

2002

REPORT



**High-Level Group  
on Education for All**

**Second Meeting  
Abuja, Nigeria  
19-20 November 2002**



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# Foreword

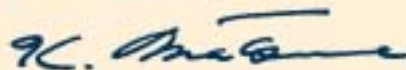
It gives me great pleasure to present the report of the second meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All (EFA). This event was a significant milestone in our common efforts to maintain the momentum of the Dakar Framework for Action. As a platform for debate and a springboard for action, the High-Level Group presents opportunities for governments and international agencies, for funders and civil society to consider priorities and come to a common understanding of the next steps in the drive towards EFA.

Following specific recommendations made at its 2001 meeting, the High-Level Group made two important changes in 2002. First, the group was smaller and more focused, enabling more concrete discussions and more intensive interaction between participants. Second, The *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* provided high-quality, relevant information and cogent analysis for assessing EFA progress.

The principal themes of the meeting covered progress towards the six Dakar goals as well as the planning, partnerships, funding and monitoring which underpin EFA at every level. As the final communiqué stressed, we must take a holistic approach to education; EFA remains an essential element in addressing broader social challenges such as HIV/AIDS, crisis and conflict, poverty and the promotion of democratic values and intercultural dialogue.

I am convinced that sufficient political will and resources for EFA will be generated only if we deliberately build alliances around our common vision of education. In this regard, the Group expressed a strong desire that the EFA vision be integrated into the priorities of other international forums, such as meetings of donor agencies and of the G-8. Millions of children and adults without access to quality basic education are waiting for the promises made at Dakar and Monterrey to be fulfilled.

I would like to express my thanks to the Government and people of Nigeria who so generously hosted the High-Level Group. Given the huge dimensions of the EFA challenge in Africa and the continent's determination to address that challenge, this was an especially appropriate venue for our deliberations. Encouraged by the outcomes of this second meeting, I will continue working to strengthen the capacity of UNESCO to play its role in pursuing our common EFA goals.



Koichiro Matsuura  
Director-General, UNESCO

# 1 Introduction

The Education for All (EFA) High-Level Group is mandated by the Dakar Framework for Action to 'serve as a lever for political commitment and technical and financial resource mobilization'. The Director-General of UNESCO convenes the meeting annually. This second meeting of the Group built on the experience of the first one in Paris in 2001 and implemented the recommendation that UNESCO should 'ensure focused and operational discussions and continuity in the important work of the Group'.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Group meeting in Abuja was smaller than last year, yet with representation from the major EFA constituencies: governments from North and South, civil society, bilateral funders and multilateral agencies. The data provided by the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* ensured that discussions were more focused and concrete.

The Presidents of Nigeria and Burkina Faso took an active part in opening the proceedings of the Group. Besides these two Heads of State, participants in the meeting included Ministers of Education from ten developing countries, one from a country in transition, Ministers of Development or International Cooperation from three industrialized countries, the head of one bilateral aid agency, representatives from five multilateral agencies, and four representatives of civil society and NGO networks. Most participants were accompanied by a second person, but in line with recommendations from 2001 to ensure focused and operational discussions, only those seated as representatives had voice; also there was no observer status.<sup>2</sup>

The *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* was published immediately prior to the start of the meeting. This provided the primary tool for the discussions, by giving specific data on progress towards EFA goals and offering an analysis of how far the world is on track to meet them. Although this was the second such report, it differed in nature from the first in that it benefited from a much higher investment of effort and expertise. Since the first meeting of the High-Level Group, a team led by Professor Christopher Colclough started work on collecting, collating and analysing EFA data, in close cooperation with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Based at and supported by UNESCO, the team produced in the report a sound basis for the work of the High-Level Group, enabling it to assess progress, examine

problems, propose solutions and identify priorities against the backdrop of as reliable data as it was possible to obtain.

Following the opening ceremony which was attended by a broad cross-section of Abuja's professional and diplomatic communities, the programme<sup>3</sup> was structured in six working sessions:

- ▷ Progress towards EFA goals
- ▷ Accelerating progress on girls' education – ways and means to gender equity
- ▷ Developing policies and plans for EFA through effective partnerships
- ▷ International commitments and initiatives
- ▷ Implications for monitoring of EFA progress
- ▷ Agreement on action agenda

The first five sessions consisted of a lead commentary by the chair of the session, a contribution by a designated respondent, followed by discussion among the participants. The major points of discussions were captured by a designated member of the group at the end of each session – these remarks are included the 'currents of debate' sections below. Preparation for the final session, which adopted the Group's communiqué, was facilitated by a select committee (designated the 'Sherpa group') which met once prior to and then again during the meeting. The final communiqué, which was adopted unanimously, can be found in Appendix 8.1.

The programme also included receptions offered by the President of Nigeria and the Director-General of UNESCO. At a dinner hosted by Nigeria, the Director-General and the Nigerian Minister of Education, acting on behalf of the Head of State, signed an agreement to set up a UNESCO Chair of distance education at the National Open University of Nigeria. At the same event, the new Atlas of Nigeria was also launched.

This report follows the structure of the programme. The five interventions which set the tone at the opening ceremony are summarized in the remainder of this section. Five sections follow corresponding to the working sessions. These sections each give a résumé of the lead commentary and of the respondent's contributions and distil the essence of the general discussion. The conclusion gives an appreciation of the ethos, outcomes and impact of the meeting.

1. Communiqué from the High-Level Group meeting, 2001.

2. The full list of participants is provided in Appendix 8.3

3. The full programme is given in Appendix 8.4

### 1.1 Building on the past twelve months: Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO<sup>4</sup>

In his welcome address Mr Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, underlined the significance of holding the High-Level Group meeting in Africa where the EFA challenges are so enormous. Thanking the Nigerian hosts, he recalled the threefold mandate of the Group:

- ▷ monitoring and assessing progress
- ▷ advocating for more extensive and better coordinated action
- ▷ promoting the expansion of resources.

In this sense the High-Level Group is the 'high conscience of the EFA movement.' It should aim at concrete outcomes and set the annual agenda for partners in EFA.

Mr Matsuura inventoried the events of the past year which had a particular impact on the progress of EFA. In terms of international action the Monterrey (development finance) and Kananaskis (G8) meetings gave promise of increased aid, while the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children and the World Summit on Sustainable Development gave higher profile to the vital need for adequate educational opportunities. Following up on the request of the 2001 High-Level Group meeting, the EFA International Strategy was published as a flexible framework for integrated EFA action. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was a significant regional initiative which links with EFA on that continent.

*Our influence and advocacy can only be strengthened by being based on up-to-date information and accurate evidence, which need to find their way into the policy-making process at national and international levels. A key function of the Monitoring Report is to let us know if we are facing a hill or a mountain and what is the gradient we must climb. In some cases, there may seem to be an entire mountain range before us!*

Koichiro Matsuura  
UNESCO

2002 produced by Professor Christopher Colclough and his team. This report, while revealing significant gaps in

our knowledge, brings us face to face with the reality that 28 countries are at risk of not achieving any of the three timed EFA goals,<sup>5</sup> and a further 43 are unlikely to meet at least one of them. This points to the responsibility of countries to increase the political and financial priority of EFA and of donors to provide additional funds in user-friendly ways. Mr Matsuura welcomed the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI) in this regard, but noted that other channels must be found to help at-risk countries currently not on the FTI list.

Emphasizing again the central importance of the *Monitoring Report* as the primary tool for the work of the High-Level Group, the Director-General concluded by announcing that the 2003 meeting would take place in India, in cooperation with the Indian government.

### 1.2 Funding EFA – a test of international will: James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank

In a recorded video statement to participants and guests at the opening event, Mr James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank, underlined how central EFA is to the development agenda – witness education's place in the Millennium Development Goals, and the endorsement of the Monterrey and Johannesburg meetings. Expressing the World Bank's full commitment to the six Dakar goals, Mr Wolfensohn pointed out that the Fast-Track Initiative is a test of international will to follow through on the clear commitments of both Dakar and Monterrey: 'They said there is enough money available for people and for countries that have programmes to get their children back to school!' He defined the Fast-Track Initiative as a process in which potential recipient governments meet a number of criteria, which then leads to a concerted and coordinated effort on the part of international funders.

Noting that the World Bank is confronting traditionally contentious issues like stability of funding and support for salaries, Mr Wolfensohn asserted that 'we are no longer talking about policy or arguing about framework, it is the moment for implementation.' He concluded by emphasizing that he and his team are fully committed to realizing the Millennium Development Goals.

4. The full text of the address can be found in Appendix 8.2

5. The three timed Dakar goals are: achieving universal primary education by 2015, achieving gender parity by 2005, halving adult illiteracy by 50 per cent by 2015.

### 1.3 Action now for quality education: Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF

Ms Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF, expressed the full commitment of UNICEF as an EFA partner in a statement that was read out to the participants in her absence. Education is the right of all children, the obligation of all governments, the heart of all development, the prerequisite for equality, dignity and lasting peace, and a means to fight poverty. She illustrated these principles by referring to the strong

international partnerships which have brought new educational opportunities to children in Afghanistan.

UNICEF's EFA priority is the gender parity target of 2005 – Ms Bellamy noted some progress but the pace is slow. Action now, based on tried and tested methods, should take precedence over debates about how to structure educational reform – the cost of delay is unconscionably

high. Focusing on the disadvantaged and marginalized, on building child-friendly and gender-sensitive school environments, on improving the relevance of curriculum and the training of teachers – these are the areas to which national and international energies must be devoted so that all children may enjoy their right to quality education.

*...we should shift all available resources into doing what we know works – tried and tested approaches to ensure that all young children are nurtured in safe, caring, and gender-sensitive environments that will help them become healthy, alert, secure, and able to learn.*

Carol Bellamy  
UNICEF

### 1.4 Education = building development: Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso

After thanking his Nigerian hosts for the warm welcome afforded him, Mr Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso, acknowledged the contribution of EFA partners to education in Africa. Emphasizing that education is a basis for peaceful and sustainable development, he went on to enumerate three facets of the impact of education on social development:

- ▷ education enables democracy to take root
- ▷ quality education sets the foundation for equitable and inclusive socio-economic development
- ▷ education gives opportunity to individuals and communities to open up to the world and benefit from new technologies.

Achieving the Dakar goals presupposes vigorous mobilization of resources, their effective use, control of population growth and reform of education systems. Three key concepts must be underscored:

- ▷ untiring efforts to build democracy, enabling EFA goals to enjoy popular legitimacy and build on social mobilization
- ▷ good governance, based on social dialogue, such that community efforts produce the intended results
- ▷ the unrelenting fight against poverty with the result that government resources to education can be gradually increased.

