



United Nations Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization



The Newsletter
of UNESCO's
Education Sector

Education TODAY

INSIDE



HIV and AIDS Education: an under-exploited potential

Today, nearly forty million people are living with HIV. Experts agree that education could help limit the further spread of the pandemic. Yet many countries are slow to put in place a coherent HIV and AIDS prevention education plan. **FOCUS**, a four-page dossier, reports.

LEARNING WORLD



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EDITO

In the past five years there has been a sea of change in the global response to HIV and AIDS. Today there is more funding available and more stakeholders involved than ever before to fight the pandemic. According to UNAIDS, global funding has increased from roughly \$2.1 billion in 2001 to \$6.1 billion in 2004.

As a former university president and US Congressman, I have seen first-hand how devastating HIV and AIDS can be. But I have also seen what education can do to reduce the impact of the disease. We need to teach children and young adults about how HIV is transmitted and prevented, and how to care for and support those infected with and affected by HIV and AIDS.

Yet messages about changing behaviour to reduce the risk of getting HIV and about accepting those living with the virus are not reaching everyone, as described in the dossier of this issue. Indeed, coverage of HIV and AIDS prevention education is extremely uneven. Despite progress, 3.1 million people worldwide died from AIDS-related disease last year.

We know that the success or failure of a global response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic rests on the ability of national governments to develop a comprehensive, effective response in the area of HIV and AIDS prevention education and on the capacity of local stakeholders to convey inclusive and sensitive messages to everyone.

I'm proud of UNESCO's leading role in EDUCAIDS, the Global Initiative on HIV and AIDS. We assist countries in finding the best ways to curb the spread of HIV and AIDS through education and to protect the core functions of education systems that are constantly being threatened by the epidemic's advance.

EDUCAIDS is one of UNESCO's three new initiatives (which also tackle the issues of teacher training and literacy). We believe that by intensifying efforts in these areas we will considerably accelerate progress towards Education for All by 2015.

Peter Smith
Assistant Director-General for Education

Empowering women farmers in China

A UNESCO literacy programme boosts rural women's confidence and helps them become community leaders

Beautiful and productive courtyard is the story of Qiaozhen, a poor woman who lives with her family in a small village in rural China. After attending literacy classes at night school where she also learns about farming techniques, she is able to convince her husband that diversifying crops in their courtyard would make it more productive. Over time, they start growing a wide variety of vegetables – enough to feed their family and to sell in the local market – and significantly increase their income. Qiaozhen's success motivates other women in the village to follow her example.

She seems so real, yet Qiaozhen is a fictional character! Her story is part of a series of booklets that cover various topics, from health and agriculture to women's rights. The booklets are locally-produced learning material for "Multi-Channel Literacy for Women Farmers," a UNESCO-led functional literacy programme in Yunnan, Xinjiang and Guizhou, three of the most impoverished provinces in western China.

A difficult life

Life is not easy for women farmers in some rural areas in China. They live in regions where low literacy rates combined with a harsh geographic environment result in poor health conditions, scarcity of clean drinking water and limited access to electricity and information. "Life is one long cycle of cooking, cleaning, washing and farm work," says Namtip Aksornkool of UNESCO Paris, "Women have no time to rest, no time to complain."

The Multi-Channel Literacy programme is designed to help rural middle-aged women with minimal education. Through captivating drawings and easy-to-read text, booklets like *Health of mother and baby* and *Scientific Breeding brings benefit* provide Chinese women farmers with effective learning materials that teach reading skills and enhance rural productivity at the same time.

Local artists and authors produce the texts and drawings for the learning materials, thus making the booklets relevant to the

lives of the learners. Heroines like Qiaozhen, who improve their lives through non-formal education, serve as models for the new readers.

The Chinese programme is based on the "Educate to Empower Model," an approach to literacy developed by UNESCO that incorporates women's empowerment into learning programmes. Over the past 15 years, UNESCO has successfully launched similar programmes in other countries in Africa and Asia and the Pacific.

