties, introduced by the United Nations over the years 1976 to 1990, which have subsequently been ratified by the great majority of the world's governments. The main purpose of supplementing these legally-binding commitments with the goals established in the Dakar Framework, and in the MDGs, is to provide a means whereby political messages and legal commitments – at least at international level – can become mutually reinforcing. While the two MDG education goals are fairly narrowly couched, in comparison with international legal commitments, the Dakar goals go well beyond those set out in the human rights treaties: they establish a more ambitious agenda. Both these sets of goals are time-bound, which brings a number of advantages for planning, for resource mobilization and for monitoring.

Impact of gender equality in education on other development objectives

There exist clear sets of legal and political commitments to achieve gender equality in education, which have been freely undertaken by a majority of countries. Thus the right to Education for All is well articulated and accepted internationally. The moral basis for these provisions is compelling. However, there is also a very strong instrumental case for so doing. A large body of evidence shows that it is in the

private and social interests of people and communities to reduce gender inequalities in education wherever they exist.

Economic analysis has consistently shown that the private rates of return to education – estimated on the basis of the relationship between the private costs of undertaking education at each level and the impact it subsequently has on lifetime earnings – are significant, and at least as high as returns from the other ways in which families might invest their money (Psacharopoulos and Patrinos, 2002). In most countries women experience discrimination in the labour market, as witnessed by their occupational earnings being less than men at given ages and levels of education. However, the proportionate increase in wages (and thus rates of return) associated with an additional year of schooling at each level tend to be about the same for both sexes. Where returns do differ, they more often favour women than men (King and Hill, 1993; Psacharopoulos and Patrinos, 2002; Schultz, 1995).

Furthermore, in countries where primary and junior secondary schooling is not yet universal, private returns to education are highest at primary level and tend to decline at secondary and higher levels. Where girls have less access to schooling than boys, this pattern of returns implies that closing the gender gap in school

Private rates of return to education are significant.

Box 1.3. Gender, education and citizenship

Nation-states have particular ways in which they shape young people as citizens. Some countries, based upon egalitarian and socially inclusive principles, have educated all children within a common school system, with the aim of assimilating social, ethnic and cultural/religious differences. Other societies have segregated, or differentiated the education received by different groups of children – either to recognize differences or, more negatively, to exclude certain categories in society. In all these contexts, education plays a key role in shaping future citizens' identities and lives.

The wish to transmit core values (or 'citizen virtues') across social groups in order to help unite members of a community has to be balanced against the need to provide them with diverse skills and knowledge, in preparation for economic life. Some education systems have prioritized national values and cultures through an emphasis on patriotism and key national institutions. Socialist countries have emphasized the importance of schooling in creating social equality and collectivity. Western European liberal democratic approaches have tended to focus on the development of individual potential. These principles change with shifts in societal values. However they all point to the key role of education systems in nourishing citizenship.

Normative models of the male and female citizen are learned as children progress through the levels, hierarchies and processes of the school. School rituals (assemblies, uniforms, celebrations), forms of discipline, relationships between teacher and pupil, and curriculum content, all help to shape male and female citizen identities. School staffing structures represent to pupils the principles of the social order. These normative models are not always conducive to the promotion of greater social equality. Ideally, learning environments should model democratic principles in all their aspects. If girls are able to learn, through schooling, that they can be in control of their own lives, they will be more likely not just to perform well but also to engage in political issues when they become adults.

Achieving full citizenship status for men and women is not a single event. Attention needs to be focused on how male and female civic participation can be encouraged through styles of teaching and learning. Opportunities are needed for both boys and girls to achieve a sense of agency – of being in control of their lives and of the social environment in which they are located. Boys tend to be offered more chance to negotiate their identities in school, whereas girls can be constrained by an overly protective environment. This difference can be expressed by the amount of physical, linguistic and pedagogic space taken up by boys in mixed classrooms and schools: much of the 'action' in schools is male. Girls and boys each need encouragement to experience the possibilities of human action, and they should be allowed to participate fully in the learning experience without fear of intimidation, violence, marginalization or silencing.

Source: Arnot (2003); see also Heater (1990); Gordon et al. (2000).

enrolments will provide higher returns than would expansion policies that left the existing gender gap unchanged.

From a more macro perspective, increasing female education has been shown to have a greater effect on overall labour supply by increasing the amount of time that women work. By contrast, the quantity of work men wish to do seems not to be influenced by their own educational level (Schultz, 2002). A further complication is that men's wages, and their educational level, tend to have a downward impact on the labour supply of women. Accordingly, strategies to increase women's education relative to that of men will tend to increase overall labour-force participation and have positive effects both on the tax base and on economic growth.