Mr Compaoré outlined Burkina Faso's 10-year plan for basic education, which looks to increase access to and the quality of formal and non-formal learning opportunities, with a focus on eliminating inequities of geography and gender. The three-phase plan will be based on strategic decisions, including the increase of resources budgeted for education, the development of leadership and expertise, and the assumption of responsibility for education by local groupings as part of a decentralization drive. Other sectoral instruments also have a bearing on EFA goals: plans for early

*Indeed, when we have given our fellow citizens an educational basis which enables them to take charge of their social, cultural and economic progress, we will have created the conditions for sustainable development and lasting social peace.*

Blaise Compaoré  
Burkina Faso



childhood education, secondary schooling, vocational training and for combating HIV/AIDS. Mr Compaoré concluded with an appeal to EFA partners of all kinds to join in efforts to realize the Dakar goals in Africa.

### 1.5 Solidarity and effort commensurate with the EFA task: Olusegun Obasanjo, President of Nigeria

*It is important that this High-Level Group should have frank and candid discussions on what may have gone wrong and draw courageous conclusions and recommendations that would help us in the developing world to initiate and implement corrective measures forthwith, so as to put our educational systems back on track for the Dakar goals.*

Olusegun Obasanjo  
Nigeria

Under the banner 'Education for All is the responsibility of all' Mr Olusegun Obasanjo, President of Nigeria, pronounced the official opening address of the meeting. He began by stressing his strong personal conviction that education is the linchpin of development. He described the High-Level Group as the manifestation of a 'partnership of a truly

global dimension' which must look at past successes and failures in order to 'fashion for ourselves instruments capable of dealing with the complexity and size of our chosen task.'

Efforts in Nigeria have been marked by clear priorities and policies on basic education, as well as a commitment to cooperation and internationalism which 'to us is a chance to give and take, to share and to profit from the experiences of others while they too glean whatever they can from our own experiences.'

Calling the *Global Monitoring Report* a 'landmark report' Mr Obasanjo bewailed the alarming data showing that the 70 countries unlikely to meet at least one Dakar deadline represent more than 60 per cent of the world's population. That fact, and the decline of ODA in the 1990s, constitute an indictment of collective will and ability to make a difference:

The decline in the real values of both total and education aid between 1990 – when the first commitments were made in Jomtien – and 2001, is more than startling indeed: it suggests a declaration of failure and neglect.

A new global education compact is needed to raise resources and mobilize political will to meet the ambitious targets of Dakar and the Millennium Development Goals. This will, again, require international cooperation and solidarity, making sure that HIPC and other mechanisms are fully used to increase funds for education. In Africa, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a plan around which development partners can join hands for 'we cannot and will not accept the notion that developing countries are on their own.' □

# 2 Progress towards EFA

Noting the challenge given to the High-Level Group by the speakers of the opening session, John Daniel, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, explained that the sessions would be structured to allow an examination of the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002*, since it set the stage for the whole meeting.

## 2.1 Presentation of the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002*

Professor Christopher Colclough, Director of the EFA Monitoring Report, recalled how crucial the Dakar agenda, with its six goals, is to halving world poverty by 2015, as formulated in the Millennium Development Goals. Education is placed at the centre of the struggle against world poverty. The EFA goals are monitored in two ways:

- ▷ by examining progress towards the goals at national level
- ▷ by monitoring the means used to achieve the goals: plans, policies, legislation, national resources, international assistance.

The *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* includes both these approaches. It should be noted that three of the goals – UPE, gender parity and adult literacy – can be

monitored in quantitative terms, while the other goals – early childhood care and education, lifeskills and learning opportunities, quality – must currently be monitored in other, qualitative terms. The *Report* indicates that 50 countries have achieved the UPE Goal, 38 have achieved universal adult literacy and 86 have achieved gender parity in school enrolments. As regards the others, Professor Colclough stressed that all of them could achieve the Dakar goals, given judicious policy change and increased and better targeted international support. However, in the absence of such measures, countries can currently be categorized along two axes:

- ▷ vertical axis: a static dimension – distance from goal: how far is the country from a particular goal at present?
- ▷ horizontal axis: a dynamic dimension – is the country moving towards or further away from a particular goal?

The dynamic dimension is based on trends observed between 1990 and 2000.

This analysis results in a four-cell matrix, which was presented for each of the three quantified goals. The *Report* details the countries in each category, and the following table summarizes the conclusions, showing the numbers of countries in each category:

		Dynamic dimension <i>Changes between 1990 – 2000</i>	
		moving away from goal	moving towards goal
Static dimension Distance from goal	close to goal	At risk of not achieving UPE: ..... 20 Gender parity at primary level: ..... 18 Adult literacy: ..... 39	High chance of achieving UPE: ..... 21 Gender parity at primary level: ..... 18 Adult literacy: ..... 18
	far from goal	Serious risk of not achieving UPE: ..... 21 Gender parity at primary level: ..... 8 Adult literacy: ..... 40	Low chance of achieving UPE: ..... 16 Gender parity at primary level: ..... 23 Adult literacy: ..... 0

# goals

Emphasizing the need for better data and further conceptual work on indicators for the other three goals, Professor Colclough underlined the central importance of political will in addressing the serious challenges of the *Report*. He further highlighted the fact that the overall financing gap, for primary education with its gender and quality components, amounts to an estimated total of US\$5.6 billion per year on top of the approximately US\$1.4 billion currently available. Given the 'desperately disappointing' aid record of the 1990s, this is a 'very tall order'. He concluded by welcoming the Fast-Track Initiative as a major breakthrough, but noted that further financing mechanisms will be essential if EFA needs, particularly in poor countries, are to be met.

## 2.2 Capturing the dynamics of change: a response

Mr Murli Manohar Joshi, Indian Minister of Human Resource Development, Science and Technology, congratulated Professor Colclough and his team on a comprehensive report which also enables each country to assess the direction it is moving in EFA efforts. He highlighted the need for up-to-date data by noting a number of discrepancies in the *Report* with regard to the Indian situation which would alter India's standing in the classification of the countries, in particular lack of reference to an unprecedented investment in the basic education sector. These gaps are largely due to recent initiatives not being captured – the Minister suggested greater dialogue with countries in the preparation of the report and called on UNESCO to use its regional and subregional offices to improve communication and take a lead in building data collection systems.

Welcoming the quantitative assessment which the *Report* presents, Mr Joshi called for increased attention to capturing 'the dynamics of change in the respective sub-sectors which do not get adequately reflected in quantitative assessments of progress.' As an example, he noted the need for 'a good review of status and trends across selected countries facing the problem of multilingual education.'

Commenting on planning, Mr Joshi observed that national-level planning should be built on and complemented by planning at district level involving

local communities to ensure ownership and deepen democratic processes. Initiatives targeted at disadvantaged groups should also be documented in the *Report*. He welcomed the realism of the *Report* in highlighting the dismal picture of international aid to education; the Fast-Track Initiative should build on current aid relationships and also be broadened to include further countries. Finally, he suggested that the forthcoming UN Literacy Decade should give E-9 countries priority as they contain such a high proportion of the world's literacy needs.

## 2.3 Reactions and comment

Many participants expressed appreciation for the *Report* and congratulated Professor Colclough and his team not only on a comprehensive and valuable report, but also on the amount and quality of work achieved in the short time available. Copies of the published *Report* were distributed during the meeting, hot off the press.

The *Report* makes clear that there is real progress, but that the pace is slow and that some countries are worse off now than they were a few years ago. The presentation of these sobering conclusions gave rise to serious concerns about the capacity, willingness and readiness of the world community – North, South and multilateral – to meet the challenge of the Dakar goals. The coordination of EFA efforts came in for repeated mention as an area which needs more attention and where significant improvement would enhance effective deployment of resources. In this respect future editions of the *Report* should assess partnerships, including the participation and contribution of civil society; this will require the development of new indicators.

There were a number of remarks on the need to improve the timeliness and adequacy of the data on which the report is based – these issues are taken up in more detail in Section 6 below.

Participants agreed that the level of political will is an absolutely crucial factor in promoting EFA. Initiative at the national level must be a starting point, but international partners must also increase the momentum of EFA through stronger commitments, better coordination and clear priorities. This is the only way to meet the challenges which the *Report* presents.

Political commitment is the key to making change possible, and it is the role of the High-Level Group to generate that commitment. This is all the more crucial as the *Report* identifies a resource gap that is bigger than was thought. Future editions should consider how to assess political commitment, perhaps by using levels of budgetary allocations to basic education.

Looking both to the use of this *Report* and to the production of the next edition, suggestions were made that regional dialogue about its results would be valuable in ongoing EFA planning – learning lessons and assessing needs for the next steps. Regional consultations on input into the next report could enhance the adequacy of the reporting process.

The Group emphasized that all six Dakar goals should be assessed equally – they can all be measured. Conceptual work must be undertaken to develop indicators where these do not yet exist, particularly on the three goals which are not attached to a timed target. The goals are all related and are mutually reinforcing, and thus should be pursued concurrently. The EFA agenda must be considered within an integrated framework of social and economic development, thus keeping questions about the purpose and outcomes of education on the agenda, including the links between educational goals and the world of work. Japan is to propose a Decade of Education for Sustainable Development at the UN, to begin in 2005, as a way of increasing momentum for the key role of education.

The *Report* is clear about the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS both currently and in the future. In some countries this will have a massive effect on education systems, reducing the teacher corps, leaving children orphaned and hollowing out institutions. It also increases the annual costs of EFA by about US\$1 billion.

If we expand enrolment, will we have enough teachers to teach them? The numbers of new teachers required will only be found if the conditions and incentives are improved. There is evidence that young people are little interested in pursuing a teaching career, citing pay, conditions and lack of social recognition as patent disincentives. In the light of the concern for quality in basic education, in-service training for teachers must become an integrated part of school systems.

A capacity-building gap was identified in relation to a number of aspects of EFA – data collection and reporting processes at national level, planning and coordination, management of resources with a view to enhancing absorptive capacity and increasing the effectiveness of aid, use of information for policy formulation and decision-making, and teacher training.

The debate closed with a keen sense of the responsibility that falls to the High-Level Group – how can it best fulfil its mission to be a team of champions for Education for All? Section 6.4 further addresses this question. This sharpened the focus on developing an action-oriented communiqué as the outcome of the meeting. □

## 3 Accelerating progress on girls' education

As the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* notes, girls' enrolment in primary school progressed in the 1990s. The gross enrolment ratio rose from 93.1 per cent in 1990 to 96.5 per cent in 1999 and the gender parity index improved in all regions. Nonetheless, this index remains below 0.9 and in favour of boys in South and West Asia, in the Arab States and in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>6</sup> Overall, 86 out of 153 countries for which data are available have achieved gender parity in primary education. Of the remaining 67, 18 stand a good chance of attaining the goal by 2015 while the 49 others will experience greater difficulties. As such, the goal set in Dakar to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 is particularly challenging. This session aimed to discuss strategies for accelerating progress towards gender parity and equality in education.