The model works on the assumption that literacy materials alone do not guarantee an improvement in women's productivity, but that education for development must reinforce women's self esteem at the same time. These programmes promote the role of women as good wives and mothers, productive workers and active members of society. "The idea" says Aksornkool, "is that literacy boosts these women's confidence in themselves and in their abilities. At the same time, the courses build their capacity to take advantage of opportunities that can lead to financial and psychological independence."

Improving women's lives

Real-life examples of how the project has changed women farmers' lives are numerous. For example, Ding Huiping is a 43-year-old farmer from Dalong, a remote village in Yunnan province, who could not read or write for the first 40 years of her life. In 2003, she decided to join her village's multi-channel literacy class. Before long, Ding was literate and skilled in planting flowers. She now plants rice, roses and lilies, and this crop diversification has allowed her to obtain a significant annual income.

"Through the process of gaining literacy, Ding Huiping has grown into an empowered woman," says Aksornkool, "Now she is serving as a model for the rest of her commu-



© Derong Zhao

Rural women learn to read in China's Yunnan Province

nity." In Dalong, the programme is having its desired effect. Following her example, over 100 families in Ding Huiping's village have begun planting flowers.

A ripple effect

Empowering women creates a ripple effect that cannot be stopped. Initially, the lives of women like Ding Huiping and those of her family are changed. A large number of women reported a positive change in their position, a louder voice in family decision-making, and progress in the communities' attitude to women's education. The momentum of empowerment then spreads to the level of the village and eventually the nation.

Such efforts clearly play an important role in the development of China, comments Yasuyuki Aoshima, the Director of UNESCO's Beijing Office. "I am extremely optimistic about China's future because the government considers rural education to be an extremely important issue," he says.

Aoshima believes that women farmers will fare better in the future. "It is my hope," he says, "that the Chinese government will be able to disseminate lessons learnt in China to other countries with rural populations."

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Lifting Cameroonian girls out of poverty

Science and technology education open new doors for rural girls in Cameroon

Ever since she was a little girl, Martine had always dreamt of becoming a farmer. Yet these dreams were shattered when an unplanned pregnancy forced her to drop out of high school. Now 20, Martine is getting a second chance at learning. She is one of 120 girls participating in a pilot project for marginalized girls in rural areas of Cameroon.

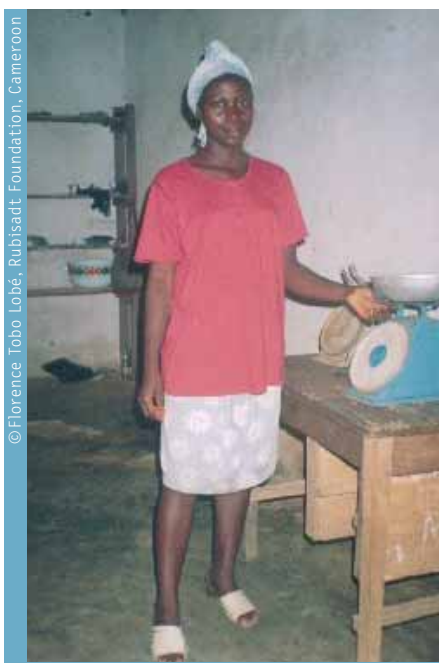
Classes began for Martine and 60 other girls in Nkondjock last May, and one month later for 50 girls in Njombé-Penja. The courses are part of a pilot project launched in Cameroon to provide scientific, technical, and vocational education for girls aged 14-27. The project is run by UNESCO and the Rubisadt Foundation, an NGO promoting novel approaches to gender in science and technology education.

Hope for rural girls

The girls in the programme share two common traits. They have all abandoned their formal education and live in rural areas. Their reasons for dropping out of school are unfortunately familiar throughout Africa. "Lack of education and illiteracy are at the root of poverty, both for adults and children," says Florence Tobo Lobé, founder of the Rubisadt Foundation. "Girls in rural areas are especially vulnerable due to lack of financial means, unplanned pregnancy or illness."

The goal of the programme is to provide training in local activities that will enable girls to find income-generating jobs, improve their social status and help alleviate poverty in their communities. Upon completion of the programme, the girls are expected to become self-employed or work in local industries and enterprises.