Increasing the education levels of girls has a favourable impact on economic growth.

Growth would also be promoted because, where access to education is skewed in favour of boys, many of the girls who are out of school will have higher levels of natural ability than many of the boys who are not.[2] Thus, redistributing school places towards achieving greater gender equality would raise the net ability levels of those at school and have a compounding effect on society's future stock of human capital.

Evidence suggests that gender parity – in terms of the relative 'stocks' of education held by men and women in the population – affects growth prospects independently of their absolute levels (Klasen, 2002), and that, particularly for countries at lower levels of income, increasing the education levels of girls has a favourable impact on economic growth (Dollar and Gatti, 1999). One of the likely reasons for the growth impact of female education in these circumstances is its positive effects on levels of agricultural productivity. This relationship has been well documented for many years (Jamison and Lau, 1982), but more recent evidence of its separately beneficial effects for the productivity of women and men in farming is beginning to emerge (Smith and Haddad, 1999; Quisumbing, 1996).

Education institutions also play a key role in the democratic process by giving women and men the opportunity, the knowledge and the commitment to influence the nature and direction of society. Individuals cannot develop their full potential without education, nor can they participate fully as citizens. Excluding girls from school badly affects their sense of agency and constrains civic and political life (Box 1.3).

A very important consequence of society investing more in the education of girls and women is the changes brought about in household behaviour and practice. Some of these changes are highly valued by society. For example, the improved sustenance of children has been shown to be more strongly associated with increased levels of education of the mother than of the father. This is so with respect to the birth weight of children, child mortality, nutrition, morbidity, school entry at early ages and longevity in school.[3] Equally, the schooling of parents (and in particular of female parents) increases the probability of their children – of both sexes – attending school. Thus, giving priority to educating girls during the move towards EFA is a better way of ensuring its future sustainability over the years when the present school-age generation will themselves have become parents.

2. This assumes that it is those with greater ability, among both sexes, who tend to have greater access to school.

3. Reviews are provided by Schultz (2002) and Abu-Ghaida and Klasen (2002). Although some of these effects may truly be more a function of joint determination of family outcomes between male and female partners than the literature conventionally acknowledges (see Behrman et al., 1997; Schultz, 2002, p. 214), such analytic niceties are likely only to reduce the positive behavioural impact of female education, in comparison with that of males, rather than to remove it completely.

A further welcome benefit of the schooling of women concerns its well-documented negative impact on rates of fertility (Cochrane, 1979; Schultz, 1997). In some societies, particularly in Africa, the first few years of schooling appear to have little effect on fertility. But elsewhere, education is associated with reductions in fertility, cumulatively for each additional year. The evidence suggests, moreover, that additional years of schooling of men are associated with increased fertility (for given years of education held by women).[4] So, in this context, targeting women and girls is particularly important.

The economic and social benefits of fertility decline are considerable. It lowers the dependency burden, which should increase national savings. It increases the labour force as a proportion of the population, and via its employment effects in turn helps to boost per capita incomes. The effect on economic growth can be considerable – some estimates suggest that up to 2 percentage points of annual per capita income growth in East and South-East Asian countries was due to this demographic effect of declining fertility (Bloom and Williamson, 1998). High female education in these countries could thus have contributed substantially to their economic boom.

All these direct and indirect benefits indicate that, where females have less access to schooling than males, society loses. In such circumstances, there is a clear case for the extension of greater subsidies to the education of females than of males, and for economic policy and investment to be targeted at that objective.

Conclusion

The rights-based arguments for achieving gender equality in education are of overriding significance. However, those countries that heed their moral, legal and political case also act strongly in their own economic and social interests. In this sense, strategies to achieve gender equality in education entail no unwelcome trade-offs. Arguments that equality cannot be afforded, or that it would generate pressures that conflict with other, more pressing, development priorities are largely false. On the contrary, a committed shift towards the creation of gender equality in education can deliver a wide range of associated benefits for economic growth and for other objectives of development policy. This report demonstrates that the task is not straightforward, and that it requires changes extending well beyond the boundaries of education policy. However, its potential benefits make it one of the most important challenges facing governments, and their societies, during these early years of the new century. ■

Arguments that equality cannot be afforded, or that it would generate pressures that conflict with other more pressing development priorities, are largely false.

4. See Schultz (1995, 2002). The negative impact of women's education on fertility is, of course, mediated by other variables. It is generally strong, but not automatic. See also the discussion in Chapter 4.