### 3.1 Gender equality: a question of social change – lead commentary

Ms Susan Whelan, Canada's Minister for International Cooperation, observed that the goal of achieving gender equality in education by 2015 is a much more difficult one than simply getting girls and young women into school, college and university. It is about making education for girls truly equal to education for boys. In the eyes of students, parents, teachers and communities, education for girls and boys must be equally accessible, safe and worthwhile. Asserting that progress towards gender equality involves change on a socio-cultural level, Ms Whelan raised critical issues for discussion, namely:

- ▷ How can policies respond to the fact that poorest families perceive a lower return on investment for educating girls than boys?
- ▷ How effective are targeted subsidies in influencing the school attendance of girls from the poorest households?
- ▷ What supply side responses, such as more trained female teachers, improved planning of school locations and gender-sensitive curricula, are particularly important for girls?
- ▷ What policy changes in areas outside the education sphere are necessary to secure and support gender equality?
- ▷ What processes and initiatives are required at the national and international levels to secure the 2015 target for gender equality?

Commending the Fast-Track Initiative, which focuses squarely on universal primary completion and gender equality, the Canadian minister announced a funding increase under this international partnership to support EFA plans in the United Republic of Tanzania and

Mozambique. Both plans stipulate the attainment of gender parity. Canada will contribute \$10 million each year to each country over the next five years, over and above its current commitments. Ms Whelan expressed hope that other donors would step forward to address the financing needs of the first group of countries identified for fast-track support, and make long-term commitments to this initiative.

### 3.2 Girls' education: addressing the complexity – a response

In her response, Dr Rima Salah, UNICEF Regional Director for West and Central Africa, evoked the risk of 'losing credibility if we cannot show meaningful results in meeting the very first goal we have set ourselves.' Issues affecting girls' education have not received specific priority attention, nor have their complexity been fully appreciated, in particular their impact on power relations and cultural practices in a society. In the quest to achieve gender equality, greater attention should be paid to education as a right for every child and an obligation for all governments.

Girls' education, she underlined, is good for boys, but the reverse is not necessarily true. Sharing ideas on how to move forward, Dr Salah appealed for country-led concerted and coordinated efforts by all partners. The particular circumstances and changing contexts of each country must be taken into account because a 'one size fits all' approach will not work. What happens for example, when a fast track country falls into crisis? Progress on girls' education requires action across sectors and beyond education. More flexible learning systems must be promoted and stronger synergies created between access and quality. Plans on girls'

6. The gender parity index is the ratio of female to male enrolment rates. Parity is 1.

education must encompass early childhood development programmes, water and sanitation projects to improve the school environment and relieve household burdens, nutrition and health to improve learning achievements, safety and security to promote enrolment and attendance, alternative forms of learning, adult education and income generation activities. 'All of that highlights the fact that the cost for achieving progress on girls' education may be far higher than what we are currently estimating in our plans.'

*Girls' education is good for boys, but the reverse is not necessarily true.*

Rima Salah  
UNICEF

Taking on board these dimensions, UNICEF has developed a strategy for accelerating progress on girls' education, especially for those countries that are most at risk of

not meeting the 2005 goals. The strategy, which is highly complementary to the Fast-Track Initiative, depends on country leadership and action by local communities, as well as additional support from the donor community. Finally, Dr Salah noted that it is not sufficient for donors to approve plans and provide funds: 'We need to accompany countries and work with them through the good and bad times.'

### 3.3 Promoting active support for gender equality – currents of debate

Participants underscored that investment in girls is the best investment for poverty reduction. Already a decade ago, the World Bank presented evidence for the claim that girls' education yields the highest return in strictly economic terms in a poor country, with positive impacts on family planning, health, HIV/AIDS and income generation, among others. The foregone gains of not achieving gender parity are clear: failing on this front will jeopardize the achievement of all other Millennium Development Goals.

Political will, expressed from the national to village level, is the sine qua non of getting girls into school. The empowerment of girls is a political process, calling for support at highest level, as well as from neighbourhoods, villages, faith-based institutions, NGOs and the media. Some of the poorest countries in the world, including Guinea, Benin, Mali, Chad, the Gambia,

Sierra Leone, Mauritania, Bangladesh and Nepal, have witnessed some of the greatest gains in girls' education over the past decade. Bangladesh has achieved gender parity in primary school enrolments and counts more girls than boys in secondary school.

In Cuba, where equity and equality have been championed as a national value for over forty years, gender parity is firmly entrenched. Cuba has reached several generations simultaneously, by universalizing early childhood education and tapping all cultural avenues to run literacy campaigns for adults. Primary education is free, with no additional hidden costs for enrolment and books, and 70 per cent of the teaching force is female.

Several countries, including India and the United Republic of Tanzania, have recently introduced constitutional amendments making education free and compulsory. As part of the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (Education for All Movement), India has committed some \$20 billion over ten years and expects to reach gender parity at the primary level by 2007. The *Mahila Samakhya* literacy programmes aimed at educating and empowering women are being expanded to all low literacy districts in the country, while early childhood care and education programmes are being strengthened. Since the late 1990s, Yemen has introduced policy measures such as placing small schools closer to girls' homes to expand access for girls and rural children.

Bold supportive decisions must be made to achieve gender parity, but new challenges constantly emerge. In the United Republic of Tanzania even in separate-sex boarding schools, for example, boys continue to perform better than girls. A bottleneck occurs at secondary and university level, with lower participation for girls than boys, a fact also observed in Ghana.

On the demand front, incentives work if they are carefully constructed and tested, as advocated by USAID. In Afghanistan, where a year-long campaign has enabled 3 million children – a third of whom are girls – to return to the classroom, families receive a vegetable oil supplement for every girl sent to school. School lunch programmes prove effective in creating a demand for education while enhancing learning, as for example in India.

Cultural mindsets are a formidable hurdle to achieving gender parity – the plight of girls working as child labourers was highlighted. According to a recent ILO report, 352 million children between the ages of 5 and 17 are engaged in economic activities, of which 168 million are girls, some being sold between countries for prostitution and pornographic purposes. Reaching these girls represents an urgent challenge for countries and the international community.

HIV/AIDS requires explicit attention, particularly in the area of gender equality. Education is a powerful ‘social vaccine’ against the pandemic, providing that innovative patterns of learning address the fact that girls are heading households, caring for siblings and being forced to generate income. Others face stigma and discrimination in their schools and communities.

In light of these interlocking obstacles to girls’ education, participants underscored the need to reach beyond the education sphere per se. How well a child does in school is intricately linked to the mother’s education level. Linkages must be woven between literacy, life skills and parenting. The whole environment must be favourable for learning to happen: gender sensitive curricula and textbooks, better qualified female teachers, nutrition, health and safety all factor into the equation.

Sharing successful experiences and championing role models are invaluable ways to build the knowledge base. UNICEF highlighted the need to apply systematically and on a much larger scale ‘the things we know and are doing successfully’; noting that successful pilot projects and innovations are often not built upon. North-South co-operation can also be valuable in this regard: five of Japan’s women’s colleges, for example, are inviting leading female educators from Afghanistan in an effort to further promote women’s education.

As countries evolve towards a knowledge-based economy, the need for educated women in the workforce increases, regardless of the cultural context. Once a generation of women is educated, it is more than likely that they will ensure their daughters are educated. Several participants noted that patterns in developed countries can prove instructive: Japan for instance, counted few women in university fifty years ago, a fact that is reversed today.

Attention towards gender and girls’ education tends to be jagged, peaking around major conferences, hence the importance of sustained advocacy. Regional initiatives (such as the Forum for African Women Educationalists and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa), popular culture (such as a television soap-opera in Brazil) and mass media have the potential to transmit values and create parental demand for education. The coming year provides several opportunities for keeping girls’ education high on the agenda. The Global Campaign for Education plans to use EFA Week in April 2003 for a worldwide campaign focusing on gender parity, working with governments and civil society groups in 180 countries. The forthcoming United Nations Literacy Decade, to be launched in early 2003, will place a strong emphasis on gender, drawing attention to the fact that two-thirds of the world’s illiterates are women.

Finally, participants urged that the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2003*, focusing on girls’ education and gender parity, should map relevant trends and examples and critically identify strategies in both developing and donor countries for accelerating progress. □

# 4 Developing policies and effective partnerships

The World Education Forum made a set of commitments designed to strengthen the processes by which EFA is achieved in every country. It emphasized strong and sustained political will and a coordinated, government-led process of policy development and planning that includes a broad range of partners such as civil society and external agencies. It stressed the need to develop national EFA action plans by the end of 2002. The *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* notes that plans are taking shape in a variety of frameworks, that evidence of policy dialogue with civil society is limited and that the differing demands of external agencies run the risk of duplicating existing processes and may handicap effective dialogue at country level.

## 4.1 Credible planning means participation – lead commentary

Mr Joseph J. Mungai, Minister of Education and Culture of the United Republic of Tanzania, set the High-Level Group the twofold task of reviewing progress and making enhanced recommendations on planning collaborative partnerships in EFA. He reminded participants that the aim is not only to achieve the six Dakar goals, but also to halve poverty by 2015. He also noted that the sub-title of the Dakar document 'Meeting our Collective Commitments' underlines the need to seriously address, through planning, the situation of ALL children and adults – ethnic minorities, nomadic tribes, remote rural populations, urban 'jobseekers' and adults in need of skills must not be left out.

The credible plans called for in the Dakar Framework for Action are above all the responsibility of each country, with the commitment on the part of donors and multilaterals to support the process. The *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* adduces a number of reasons why 'credible plans' have as yet not been widely developed. Lack of political will vitiates credible planning, as do lack of involvement of critical stakeholders and the development of double or parallel plans.

If the *Monitoring Report* notes that Dakar was of political rather than technical or professional significance, Mr Mungai called rather for input of the latter kind and set the tone for the ensuing debate by citing his words at the October 2002 meeting of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA):

A 'credible plan' is a reliable, implementable and sustainable plan which can be funded by different committed stakeholders. [...] a credible plan must have all the SMART qualities (specific, measurable,

attainable, realistic and time-bound). It must be a plan devolved through a participatory process involving all stakeholders and which addresses both education needs and cross-cutting issues such as HIV/AIDS, gender parity, health and safety, civic education, good governance, income generation and employment.

## 4.2 Partnerships: common hurdles – a response

As respondent for this session, Mr Kailash Satyarthi, Chair of the Global Campaign for Education, pointed out how difficult it is to implement partnership, simple though the concept appears. While effective partnerships for EFA have been forged in some contexts, in others they are hampered by:

- ▷ lack of mutual trust and confidence: within governments, between civil society and governments, between governments and donors, etc.
- ▷ lack of a sense of urgency: commitments are frequently re-affirmed, but action is not as easily forthcoming
- ▷ lack of capacity: some stakeholders may be interested in partnership, but lack the financial, institutional or technical capacity to engage
- ▷ lack of political will at local, national and international levels – one of the biggest obstacles in genuine partnership building.