"We are not promising miracles nor the moon," Tobo Lobé tells the girls, "We are there to provide you with a training that allows you, if you wish, to acquire the skills necessary to quickly open the doors to independence. We wish to make you financially independent and intellectually free."



©Florence Tobo Lobé, Rubisadt Foundation, Cameroon

A student learns about science in Cameroon

In Cameroon, girls suffer from a weak educational system and also from socio-cultural barriers that marginalize them. "The gender-based approach to education is necessary," explains Florence Tobo Lobé. "These women's poverty is further accentuated because they are not part of public life, and they are discriminated against in the labour market and in learning."

The importance of teachers

Teachers play a critical role in the programme. They are recruited locally and are required to take two training courses. Their teaching method is inspired by programmes for adult non-formal learning – girls are encouraged to participate actively in class and often partake in role-playing activities. Teachers not only teach the subject matter, but also serve as positive role models in a country where science and technology are not valued enough. "A girl can realize that she is not abnormal just because she is interested in physics," says Diileep Bhagwut of UNESCO Paris.

The project aims at improving the life of the learner and of her family. "Ever since they

started learning again, our two daughters speak much better French and can already do math," say proud parents Alice and Joseph. "Tears came to our eyes when we realized that the girls could keep accounts. This is why we support this programme with all our heart," they said.

Upon completing the programme, young girls should be able to find employment and thus help their entire family. The mayor of Njombé-Penja has told the girls that once they have finished the course and begun to improve their own lives, they "should help better the daily lives of their community"

Enduring opportunities for all?

The excitement and support from parents and local officials in Nkondjock and Njombé-Penja are extremely important for the pilot project. "It is imperative that the UNESCO-Rubisadt project for reschooling young rural girls becomes long-term," says Julia Heiss of UNESCO Paris.

In practice, this means that the project must become self-sustaining and open to more girls. "Eventually local authorities have to take the reins from UNESCO to guide these young girls in their first professional steps," Heiss says.

Martine is one of the lucky few who have been able to return to learning. She is filled with hope that the training programme will enable her to find a job more easily or to manage her agricultural work more efficiently. It is now up to Tobo Lobé and the other dedicated individuals involved in the project to make Martine's fairytale a reality for other rural girls in Cameroon.

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The under-exploited potential

Education is the best available means to halt the spread of HIV, experts say, yet education's potential to curb the pandemic is being under utilized in many countries throughout the world.



©Wilson Ngoni, an artist from Botswana, E-mail: wilsonngoni@yahoo.com

“More than 40 per cent of teachers are HIV-positive in Zambia,” said the President of Zambia, Levy Patrick Mwanawasa as he opened a UNESCO/UNAIDS conference in 2004 that launched the Global Initiative on HIV and AIDS Prevention. Mwanawasa knew of what he spoke when he called on fellow political leaders and decision-makers in six southern African nations to step up their actions against HIV and AIDS in the education sector. Zambia is a country that is heavily hit by the HIV epidemic: nearly one out of six adults (aged 15-49) are infected, according to UNAIDS estimates. Despite these challenges, the Zambian government has increased efforts to stem the epidemic by assessing the needs of the education sector and by implementing a comprehensive national response for HIV and AIDS education.

These efforts are paying off. A recent study by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) lauds the Zambian case as one of the best examples of good HIV and AIDS education policy and programming responses. The recipe for this success is clear: political support from the highest level, combined with a comprehensive national education strategy and the accessibility of free antiretroviral medication.

Political will is key

Zambia does not stand alone. Countries like Brazil, Namibia, Senegal and Thailand have all shown the political will and commitment to bring HIV/AIDS to the fore of the education system. “That’s what makes all the difference,” notes Chris Castle, UNESCO’s Focal Point for HIV and AIDS. A recent UNESCO document concludes that in recent years better leadership has emerged – locally, nationally and globally – and improved levels of funding have materialized (according to

of HIV and AIDS education

UNAIDS, funding to the global response to HIV/AIDS has increased from roughly \$2.1 billion in 2001 to \$6.1 billion in 2004). In terms of education, the number of secondary school students receiving HIV and AIDS education has nearly tripled since 2001.