Mr Satyarthi further categorized partnerships into four groups: sectoral (between governments, intergovernmental agencies, corporate sector and civil society), inter-sectoral (inter-ministerial, among civil society organizations, within the corporate sector), internal (within countries), and external (with outside partners). He cited the Philippines, Nepal, the Gambia,



# plans for EFA through

Benin and Mauritania as examples where partnerships had resulted in progress in EFA, in reducing or abolishing user fees, in achieving gender parity, and in developing EFA action plans. Nevertheless, five major areas of concern remain:

- ▷ space for civil society engagement: governments need to create mechanisms for genuine dialogue in planning, implementing and monitoring EFA – it is not just a matter of bringing NGOs to meetings.
- ▷ information-sharing: civil society is frequently in the dark regarding funding and budget allocations.
- ▷ capacity-building: even when genuinely concerned many civil society organizations need further technical and financial capacity to become active partners.
- ▷ feedback mechanism: civil society and other stakeholders need to take more part in feedback processes as part of implementation.
- ▷ policy and legislation: how is space for civil society engagement recognized? How is respect for laws and policies monitored?

These are important areas of partnership – it will take strong political will to see them developed.

## 4.3 Planning: complex but together – currents of debate

The High-Level Group has the responsibility to focus attention on the opportunities and problems ahead. EFA cannot be promoted merely by a mechanical process, but must address the human problems involved. In the 'arithmetic of suffering' it is often the poor and the most marginalized who are called upon to make the greatest sacrifices – the following elements of the debate indicated a concern to move EFA in the direction of broader impact.

**Integrated planning:** there has been progress in understanding that an EFA plan should be integrated into other types of planning, such as poverty reduction plans, overall national development plans, PRSPs and sector-wide education planning. An EFA plan must emerge from national development priorities, rather than being an exercise to please or attract external donors.

**Genuine engagement with civil society:** all stakeholders need to be engaged fully in the development of an EFA plan – these include civil society, teachers and trade unions, grassroots organizations, PTAs, religious groups, youth, women, universities and the media. Engagement of civil society particularly gives an opportunity for education to be tailored to local needs, especially in the context of decentralization underway in many countries. Identifying civil society groups can be based on their participation in networks and coalitions. Opting for a participatory approach implies the acceptance of divergent views and a process of negotiation – are governments ready and willing to commit to this?

**Full government ownership:** it is not enough that an EFA plan should exist as the product of education stakeholders alone, there must be strong ownership across government. Full cabinet endorsement of EFA is essential, with backing from departments which are both users and promoters of education, as well as of the finance ministry. This kind of government-wide support is yet to be developed in many countries. Broader ownership by democratic institutions such as parliaments and national assemblies is a basis for making EFA a national priority.

**Quality of partnerships:** the quality of partnerships underpins the credibility of planning and depends on the investment made – partnerships require time and a focus on the process rather than the product. Countries should be able to call on external partners for planning assistance as necessary without any sense of constraint.

**Flexible planning:** every country is unique, and plans and the planning process should fit local situations. EFA partners should not be obsessed with finding a perfect plan. Flexibility will give maximum opportunity for relevance – addressing education in the context of local deprivation and local opportunities. Sensitivity to context will require effective diagnosis at minimum cost, resulting in specific mechanisms to address different situations.

**Crisis situations:** war and conflict, hunger, foreign debt, HIV/AIDS, natural catastrophes – these and other crises call for special attention and for specially conceived EFA plans. Education in crisis situations is under-funded and requires innovative solutions, such as the 'School in a box' idea developed by the Norwegian Refugee Council,

to get education going. As HIV/AIDS drastically reduces the teaching corps in a number of countries, new teachers with little training need access to resources – such as the teacher web portal being developed by NGO consortia in cooperation with the business community.

Africa: EFA is a huge challenge in Africa where 20 countries are at risk of not achieving any of the three quantified goals – how can EFA partners ensure effective delivery of educational opportunity? In some countries governments function well, in others they function badly or barely at all, creating a vacuum. Thus donor performance becomes crucial, including possible funding of recurrent costs, working together to reduce transaction costs on governments, building on PRSP processes to obtain stronger national commitments to EFA. In countries without effective governments or education systems, how can children be offered education? Innovative partnerships and solutions must be tried.

Capacity-building: where capacity for producing credible plans is weak external assistance should be available, but only after asking how internal resources are being used. In some countries education budgets may not be targeted at the most needy. In giving support the aim must be to make possible a sustainable process of planning, not merely to produce a plan. Development partners should reconsider their approaches to the funding of capacity-building by earmarking less assistance for consultancy fees and more to support teacher training and facilities.

Regional initiatives: planning will need to include regional approaches, cutting across national boundaries. Reasons for this include the weakening of institutions because of HIV/AIDS, or the opportunity offered by regional similarities. Cooperation among universities in teacher training and in distance education is an example of such initiatives in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

Exchange of experience: common interests and situations at regional and subregional levels argue for the usefulness of forums for exchange. Sharing ideas, developing regional formulations, exchanging experience between ministers, particularly on how to move reform and plans through the political system – these are functions that UNESCO could facilitate.

In conclusion, throughout the discussion, participants warned against planning being an externally driven exercise, rather than a democratic process with high-level support from the finance and planning ministries. The end goal of the exercise must be to increase real educational opportunities for children and adults. □

# 5 International commitments and initiatives

The *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* indicates that the real value of aid flows to developing countries in 2000 constituted only 80 per cent of their 1990/91 levels. Within that, bilateral aid to education fell over the decade from around \$5bn to \$4bn – a 30 per cent decline in real terms. In addition, multilateral aid to education also fell, with World Bank IDA loans roughly halved since the mid-1990s. About 20 per cent of bilateral aid and 40 per cent of multilateral aid were earmarked for basic education in particular. The *Report* estimates the additional annual funding needs for UPE alone at \$5.6bn. A number of new commitments have been announced in support of EFA, including the Fast-Track Initiative. Kananaskis and Monterrey produced pledges of increased aid, but it is difficult to assess the extent to which these commitments measure up to the financial challenge facing developing countries.

## 5.1 Delivering action – lead commentary

Ever since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 education has been a right – this was the backdrop to the contention of Ms Hilde Johnson, Norwegian Minister of International Development, that the world has thus far manifestly failed to deliver. The debate on international commitments and initiatives must therefore be focused on action.

Ms Johnson emphasized that the EFA agenda is not only about access to schooling, but also about completion of basic education and about the quality of learning.

*The ultimate test of any system of education is whether it contributes to the empowerment of people. [...] A poor family must be able to see the reasons for sending their children to school. They must see education as a way out of poverty and insecurity.*

Hilde Johnson  
Norway

A quality education is the foundation of development, personally, in families, in communities and for a country. The best and most productive investment in the development of a country is the education of its girls. Efforts at every level need to be less fragmented: at a local level education systems and their ownership need strengthening, and at a national level institutional capacity-building is the basis for scaling up productive initiatives, supported by sector-wide approaches. Donors also have the responsibility to come up with sufficient funding, for instance by setting a target percentage of aid to be devoted to education.

The challenge for the High-Level Group is twofold:

- ▷ political: how can EFA be kept at the top of the global political agenda? and
- ▷ financial: how can we mobilize the necessary financial resources for countries – those that are on the fast-track list and those that are not?

## 5.2 Making aid effective – a response

The Administrator of USAID, Mr Andrew Natsios, began by highlighting the US\$5bn increase in the United States aid budget, to be phased in over five years – the largest such increase since the Marshall Plan. Three criteria for development assistance apply:

- ▷ democratic and accountable governance;
- ▷ micro and macro economic reform; and
- ▷ investment in people: for example, funds going to health and education.

In the 1990s USAID moved out of agriculture and education, but is now investing significantly in these two areas which underlie sustainable development. Agricultural surpluses have always underpinned industrial development. Women's education to Grade 6 level, by itself and without any further inputs, raises agricultural production. Lessons may be learned about the links between education and development by looking at the experience of Europe and North America.

Partnerships for EFA should include faith-based institutions, including churches and Koranic schools. The older Koranic tradition of broad scholarship and the Christian missionary institutions have had a profound influence on education. Partnerships with the private

sector must also be explored, both for the purposes of funding and for its expertise in technical education and training.

In the funding relationship it is essential to focus on quality outputs, not merely what the level of inputs is; we must ask what kind of an education children have when they leave school. When external support comes to an end, local commitment and local capacity are key to sustained improvement in education systems and learning outcomes.

### 5.3 Exploring new practices – currents of debate

As a forum of partners involved both in the implementation and funding of EFA, the High-Level Group is uniquely placed to explore concrete ways of making international arrangements more suitable and more effective in meeting the educational challenge. The Group raised issues around the following poles:

**Aid:** there was a clear consensus that increased aid to education is an essential component of meeting EFA goals, as confirmed in the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* by the estimation of the funding gap of \$5.6bn annually for UPE. This did not obscure the fact that pledges do not always become disbursements nor that ways of channelling aid need improvement. As well as additional funding from USAID mentioned above, increased aid to EFA was announced or confirmed during the meeting as follows:

- ▷ Canada: an additional \$10m each to Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania each year over the next five years; quadrupled funding to basic education overall between 2000 and 2005.
- ▷ Norway: increase from 9 to 15 per cent of development budget reserved for education by 2005.
- ▷ Japan: \$2bn pledged over next five years.
- ▷ World Bank: increased lending to EFA to \$1.6bn, with half through IDA. Also an increase to 23 per cent in grant portion of IDA, with the possibility of using some for support of education.
- ▷ through the Monterrey Consensus, G-8 and EU countries committed themselves to increased overall development funding.

Participants emphasized the need for domestic resource mobilization as an expression of the priority given to education, and the necessity of examining how efficiently resources are used. Raising revenue can, in some circumstances, be accompanied by reducing costs – even a reduction, for example, of \$1 per child per annum can make a difference. However, there is a clear need for new resources from donors, in the context of continued advocacy to meet the 0.7 per cent target for development assistance.

Financial aid should not be seen as the whole picture; countries need to tap into a total resource package which includes funds, technical expertise, experiential knowledge, solidarity and working with people on the ground, including south-south technical cooperation. Areas which were once taboo, such as recurrent salary expenditure, are now included in consideration for funding. Concern was expressed that children in some countries might be denied the chance of education because their governments, whom they have not chosen, do not satisfy criteria for external funding.

**Fast-Track Initiative:** this initiative was recognized as a significant step in pushing the EFA agenda forward. The discussion focused on a number of concerns regarding the nature and processes of the Initiative, particularly with regard to the broader Dakar commitment known as the Global Initiative (GI):

- ▷ FTI focuses mainly two goals, not all six;
- ▷ the condition for eligibility to the GI was having a 'credible plan', while many perceived the FTI 'indicative framework' as a more demanding set of criteria for eligibility;
- ▷ there is a risk that the poorest and weakest countries could be neglected, whereas they need more attention, often victims of crisis, conflict or HIV/AIDS; and
- ▷ there is a possible contradiction in the FTI approach – UPE cannot be pursued without equal priority to literacy, because those who do not send their children, especially girls, to school are mostly the poor and illiterate.

The World Bank clarified that there are only two criteria for eligibility of countries for the Fast-Track Initiative:

- ▷ the elaboration of a full PRSP and
- ▷ the existence of an education sector plan.

The World Bank explained that the indicative framework is not a criterion for eligibility. It offers a transparent and consistent core of indicators that provide a basis for benchmarking, diagnosis and policy development, and for monitoring of progress. It is not prescriptive but indicative, and provides a basis for a dialogue at country level that will help ensure transparency and accountability of both national efforts and donor support.

The Fast-Track Initiative is evolving very rapidly, building on Dakar and on Monterrey, and incorporating issues raised by partners. It was noted that UNESCO has participated as an active partner.

Implementation of the Initiative requires above all new donor funding commitments and improved harmonization of aid modalities among donors and with governments.

Private sector funding: participants expressed considerable interest in exploring to a greater degree the possibility of attracting funding from the private sector for EFA. Particularly in the United States, corporate foundations and other private sources of finance represent a significant resource and should be tapped. Links between companies and their local community schools have resulted, for example,

in funding of equipment; such links are found in both industrialized and developing countries. A note of caution was sounded: will the flow of funds from private business make a significant difference? The private sector cannot be expected to provide a large proportion of the needs of EFA, since there is no privately capturable benefit in investing in a public good.

Education and other investment needs: participants acknowledged that developing countries have a range of priorities which compete for national investment. These needs often link into education: for example, infrastructure projects such as roads may give opportunity for farmers to sell more agricultural produce, thus increasing income and revenues which can be devoted to education. Enhanced agricultural production may empower women and enable them to attend classes. Where countries do not get an adequate return for their primary products, investment in education suffers. It would not be fair on policy-makers to look at budget percentages devoted to education without addressing the linkages between education and other priorities.

Reform and coordination: new practices for both funders and developing countries were summed up under the headings 'do more and be more efficient'.

	'do more'	'be more efficient'
Funders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ provide more resources of all kinds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ better quality processes and modalities at country level</li> <li>▷ greater coherence and harmonization</li> <li>▷ coordinated and predictable aid</li> </ul>
Developing countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ use more domestic resources for education</li> <li>▷ demonstrate that education is a national priority</li> <li>▷ ensure funds destined for education are spent on it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ translate resources into deliverables at school level</li> <li>▷ democracy dividend: respond to local people's demands for greater accountability in use of resources</li> </ul>

## 6 Implications for monitoring

Monitoring progress is critical for identifying educational needs, developing evidence-based policies and sustaining political commitment. The preparation of the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* highlighted the limitations of available data, with more than 70 countries unable to provide figures on net enrolment rates for primary education. This session sought to identify measures to improve data collection and quality, develop the *EFA Global Monitoring Report* to better meet the needs of all key partners, and strengthen the impact of the High-Level Group.

### 6.1 Moving forward in monitoring – lead commentary

Jordan's Minister of Education, Mr Khaled Toukan, highlighted the importance of monitoring for setting priorities, mobilizing resources and effective planning. Accurate and timely data can act as an 'early warning mechanism' and are essential for evaluating and renewing policy and practice. Evaluation is also required to assess the effectiveness of plans. As such, every EFA policy should be accompanied by a monitoring mechanism allowing countries to measure progress and the international community to assess progress towards the Dakar goals.

The *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* highlighted the limitations of available data, both in terms of coverage, timeliness and reliability. More than 70 countries were unable to provide data on net enrolment rates for primary education and public expenditure data on education are particularly weak. Internationally, information on aid flows to education remains open to considerable improvements in quality and coverage.

To bridge these gaps, many governments will need to accord greater priority to the collection and effective use of good data. This has implications in terms of strengthening the capacity of national institutions, notably ministries of education, and the work of international institutes and programmes such as the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Aid agencies must equally ensure that technical assistance includes components for enhancing capacity on data collection and analysis.

The *Monitoring Report* provides a new tool for tracking progress and has sought to initiate a sense of international accountability towards the commitments made at the World Education Forum. While the 2002 *Report* focused primarily on countries that are most at risk of not achieving EFA, Mr Toukan remarked that

many EFA challenges extend well beyond developing countries. If EFA is treated as an issue specific to particular countries, it runs the risk of becoming partial, rather than a central priority worldwide. The minister called for reflection on ways in which the *Report* could be developed to enhance accountability and best meet the needs of governments, civil society representatives, development agencies and other parties.

Finally, the High-Level Group, conceived as a lever for generating political commitment and mobilizing technical and financial resources, currently meets annually. Further thought is required on ways to maximize the impact of this small group.

### 6.2 Importance of good data – a response

As respondent, Luis Gomez Gutiérrez, Cuba's Minister of Education, noted that monitoring was critical for establishing a proper diagnosis of each country's reality. All countries, he said, should be duty bound to step up efforts in order to secure reliable and updated statistics. National and international consultations could prove valuable for assessing progress and identifying obstacles, while UNESCO, in light of its unique position, should continue to play its monitoring and coordinating role.

Good data, he reiterated, are critical for pinpointing shortcomings in education systems and developing a national consensus around the achievement of EFA goals. He expressed concern over growing gaps between urban and rural, public and private schools in Latin America, the region with the highest inequalities in the world. Against this backdrop, it becomes all the more vital to develop a national consensus around education. Cuba spends 12 per cent of its GDP on education (in contrast to a 4 per cent regional average), placing it in the number one slot in terms of national budgetary allocation. Data have enabled policymakers

# ring EFA progress

to identify inputs that impact most on quality. As a result, training for teachers, described as the 'souls of the school,' has been stepped up via television and radio, while classes are limited to 20 students.

In many cases, however, poverty, hunger, HIV/AIDS and other barriers are standing in the way of effective data collection. Forced to accept conditionalities from donors, countries are often left with little room for manoeuvre. The economic context aggravates the picture: while commodity prices are falling, many poor countries are forced to import food, technology and oil from richer ones.

Observing that many industrialized countries are plagued by violence (including in schools), xenophobia and other social ills, he underscored that EFA is a necessity for all countries, not just developing ones. Reducing military spending and battling against corruption would also raise additional funds. Finally, to create a stronger national consensus, governments should be held accountable by a 'social contract,' and parliamentarians more closely involved in educational decisions. In all these endeavours, monitoring plays an instrumental role in building up political will towards education.

## 6.3 Making monitoring count – currents of debate

The data issue provided a springboard for debate. Over the course of the meeting, several countries regretted that recent progress was not reflected in the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*. To obtain data of reasonable quality and credibility, however, a time lag is inevitable. While UIS is studying ways to speed up the process, data must be rigorously checked to avoid pitfalls such as manipulation for political ends. In the quest to secure more immediate systems of data reporting, there is always a risk of foregoing quality assurance and comparability. At present, literacy data are collected in a variety of ways, through inadequate proxy reports, rendering comparisons difficult. The development of accurate and feasible literacy assessment methodologies must be high on the agenda of the UN Literacy Decade.

While commending the *Monitoring Report's* emphasis on completion rates in primary education, several participants drew attention to the need for developing further indicators. How many countries, for example,

provide truly free education, without hidden costs? What specific benchmarks could be designed for measuring partnerships? Criteria to evaluate progress must also be scrutinized: it is key to obtain qualitative data such as the additional number of teachers hired and to design a clear definition of standards. Conceptual work is required to develop indicators on life skills and early childhood care and education.

UIS appealed to ministries of education to place a higher priority on statistics. As several participants reiterated, education management systems are first and foremost the responsibility of ministries, which should be supported by donors and multilaterals. This, the World Bank underlined, is a collective responsibility.

Unquestionably, there is an urgent need to develop rigorous methodologies for collecting and analysing data through strengthening capacity at national, regional and international level. In this endeavour, partnerships are vital. Canada is providing \$5 million in core funding to UIS over the next five years to support their work in forwarding the EFA goals, including enhancing the statistical capability in developing countries. Regional initiatives in the Pacific region and Latin America have enabled partners to use resources more effectively. In Africa, UIS and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa have closely collaborated on improving data collection.

Emphasis was placed on expanding the scope of data collection beyond ministries of education per se. Integrated statistical plans are critical for obtaining a more comprehensive picture of education and health sectors, and in resolving disputes between, for example, education ministries and national statistical offices on data such as population. Data on learning that takes place outside the formal system, which often concerns a large swathe of the population, are not collected. UNICEF drew attention to its growing national databases, which features a wide range of indicators on child development, offering a valuable framework for analysing learning contexts.

Some gaps could be filled by giving greater attention to contributions from civil society. In Latin America, for example, USAID is supporting a 'score-card' process whereby civil society assesses EFA processes at national level, an initiative it aims to carry to the local level in

## 7 Conclusion

order for communities to evaluate school performance. As noted by several participants, the contribution of local communities should be further tapped by providing training opportunities. UNFPA reported success stories on teachers quantifying all aspects of school management. Early childhood care and education as well as adult literacy could be better quantified through household surveys, which United Nations agencies should work on standardizing. In developing local capacity, it is important to identify the most useful statistics for people at community level.

The *Monitoring Report* was widely praised by participants and upheld as an authoritative accountability mechanism, tracking both donor and government efforts. They agreed that the *Report* should be viewed as a political instrument to mobilize commitment and prompt debate around EFA issues. It should be further developed to become a common frame of analysis for policy-making and resource mobilization. The sharing of data among civil society groups in North and South is an important means of raising awareness and building solidarity around education issues. To foster a greater sense of ownership, regions could be more actively engaged to respond to issues treated in the *Report*. This would encourage a more consultative working process. Several participants also raised the need for illustrative case studies.

### 6.4 The Role of the High-Level Group

There was clear consensus that the impact of the High-Level Group had to be strengthened. Quarterly or biannual meetings gathering representatives from the group to hammer out technical matters, reach consensus and provide greater continuity could prove highly productive. The Group's role is to maintain its global scope by focusing on matters of worldwide concern which transcend any one particular situation. If the Group is to become a real champion in advancing the cause of education for all, it must attract the most influential players on board, starting with heads of governments from developing and industrialized countries and United Nations agency heads. The experience of the Abuja meeting should be critically reviewed with the aim of creating a stronger forum in the future. □

The High-Level Group ended with the adoption of the Communiqué (see Appendix 8.1); before summarizing that process it is worth making some overall observations on the ethos of the meeting, and noting some issues which emerged tangentially yet significantly in discussion, as areas for further reflection.