Yet education's potential to halt the spread of the HIV epidemic is being under-utilized in many countries throughout the world.

In fact, very few countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa have coherent HIV and AIDS plans within the education sector that are actually being implemented. This is the conclusion of a recent survey of education ministries in 71 countries and of civil society organizations in 18 countries (sponsored by the UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team on Education and HIV/AIDS (IATT)). If young people are society's greatest asset, then most countries are failing their youth by not providing comprehensive education on HIV and AIDS in and out of school, concludes the study. This approach means not only implementing programmes that teach about HIV prevention, but also teaching about care, treatment, and support for those living with and/or affected by HIV and AIDS.

The survey also notes that "a disturbing number of senior Ministry of Education officials avoid taking responsibility for HIV and AIDS by dismissing it as a 'health issue' or as 'not a serious problem in our country.'" Existing HIV units in education ministry were "isolated, under-resourced and lacking in political power," it states. The review provides the first international benchmark for examining the official response to manage and mitigate the impact of HIV and AIDS on education systems.

A serious problem for many countries is that there is little or no assessment of the education sector's response to HIV and AIDS,

thus making it difficult to develop policies that might support an effective strategy.

Nations often laud the merits of teaching about HIV and AIDS, but don't follow through, comments Mary Joy Pigozzi, UNESCO's Global Coordinator for HIV and AIDS and the Director of the Division for the Promotion of Quality Education. "People want a single, quick solution but there is no magic bullet," she says. Like many experts, UNESCO advocates a comprehensive education response that targets not only HIV prevention education but also care and support for those living with or affected by HIV, especially those within the education sector such as teachers and students.

Involving schools and communities

Government officials and ministries can establish national responses, but it is up to local stakeholders to implement these programs in local communities. The IATT survey concludes that, although intentions and structures are in place at the national level in most countries, the tools for implementation are lagging behind at the district level. Similarly, while curricular and materials are reported to be available in nearly 80 per cent of reporting countries, less than half of them have been directly linked to any form of teacher training.

Even when ministries of education may have clear national policies and good educational material, these are not always properly implemented in the schools. Sophie Dilmitis, an HIV Educator at Choose Life, an NGO in Zimbabwe, who often visits schools, says that a good programme has been put together by UNICEF and the Education Ministry. "But," she adds, "in every school I have been to, HIV and AIDS education materials are often found in the library, if they have one, collecting dust."

Did you know?

- 40.3 million people are living with HIV.
- 3.1 million people have died from AIDS-related disease in the past year.
- All regions in the world have experienced an increase in HIV and AIDS cases in the past two years.
- Sub-Saharan Africa remains by far the worst affected region with 25.4 million living with HIV.
- Universal primary education could save at least 700,000 young people from HIV infection annually – 7 million over a decade.
- Young people with little or no education may be 2.2 times more likely to contract HIV than those who have completed primary education.

Sources: UNAIDS, UNESCO and the Global Campaign for Education

Recent evaluations of HIV prevention education in school settings confirm that this is a worldwide problem. They highlight common shortcomings such as poor teaching and learning materials, an emphasis on learning of facts over acquiring attitudes and adopting safe behaviours, and inadequately trained teachers. Teachers and education professionals need to have access to reliable and up-to-date information. UNESCO has therefore established a Network of Clearinghouses on HIV and AIDS (see box p. 7) that provide accurate regionally- and culturally-appropriate material.

The role of school principals and teachers in advocating for HIV and AIDS prevention education is key. They shape school curricula, maintain safe learning environments and ensure that HIV education is culturally adapted to the concerns of the community.



The under-exploited potential of HIV and AIDS education

→ But before they can help students, they first need to become informed about HIV and AIDS and find out about ways to enable their students to learn through effective training. Education International, an NGO representing more than 29 million teachers worldwide, and the World Health Organization (WHO) are currently implementing a programme through teachers' unions in 17 countries. Thousands of teachers receive the essential knowledge and tools, as well as the confidence, to address issues surrounding HIV and AIDS in the school setting and to share that knowledge and skills.