### 7.1 Ethos and issues

The meeting was characterized by full engagement by all the EFA partners present. Having taken on board the recommendations from the first meeting in 2001, it was noticeable that the Group enjoyed a smooth process of dialogue, a spirit of cooperation and above all a common desire to move forward and make a difference to learning opportunities. This desire took its shape from the data and analysis presented in the *Monitoring Report* which served therefore both as a reference point and as a goad to action. The kind of fruitful dialogue between EFA stakeholders modelled in this meeting should increasingly be fostered and reproduced at national level. The significant participation of civil society networks in international forums sets a pattern for national interaction, in both the EFA planning and implementation processes. The concern, noted above, to attract top leaders and decision-makers demonstrates that the High-Level Group views its role in the future as providing yet greater impact and momentum.

Three issues deserve mention as areas which were raised implicitly in discussion and which will merit further attention: capacity-building, quality and educational assumptions.

Capacity-building emerged as a consistent theme, in relation to a wide range of aspects of EFA: planning, developing indicators, collecting and managing data, policy-making and education system reform, funding coordination and absorptive capacity, teacher training and civil society participation in EFA forums. Thus the building of capacity is a condition for progress in EFA – until capacity is strengthened in the areas mentioned, there will be a reduced chance to move forward towards the attainment of the Dakar goals. While the discussions (and the Communiqué) addressed the need to develop further initiatives and strategies in funding and advocacy, there was little systematic consideration of capacity-building. Most capacity-building will be



planned and carried out at national level, but systematic support for this activity is a key area of concern in the international arena. Specific initiatives to increase capacity should be planned at national and regional levels, with international support. South-South cooperation will be the predominant mode of operation as a way to build on the most relevant experiences and draw on the most similar contexts. EFA partners should assist in developing frameworks and communication channels to make this possible.

**Quality:** quality is one of the three Dakar goals for which there is as yet no measurable indicator. Further conceptual work is necessary to define what should be included in the notion of quality and how it may be assessed. The communiqué addresses the other two goals not currently quantifiable – early childhood care and development, and lifeskills/learning opportunities for youth and adults – but does not mention quality, the sixth Dakar goal. Since an emphasis on the quality of education was a marked feature of the World Education Forum, and since EFA will mean nothing if it does not offer learning opportunities with quality outcomes, it must not be allowed to slip out of focus.

**Educational assumptions:** In a group such as this the emphasis is explicitly on the political dimension of EFA, activating levers of power to increase momentum and resources. It was observed that the technical and professional aspects of education should be left to implementing institutions competent for the task. However, acknowledgement of the political dimension on the one hand, and of the technical dimension on the other, leaves aside the values aspect of education: education for what and in what way? Some participants from the South raised similar questions, noting the need to make education relevant to particular socio-economic situations. However, if such dimensions are largely left out of discussion, it leaves in place the assumption that there is an agreed model of education – schooling. It is probably the case, however, that the very concerns of EFA – access, gender parity, quality, learning outcomes – will be better served by openness to alternative ways of educating and socializing children. The debate about political commitment and the mobilization of resources must not run the risk of being divorced from the debate about assumptions which underlie educational models – the adequacy, relevance and quality of learning opportunities are at stake.

## 7.2 The communiqué

John Daniel, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, guided the draft of the Communiqué through its final stages towards consensus and adoption. The agreed text was the output of drafting and revision work undertaken by a select committee drawn from participants and their aides ('Sherpas'). He highlighted the principal elements of the Communiqué, concentrating on the ten specific action points which it is the responsibility of each EFA partner to follow up after the meeting.

Immediately afterwards the Director-General of UNESCO invited journalists to join the session to witness the unanimous adoption of the Communiqué. He noted the increased orientation to action in the 2002 High-Level Group and thanked all the participants for ensuring that the two days were fruitful and productive.

## 7.3 Final words

'Is the world on track? Some countries are on the fast track, others on the analytical fast track, some on the side-track, but we are all on the track.' These were the words by which Mr Abraham Babalola Borishade, Nigerian Minister of Education, summed up the meeting. He went on to close the session by thanking UNESCO's Director-General for his leadership and courage, thanking participants for the frank discussions – 'we have told ourselves the truth' – and congratulating the *Monitoring Report* team, and India on hosting the next High-Level Group. The meeting was one 'where challenges have been thrown into the air for all of us to catch.' □

# 8 Appendices

## 8.1 Communiqué 2002

1. *We, the participants in the second meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All, met, at the invitation of the Director-General of UNESCO, during 19-20 November 2002 in Abuja, Nigeria. The Government of Nigeria generously hosted the meeting. In fulfilment of our mandate to promote political commitment and mobilize technical and financial resources, we examined the progress that is being made towards the achievement by 2005 and 2015 of six Education for All goals agreed upon at the World Education Forum in Dakar in April 2000.*
2. *We welcomed the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002. Education for All. Is the World on Track? as a valuable tool to hold governments and the international community to account for the delivery on commitments set out in the Dakar Framework for Action and the Millennium Development Goals. We find it alarming that, on present trends, only 83 countries have achieved or have a high chance of achieving by 2015 three of the six Dakar goals that can currently be quantitatively monitored – universal primary education (enrolment and completion), gender equality and adult literacy.*
3. *In view of the urgency of the goal of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, we urge that countries at risk be assisted to accelerate progress on girls' education and specifically address cultural barriers. Multi-sectoral programmes and strategies must be implemented to combat forms of exploitation and other constraints that adversely affect female participation and performance in education. The production of gender-disaggregated data for secondary education must be given urgent and high priority to ensure monitoring at this level.*
4. *The impetus given by the World Education Forum to plan for the achievement of Education for All in a comprehensive, inclusive, gender-responsive and outcome-driven way must be sustained and urgently translated into action. External prescription, planning and reporting overload must be avoided and coordinated support for national processes at the country level promoted. In order to avoid parallel planning processes, we underline the necessity to view planning for EFA flexibly and according to the circumstances of individual countries. This may mean either a specific plan for EFA or one that is integrated with other education sector or wider development plans – with due attention paid to all six Dakar goals. The opportunities afforded by Poverty Reduction Strategies and the Fast-Track Initiative to promote EFA and the education-related Millennium Development Goals must be exploited.*
5. *National plans must be set in the economic context of countries and present a holistic approach to educational development that addresses challenges such as HIV/AIDS, conflict, crisis and transition to democracies. Country plans to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic must enable the education sector to more strongly prevent the further spread of HIV, as well as engage the entire sector in addressing the impact of AIDS on the supply and demand for quality education.*
6. *We are seriously concerned by the reported decline in Official Development Assistance for basic education during the 1990s. Despite recent commitments from some countries, existing evidence suggests a serious gap in international support to achieve the EFA goals even after countries undertake maximum efforts to improve domestic resource mobilization and efficiency. We urge the international community to accelerate progress to deliver on the commitments made at Dakar. These commitments have been followed by the development compact agreed upon in Monterrey which necessitates mutual accountability and responsibility for global development between governments in the North and the South. We welcome and support the Fast-Track Initiative as one of the means to facilitate such compacts at the country level, building on existing development processes and matching credible plans with needed resources. The Initiative should be complemented with alternative instruments to reach other countries over time. International funding and technical assistance agencies must develop strategies for assisting countries outside the Fast-Track Initiative in their achievement of EFA. Country-led coordination and harmonization of procedures and reporting must be undertaken effectively with support from the international funding and technical assistance agencies.*
7. *Concrete actions are needed, especially at the local and national levels, to broaden and intensify the involvement of civil society (including the poor, religious/faith and business communities) in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of EFA. Timely information and outcomes must be shared openly with committed civil society organizations. Funding and technical assistance agencies and governments need to support capacity-building of civil*

- society to enable it to participate effectively in the EFA process. Policies and legislation recognizing the important role of civil society should be elaborated. Indicators for successful partnership need to be developed.
8. To improve policy formation and monitoring of all six EFA goals, more accurate and timely quantitative and qualitative data are needed. This calls for intensive capacity-building for the collection and effective use of data for national policy and planning processes at the local, national and international levels. We welcome the announcement by the Government of Canada of \$5 million over five years for the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and encourage other partners to intensify their support for such capacity-building efforts. We see the necessity for building on the synergy between the six EFA goals and the two education Millennium Development goals.
  9. We resolve to intensify our advocacy at global, regional and national levels for increased political commitment and resources to accelerate progress on EFA.
  10. As next steps we particularly recommend that:
    - (i) Governments in the South must ensure that free and compulsory primary education is a right reflected in national legislation and in practice. National strategies to achieve the goals of Education for All must receive their necessary share of government budgets and benefit from all possible funding sources, including debt relief.
    - (ii) Strong and committed action is required by Governments to improve the status and working conditions of teachers to address the anticipated shortages signaled by the monitoring report. This anticipated shortage is being exacerbated by the impact of HIV/AIDS, conflict and emergencies. This action is particularly important as young people are no longer attracted to the teaching profession in some countries.
    - (iii) Regional and subregional forums, starting with the Proyecto Regional de Educación para América Latina y el Caribe (PRELAC) (November 2002), the Conference of the Ministers of Education of African Member States organized by UNESCO (MINEDAF VIII) (December 2002), and regional initiatives, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) that promote South-South collaboration are important opportunities for mobilizing political commitment and resources for EFA.
  - (iv) The meeting of funding and technical assistance agencies in Brussels (November 2002) offers an important opportunity for bilateral and multilateral agencies to coordinate their commitment to deliver on the promises made at Dakar and Monterrey.
  - (v) The G-8 meeting in Evian, France, in 2003 presents a critical opportunity for this influential body to continue and to accelerate the valuable contribution made through its Task Force on Education.
  - (vi) An advocacy strategy on EFA must be designed and coordinated by appropriate agencies, to address specific areas of concern in different countries and regions (for example girls' education by UNICEF and teachers' conditions by UNESCO).
  - (vii) Every advantage should be taken of the coming UN Literacy Decade and the proposed UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development to advance the EFA agenda.
  - (viii) Maximum use must be made of opportunities presented by the High-Level Group, the annual monitoring report, the annual EFA week and high-level international events on development issues to underline the importance of education for global development.
  - (ix) UNESCO should strengthen urgently its capacity to fulfil its international coordination role.
  - (x) UNESCO and other key EFA agencies must devise and implement a strategy to ensure that subsequent High-Level Group meetings have higher-level representation with stronger capability of mobilizing political commitment for the EFA goals.
  11. We acknowledge that important advances have been made in many countries that were not reflected in the data available to the Monitoring Report Team. We encourage the Monitoring Report Team to include case studies of good practice and successful experiences in achieving the EFA goals and of providing free education as part of the analysis of forthcoming reports. Future reports should also contribute to clarifying the concepts and indicators that would permit more effective monitoring of the three goals of early childhood care and development, adult literacy and learning needs of youth and adults through skills development.
  12. We welcome the invitation of the Government of India to host the next meeting of the High-Level Group in November 2003. □

## 8.2 Address by Mr Koïchiro Matsuura,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to you all. You have come from far and wide to be here in Abuja for this, the second meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All (EFA). It is important that we are holding this meeting on the African continent, where the EFA challenge is so enormous. Even in the best of times, that challenge would be daunting but today, with the impact of conflicts, faltering economies and the renewed threat of famine in many parts of Africa, along with the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic, our path is strewn with obstacles. But it is precisely our task to identify effective ways to overcome these obstacles, not only in Africa but wherever basic education remains an unfulfilled dream. That is our shared challenge.