Teachers also need the support of parents and the community since they don't work in a vacuum, explains Tania Boler of ActionAid International, an NGO that fights poverty. "When teachers are in conflict with social norms, such as with condom use, it's important to give them the support they need by preparing the community. That means a national campaign that will educate adults as well so that they will support the teachers," Boler says. They also need workplace policies that address their own vulnerability to HIV infection and AIDS. Susan Nkinyangi of UNESCO Nairobi says, "Teachers need to work in an environment where they can live positively without discrimination before they can readily teach their students."

Communities cannot rely solely on school-based programs since those who come from

EDUCAIDS

The Global Initiative on HIV and AIDS Prevention Education (now known as EDUCAIDS) is part of UNESCO's efforts to assist governments implement effective HIV and AIDS education programmes for young people. It coordinates all UNAIDS co-sponsor agencies in HIV and AIDS prevention education and also supports other global initiatives such as the '3 x 5' initiative led by the World Health Organization (WHO). Currently, EDUCAIDS is providing support to strengthen the education sector response in four first-batch countries – Cambodia, Jamaica, Moldova and Namibia. Additional countries will be added in 2006.

Website: www.unesco.org/aids

"Tagging" the message about HIV

What can one do when an ugly zinc fence 150 meters long is erected around a building site next to a beautiful park?

Members of the HIV/AIDS Education and Training Sub-Committee of the University of Technology, Jamaica came up with a creative solution. They decided to use the wall for a graffiti competition.

Twenty eager student teams amidst brushes, paint cans, and tarps in the Caribbean Sculpture Garden on October 22, 2003 as part of the university's HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

The deal was: 8 quarts of paint in different colours. 4 brushes. 1 quart of paint thinner. Each team received exactly the same materials donated by local paint companies and other sponsors, including UNESCO's Office for the Caribbean. 3 themes from which to choose: abstinence from sex with multiple partners, condom use as protection against HIV/AIDS and showing respect for persons living with HIV/AIDS. 5 days to complete the project.

Participants reported that they learned a lot about HIV/AIDS and shared that learning with their friends during and after the competition.

Today, the graffiti wall has been placed on display on the Student Activity Area, which students use to study and for events and dances.

From *Creating a Graffiti Wall: HIV/AIDS Youth Education CD* and www.utech.edu.jm/hiv/

poor families and communities most vulnerable to HIV are more likely not to be present in schools and because evidence shows that the quality of HIV and AIDS related education still has to be improved in most cases. It is here that civil society, working together with national governments plays a vital role. In Singapore, for example, Action for AIDS, an NGO, is working with certain groups – gay men and women, transsexuals and some sex workers – that are difficult for government programmes to reach. "Many members of these populations feel more comfortable talking with a worker from a voluntary organization than a government worker," says Clive Wing of UNESCO Bangkok. New partners, such as religious leaders, are also being mobilized in efforts against HIV and AIDS. "They benefit from a privileged relationship with their followers and (hence) can be important for getting the messages across," Wing says.

Teaching about HIV and AIDS

To get culturally-appropriate HIV and AIDS messages across to all segments of society, in particular to young people, a wide range of methods are now being used. Theatre, soap-opera, hip/hop, graffiti, digital creations and writing competitions are just

some examples of UNESCO-supported initiatives that have sprung up around the world in recent years. These fun and interactive projects involve children and young people in developing materials and delivering messages have proven popular and can be a good complement to classroom teaching on the subject. For Dilmitis in Zimbabwe, the answer is clear: "Learning about HIV and AIDS needs to be compulsory and interesting. It should not only mentioned in a science class once a year or in a religious class whilst talking about "good morals," she says.

It is crucial to begin prevention education early, especially in high HIV prevalence countries where AIDS is a fact of every day life. Some countries already provide HIV/AIDS education through television programmes for pre-school children, which include segments on death and losing a parent. "These children hear about HIV and need to know what it is and how it is transmitted," says Mahesh Mahalingan of UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS. "They must realize that AIDS is not something to be ashamed of, that it's all right to be friends with someone with AIDS." But the message must be "age appropriate," and adapted to each age group, he adds.