For hosting us here and making our work easier to perform, I would like to warmly thank H.E. President Obasanjo, who responded so positively to my request that the next High-Level Group meeting be held in his country. In addition, I am pleased to pay tribute to H.E. President Compaore of Burkina Faso, whose wise counsel will greatly assist us in our deliberations. I also take this opportunity to thank all the Nigerian authorities, especially Professor Borishade, the Minister of Education, for doing so much to make us feel welcome.

According to the Dakar Framework for Action agreed two and half years ago, the High-Level Group is a key instrument for maintaining the collaborative momentum and coordinated action of the EFA partners and for holding the global community to account for commitments made in Dakar. Placed at the apex of the EFA movement and overseeing the entire range of EFA activities at international, regional and national levels, the High-Level Group has a three-fold mandate:

First, to monitor and assess the extent to which progress is being made on the Dakar commitments;

Second, to advocate for more extensive and better coordinated action at the international and national levels;

Third, to promote the expansion of resources (financial, human, technical and material) to meet each country's requirements to achieve the Dakar goals.

Thus, the High-Level Group may best be seen as the high conscience of the EFA movement, reminding us of our individual and collective commitments and calling upon us to do more and to do better. But it must do much more than issue warnings and admonishments: concrete outcomes are required. Each meeting of the High-Level Group must establish clear actions to be accomplished in the forthcoming year. It must set the annual agenda of the whole EFA movement, all of whose key constituencies are represented here: governments, donors, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations and civil society. I urge you, therefore, to do your utmost to ensure that the constituency you represent pursues the agreed actions energetically and with maximum effect.

At the High-Level Group's inaugural session in Paris last year, a consensus emerged that the meeting should be smaller, more business-like, more focused and more outcome-oriented. Certainly the number of participants has been reduced but hopefully without compromising the need for a balanced representation of the key EFA constituencies and of the different regions of the world. Moreover, this year's meeting has been more carefully designed and structured in order to promote dialogue. If the current format proves more successful, I propose that we continue using the same approach at the next meeting of the High-Level Group.

Turning next to a review of the past twelve months of EFA action, I intend to be brief. My overall judgement is that, during this period, some significant advances have occurred in several key areas of the EFA drive. At the international level and particularly regarding the prospects for enhanced financing of EFA, a series of developments saw the international donor community take positive steps. The Monterrey Conference on financing for development (March 2002) and the G-8 meeting in Kananaskis, Canada (June 2002) were important for the strong signals they sent out that the decline in development-related funding seen in the 1990s would be reversed.

## Director-General of UNESCO

Other important events at the international level were the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children in May 2002, which did much to highlight the unmet educational needs of children throughout the world, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, in August/September 2002, which witnessed a global endorsement of the vital role of education, especially basic education, in building a sustainable future. Clearly, the integration of the EFA agenda into other frameworks of international action is both necessary and useful.

The last twelve months also brought specific follow-up to the first High-Level Group meeting through the publication of the International Strategy in May 2002 after intensive collaboration among a wide range of EFA partners. This strategy provides a flexible framework for looking at the whole EFA enterprise in an integrated way and has helped to clarify some of the 'who does what?' issues. The International Strategy figured prominently in the deliberations of the Working Group on EFA that met in July, along with the preparations for our meeting here and the *Monitoring Report*.

At the regional level, the most outstanding advance has been the establishment of the New Programme for Africa's Development (NEPAD). While much remains to be done, NEPAD is galvanizing a fresh momentum among African countries and their international partners. Education is a key aspect of the Human Resources Development, Employment and HIV/AIDS agenda of NEPAD, which has quickly become the natural counterpart for the EFA movement in continent-wide terms.

At the national level, the EFA picture continues to be patchy and uneven. It is becoming increasingly clear that, at current rates of progress, the prospects of many countries to achieve the EFA goals by 2015 are poor. Uneven performance also characterizes the preparation of national EFA plans of action by the end of this year, as had been agreed in Dakar. There are reasons for concern here but we need to seek a better understanding of what is the actual situation on the ground. For example, some countries without an EFA plan as such are nevertheless dealing actively with basic education through PRSPs, sectoral planning processes

and national development frameworks and strategies. The idea of a 'final' EFA plan also needs to be queried lest we forget that planning is a process. In some cases, the existence of a finalized EFA plan may bring disadvantages if crisis situations, gender inequities and HIV/AIDS have not been factored into the analysis.

Let me now turn to the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*, our primary tool for doing our work. This year, that work is made easier by the availability of a *Report* of much improved quality. I shall now highlight some aspects of the *Report* of particular importance.

The *Monitoring Report* shows that there are significant gaps in our EFA knowledge, gaps which are partly an outcome of working with concepts, methodologies and indicators that need more elaboration; for example, the meaning and measurement of 'quality' and 'life skills'. We must also recognize that existing processes of data collection at the national level and analysis at the international level cannot provide concurrent or 'real time' monitoring. It will take time to improve this situation but these difficulties do not invalidate the general picture provided by the *Report*.

The findings of the 2002 *Report* are not entirely a surprise but they nevertheless provide grounds for serious reflection and stocktaking. According to present trends, 28 countries are at serious risk of not achieving any of the three measurable Dakar goals by 2015, two of which, please note, are Millennium Development Goals. Three-quarters of these countries are located in sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, the *Report* identifies an additional 43 countries that are unlikely to attain at least one of those three goals. Thus, over 70 nations, the great majority of whom are developing countries, are not on track. Some countries are even going backwards.

It is imperative, however, that realism does not give way to pessimism or fatalism. There is too much at stake to allow this to happen. The *Report's* findings are couched in terms of 'current rates of progress' and therefore are conditional in character. The message is clear: this is what is likely to be the case in 2015 *unless* measures are taken that have a significant impact on present trends. The goals can be attained if appropriate national and international action is taken.

Our task, as key representatives of the EFA movement, is to identify those measures that promise greatest success in delivering substantive EFA progress where it counts – in schools and communities – and then to exert influence upon decision-makers and society as a whole to adopt those measures.

Our influence and advocacy can only be strengthened by being based on up-to-date information and accurate evidence, which need to find their way into the policy-making process at national and international levels. A key function of the *Monitoring Report* is to let us know if we are facing a hill or a mountain and what is the gradient we must climb. In some cases, there may seem to be an entire mountain range before us!

In fact, there are six EFA peaks and each country must climb them. Countries, of course, have the first responsibility for basic education but many of them could be doing much more – by releasing more resources; by harnessing more effectively all the resources available; by ensuring that plans and strategies address the educational needs of the excluded and the poor; by exploring the room for bold innovation and new forms of partnership in order to meet those needs; and, in particular, by tapping more fully the energy and dynamism of NGOs and civil society.

The *Report* shows how wide are the variations among national EFA situations. A total of only 83 countries either have already achieved the three measurable EFA goals or are on schedule to attain those goals by 2015. While continuing to support the EFA programmes of countries 'on track', the international community must direct its major efforts towards those countries that are making slow progress or are slipping backwards.

As the *Monitoring Report* shows, the record of aid flows during the 1990s to developing countries, and particularly to basic education, was broadly disappointing. This pattern has to be reversed. From past experience, we know that pledges and commitments are not enough. The governments of developing countries must boost their education budgets, especially for basic education. For its part, the international community should provide additional funds channelled through modalities that do not put further strains on developing countries.

Donor harmonization of procedures, processes and reporting is an urgent and felt need.

The *Report* maintains that there are indications of a better climate of policy reform and policy dialogue compared with the 1990s. This argument needs to be put to the test. I believe that an important task of the High-Level Group is to advocate vigorously in favour of increased bilateral and multilateral financing of basic education. In particular, we should consider how we might persuade the G-8 to keep basic education high on its agenda in France next year.

With regard to the financing of EFA, the *Report* questions the adequacy of the measurements used to estimate costs. If the cost of achieving the EFA gender goals has been underestimated along with the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and situations of crisis and emergency, we need to look squarely at the implications of this. In addition, the *Report* raises issues concerning the criteria used for awarding direct bilateral or multilateral donor assistance for EFA programmes. If certain countries are unlikely to fulfil the designated criteria due to instability and crisis, for example, what other avenues of assistance need to be explored or, if necessary, created? I believe that this year's *Monitoring Report* challenges us in our meeting here in Abuja to address these questions and to find some answers. We must point the way forward and then do all we can to ensure there is follow-up.

An important development during the past twelve months has been the Fast-Track Initiative which the World Bank has done so much to get off the ground. Frankly, without the Fast-Track Initiative, the international donor response to Dakar would look inadequate and slow. UNESCO supports this major initiative. It promises to have a substantial impact on those 18 countries selected for assistance (plus possibly a further 5 'reserves'). In addition, it is encouraging a stronger link between the EFA and PRSP processes as well as serving, more generally, as a catalyst of thought and action within the EFA movement.

We recognize, however, that the Fast-Track Initiative will not include many countries whose EFA needs are very great. Two thirds of the 18 countries on the initial

fast-track list do not fall into the category of countries at serious risk of not achieving any of the three measurable EFA goals by 2015. The Fast-Track Initiative, therefore, alerts us to the need to devise other mechanisms, other modalities of international assistance for those countries ineligible for fast-track assistance. It would be helpful if the High-Level Group could advise on the ways and means to mobilize the political will to develop these alternative mechanisms. In this regard, we should encourage the EFA Donors Conference meeting in Brussels on 27 November, hosted by the European Commission, to look beyond the 18 or 23 fast-track countries and take up the challenge of all countries where the EFA drive needs help.

Another major opportunity for follow-up in the specific case of Africa will come soon with the meeting of MINEDAF VIII in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania. I call upon those Ministers in the High-Level Group who represent the governments in the region to advocate for EFA among your peers. The outcomes of our deliberations here in Abuja, along with the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*, will be fed into the MINEDAF meeting. It is particularly vital that a close linkage with NEPAD processes is achieved and maintained in the period ahead and the meeting in Dar es Salaam will be important in this regard.

Last week, Ministers of Education of another region, Latin America and the Caribbean, met in Havana, Cuba. We made efforts to ensure that the main findings and analysis of this year's *EFA Global Monitoring Report* were made available to the Havana meeting, but I urge those representatives here from the region to follow up with the message from Abuja. We need you to be ambassadors of EFA in your region in the period ahead.