→ Another emerging trend is the involvement of people living with HIV and AIDS in the design and implementation of prevention programmes at all stages. Dilmitis, who became an HIV and AIDS educator after becoming infected with the virus herself, says: “HIV-positive people can play an extremely powerful and effective role in preventing further HIV infections as they talk to their peers about what it is actually like to live with HIV. This can break down many stigmas and correct some of the misconceptions that still exist around HIV and AIDS today.”

Overcoming taboos about sex

Taboos and fears of talking about sex impede HIV and AIDS education, experts say. Some education ministries, responding to pressure from some donor nations and faith-based NGOs, have focused their message on abstinence. This approach doesn't work according to Dilmitis. “You cannot talk about HIV and not talk about sex. The kids have so many questions. If someone is preaching to them about abstinence, they might not feel comfortable asking the questions that could save their lives,” she says.

Her view is shared by most experts including Mahalingan of UNAIDS. “Assuming young people will abstain, they need to know what to abstain from,” he points out. While there is a consensus that young people should be encouraged to delay their sexual debut, “when they are already sexually active, it just isn't enough to push for abstinence, they must be taught about condoms,” he adds. Studies show that young people who rely on abstinence only, if they do fail to keep their pledge, are more likely to become pregnant or to contract a sexually transmitted infection (STI). Yet it is not so easy to talk about HIV and everything that surrounds it. “In many societies, it is taboo even at home to speak about sexual matters, sexual choices and sexual diseases,” says Wing, “So how can we expect teachers in a conservative society to talk about sexual acts, sexual preferences and the use of condoms?”

But in a world where every region is experiencing an increase in HIV and AIDS, young people remain the priority. In most countries, even those with a high HIV prevalence,

the majority of young people are not infected and education can therefore act as a social vaccine for reducing the impact of the epidemic and slowing its progression.

“We believe that young people must have all the information and all the skills they need to make informed decisions,” says Mahalingan, adding, “Young people will make the right decisions given the proper information and a good environment.”

Countries with effective HIV and AIDS education programmes must not become complacent. “The fact is that there will always be new young people coming on to the scene,” says Wing practically, “If we stop emphasizing HIV and AIDS prevention education, how are all the new kids on the block going to find out about HIV and AIDS in order to protect themselves?” ●

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UNESCO clearinghouses on HIV and AIDS

UNESCO's strategy for HIV/AIDS prevention focuses on education's crucial role in reducing both the spread of the disease and its impact on individuals and communities.

To develop effective policies in this area, decision-makers must be able to access reliable information and best practices. UNESCO has therefore established the HIV/AIDS Network of Clearinghouses, which operates at global and regional level to collect and share timely and relevant information on HIV and AIDS and education.

The Global Clearinghouses are interactive internet portals with large databanks of documentation. Users can find the latest studies and research, and they can also participate in discussion forums, contact other members, order education materials and access related websites.

UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) coordinates the HIV/AIDS Impact on Education Clearinghouse. It aims to help educational planners and managers better understand how HIV and AIDS affects education systems and hampers Education for All goals. The website contains over 1,000 downloadable documents.

The International Bureau of Education (IBE) maintains the International Clearinghouse on Curriculum for HIV/AIDS Preventive Education, which focuses primarily on integrating HIV and AIDS education in the curriculum at primary and secondary levels of schooling.

In addition to the global projects, regional Clearinghouses also exist at UNESCO offices in Bangkok, Dakar, Harare, Kingston and Nairobi.

For more information:

■ **The Clearinghouse network**
www.ibe.unesco.org/AIDS/Clearinghouses/clearing_home.htm

■ **Global Clearinghouses**
 IIEP – hivaidsclearinghouse.unesco.org
 IBE – www.ibe.unesco.org/HIVAids.htm

Renewed commitments from G-8

Despite bomb attacks, leaders from the world's richest countries pledged more aid for Africa and priority for education

Educators came away from the G-8 summit last July with expectations of new support, even though the event was overshadowed by terrorist attacks in London. The meeting was inevitably dominated by security issues, but in the end, G-8 leaders promised an overall increase in aid of \$25 billion for the continent over the next five years.