It is clear, however, that follow-up actions cannot not be confined to formal meetings. Today and tomorrow, therefore, we should seek to identify how your advocacy might best be conducted. Global EFA Week in April 2003, which will take gender equality as its theme, will provide one opportunity for large-scale advocacy but there is a clear need for continuous applied pressure and mobilization on behalf of EFA. To this we can all contribute.

Let me conclude by emphasizing once again the central importance of the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*. I would like to thank Professor Colclough and his colleagues for their remarkable performance in the very limited time available to them. They will be the first to say that the *Report*, in terms of process and product, can be further improved, in which case we really do have something to look forward to in the years ahead. Next year's *Report* will take gender equality in education as its special theme. The 2005 deadline is most challenging but, as this year's *Report* points out, there are policies and programmes that can have a significant impact even in the short-term with regards to girls' enrolment and retention.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Nigeria was chosen for this year's meeting of the High-Level Group because sub-Saharan Africa is one of the key areas of challenge for EFA. Another key area is South Asia and therefore the next meeting of the High-Level Group will be held in November 2003 in India, organized in cooperation with the Indian Government. Informed by the next *Monitoring Report*, it will review what has taken place in the intervening twelve months and then decide what further steps must be taken. Thus, while the High-Level Group meets just once a year, it is a vital expression of the EFA movement's continuity of purpose and commitment.

Thank you.

Abuja, 19 November 2002.

## 8.3 List of participants

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- Ms Lene Buchert
- Ms Ulrika Pepler Barry
- Mr Hilaire Mputu Afusaka
- Mr Yuto Kitamura
- Ms Mary Konin
- Mr Alain Perry

#### Rapporteurs

- Mr Clinton Robinson, Chief Rapporteur
- Ms Cynthia Guttman, Co-Rapporteur

### EFA Global Monitoring Report Team

- Mr Christopher Colclough  
Director
- Mr Steve Packer  
Deputy Director

### In attendance

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- Ms Aïcha Bah Diallo  
Deputy Assistant Director-General for  
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- Ms Birgitte Moller, Director ERC/CFS
- Mr Mark Richmond,  
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- Mr Julius Banda  
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- Ms Denise Lievesley, Director, UIS

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#### Interpreters

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- Ms Judith Lafuente Vanders Sluis
- Mr Luis Ospina
- Ms Naia Sadaba-Herrero
- Mr Nicolas Simon
- Ms Olga Martin-Mancera
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#### Interpreters

(from Africa)

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- Mr Lucas Amuri (Nairobi, Kenya)
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- Ms Marie Aïda Diop-Wane (Dakar, Senegal)
- Mr Momar Khary Diagne (Dakar, Senegal)
- Ms Natalia Engmann (Accra, Ghana)
- Ms Sroda Bedarida-Gaveh (Accra, Ghana)
- Ms Taiwo David (Lagos, Nigeria)

## 8.4 Programme of the meeting

*The High-Level Group will serve as a lever for political commitment and technical and financial resource mobilization. Informed by a monitoring report ... it will also be an opportunity to hold the global community to account for commitments made in Dakar (Dakar Framework for Action, Para. 19).*

### Expected outcomes of the meeting

1. Reviewing progress towards the achievement of the Dakar goals including guidance on the development of the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*.
2. Assessing the extent to which national policies, plans and programmes are on track and characterized by well-coordinated and inclusive partnerships.
3. Assessing the extent to which the international commitments made in Dakar are being met.
4. Mobilizing global political support and resources for realizing EFA goals including the elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005.

## Tuesday, 19 November 2002

8 am Registration

### Opening Ceremony (Open to the public)

9-10.30 am Chair: Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO

*Welcome address:*

Education for All: Actions since Dakar and Challenges Ahead  
Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO

*Opening speech:*

Education for All is the Responsibility of All  
Olusegun Obasanjo, President of Nigeria

*Keynote speeches:*

Delivering on Political Commitment to EFA  
Blaise Compaore, President of Burkina Faso

*Recorded Video Statements on EFA:*

James Wolfensohn, President, The World Bank

Carol Bellamy, Executive Director, UNICEF

10.30-11 am Coffee break

### Working Session I

11 am-12.30 pm Progress towards EFA goals

Chair: John Daniel, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO

Lead Commentary: Christopher Colclough, Report Director

Respondent: Murli Manohar Joshi, Minister of Human Resource Development,  
Science and Technology, India

*The monitoring report provides analysis on progress with respect to all six Dakar goals and selected themes. The High-Level Group will address the challenges of meeting all six Dakar goals seen in light of current progress, identify the major blockages and shortcomings, prepare recommendations for overcoming them and set strategic priorities for the coming years.*

- 12.30–2 pm Lunch hosted by Director-General of UNESCO  
 2–4 pm Working Session I continued  
 Major points, recommendations and actions: Peter Piot, UNAIDS

### Working Session II

- 4–6.30 pm Accelerating progress on girls' education – Ways and means to gender equity  
 Chair and Lead Commentary: Susan Whelan, Minister for International Cooperation, Canada  
 Respondent: Ms Rima Salah, Regional Director, West and Central Africa, UNICEF  
*The 2005 goal of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education is rapidly approaching. On the basis of the findings of the Monitoring Report, the High-Level Group will discuss appropriate policy responses to the situation, identify promising alternatives and suggest strategies to accelerate progress on education of girls, adolescents and women.*  
 Major points, recommendations and actions:  
 Mary Hatwood Futrell, President, Education International  
 7.30 pm Reception

## Wednesday, 20 November 2002

### Working Session III

- 8.30–11.30 am Developing policies and plans for EFA through effective partnerships  
 Chair and Lead Commentator: Joseph Mungai, Minister of Education, United Republic of Tanzania  
 Respondent: Kailash Satyarthi, Chair, Global Campaign for Education  
*Based on the Monitoring Report, the High-Level Group will review the progress that has been made in developing policies and plans for EFA through ongoing broad-based and representative partnerships, forums and alliances between governments and civil society, including teachers, parents and communities. The Group will discuss ways and means to sustain the impetus for better planning for EFA generated by Dakar and promote genuine dialogue with civil society.*  
 Major points, recommendations and actions: Kunio Waki, UNFPA

### Working Session IV

- 11.30 am–12.30 pm International Commitments and Initiatives  
 Chair and Lead Commentary: Hilde Frafjord Johnson, Minister of International Development Cooperation, Norway  
 Respondent: Andrew Natsios, Administrator, USAID  
*Since Dakar and the reconfirmation of two of the Dakar goals in the Millennium Declaration, a number of new initiatives and programmes have been launched in support of EFA. They include the Monterrey Consensus, the Fast-Track Initiative, the commitments of G8 and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). In the light of the disappointing record of aid flows to EFA in 1990s, the High-Level Group will discuss ways to ensure that the new commitments are translated into concrete action. The High-Level Group will give attention to modalities of supporting "at risk countries" that are not currently covered by the Fast-Track Initiative. It will review the effectiveness of the international EFA partnership.*  
 12.30–2 pm Lunch

- 2-3.30 pm Working session IV continued  
Major points, recommendations and actions:  
Ruth Kagia, Director for Education, The World Bank

### Working Session V

- 3.30-5 pm Implications for monitoring of EFA Progress  
Chair and Lead Commentary: Khaled Toukan, Minister of Education, Jordan  
Respondent: Luis Gomez Gutiérrez, Minister of Education, Cuba
- The session will build on the four previous sessions in order to clarify implications for monitoring EFA progress in the following ways: (1) implications for monitoring and evaluation of EFA at the national, regional and international levels; (2) implications for the content and development of the monitoring report; and (3) implications for the role of the High-Level Group as a monitoring body.*
- Major points, recommendations and actions:  
Gorgui Sow, Coordinator, African Network Campaign on Education for All

### Working Session VI

- 5-6 pm Agreement on action agenda  
Chair: John Daniel, Assistant Director-General of UNESCO
- The closing session aims at reaching agreement on the lines of action and strategic choices that need to be taken for the next period until the High-Level Group meets. The discussion will be based on the recommendations summarized for each of the individual working sessions by the session reporter and on other comments and issues raised in the meeting. The actions will be reflected in the Communiqué.*
- 7-7.30 pm Adoption of Communiqué  
Chair: Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO
- 7.30-7.45 pm Concluding remarks  
Abraham Babalola Borishade, Minister of Education, Nigeria
- 8.30 pm Reception

#### Notes:

- ▷ Each of the working sessions will be introduced by the Chair and Lead of the session who will, with point of departure in the Monitoring Report, in 10 minutes outline the most critical issues for discussion by the meeting. This will be followed by a 7 minute response providing further reflections and considerations for the debate. The role of the Chair will be to lead the session towards specific recommendations for actions. The major points, recommendations and actions will be highlighted in 10 minutes at the end of each session. The summaries will form the basis for reaching consensus on the lines of action, communication and follow-up in Working Session VI.
- ▷ The opening session will be public whereas the working sessions will be restricted to participants.
- ▷ The Communiqué will be finalized during the meeting.
- ▷ Tea/coffee will be available to participants, but there will be no breaks except for the one immediately after the opening ceremony.

## 8.5 List of abbreviations

- ADEA Association for the Development of Education in Africa
- AIDS Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
- E-9 Nine high-population countries:  
Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India,  
Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan
- EFA Education for All
- EU European Union
- FTI Fast-Track Initiative
- G-8 Group of eight major industrial democracies:  
Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan,  
Russia United Kingdom, United States.
- GDP Gross Domestic Product
- GI Global Initiative
- HIPC Heavily indebted poor countries
- HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- IDA International Development Association
- ILO International Labour Organization
- NEPAD New Partnership for Africa's Development
- NGO Non-Governmental Organization
- ODA Official Development Assistance
- PRSP Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
- PTA Parent Teacher Association
- UIS UNESCO Institute for Statistics
- UN United Nations
- UNESCO United Nations Educational,  
Scientific and Cultural Organization
- UNFPA United Nations Population Fund
- UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund
- UPE Universal primary education
- USAID United States Agency for International Development

# 2002

## High-Level Group on Education for All

Second Meeting  
Abuja, Nigeria  
19-20 November 2002

# REPORT



The Education for All (EFA) High-Level Group is mandated by the Dakar Framework for Action to 'serve as a lever for political commitment and technical and financial resource mobilization'. The Director-General of UNESCO convenes the meeting annually.

The data provided by the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* ensured that discussions were more focused and concrete on the following issues:

- ▶ Progress towards EFA goals
- ▶ Accelerating progress on girls' education – ways and means to gender equity
- ▶ Developing policies and plans for EFA through effective partnerships
- ▶ International commitments and initiatives
- ▶ Implications for monitoring of EFA progress
- ▶ Agreement on action agenda

The next meeting of the High-Level Group will be in November 2003, in India.