The G-8 did not specify how the money would be spent, yet reaffirmed its commitment to Education for All (EFA) and the Fast Track Initiative (FTI), a global partnership ensuring accelerated progress towards Education for All by 2015. "It is to be hoped that basic education will benefit significantly from these measures," says Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO.

Brian Hammond, Head of the Statistics and Monitoring Division of the Development Assistance Committee at the OECD, says "The G-8 has shown strong support for all Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and education has not been forgotten. EFA is one of the most achievable MDGs, and also one of the most measurable ones: kids are either in or out of school," he says.

Aid is a must

The EFA movement is especially important in Africa, where over 40 million primary school-aged children are not in school. Extra money will provide much needed support for country-led education plans. But, Hammond says, "if African countries are to invest efforts in EFA, they need to know that they can count on long-term, predictable investment from donors to train teachers and build schools."

A long and complex chain lies between political promises and actual aid delivery.

"The aid delivery process needs more transparency and better co-ordination," he says.

The G-8 promise of additional resources for development raises hopes for more ambitious education goals. So far the Fast Track Initiative has focused mainly on the EFA goal of universal primary education, with attention to the gender parity and quality aspects as well.

Clinton Robinson of UNESCO Paris is optimistic that the initiative can be expanded to other EFA areas, like literacy or education for rural people. "If countries show increasing leadership in presenting coherent strategies for education," he says, "there is some hope of convincing the FTI and donor countries to respond positively."

Educators are aware that they must build on the momentum of the "Make Poverty History" campaign and G-8 summit to advance the EFA agenda. "Education is being given increased attention, but it hasn't caught the headlines the way health, for instance, has," comments Hammond.

Peter Smith, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Education wants to push Education for All more. "By promoting EFA, in the sense of not only the programme but also the words," he says "we are promoting socially, culturally and economically stable societies."

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3 questions to Ruth Kagia

Director of Education, The World Bank

1 Donor countries have promised aid in the past that never materialized. What makes the new G-8 promises any different?

The promises did in fact materialize, but not to the levels hoped for. Between the 2002 Monterrey Conference and 2005, multilateral and bilateral aid for education has increased by over \$1 billion. We have reason to be optimistic that promises made at the G-8 summit will be honoured. They are much more specific in directing most of the support to Africa. Moreover, the Africa Commission Report has provided a detailed analysis of the needs and business rationale for increased aid.

2 Given all the competing development agendas, do you think education will be benefiting from the new resources?

Yes. The Millennium +5 Summit (September 2005) was yet another reminder of specific commitments that need to be honoured. Education is a prerequisite of development,

and is essential for the achievement of the other MDGs. Not all resources need to be earmarked for education, for the sector to benefit. For example, resources freed up by debt relief can be deployed in the health or education sector.

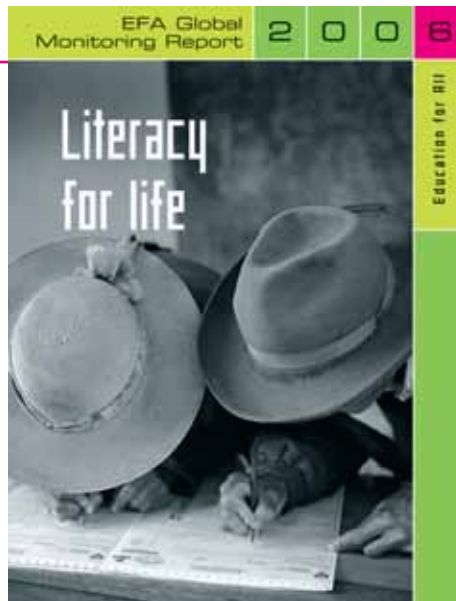
3 What are the main challenges for African countries following the G-8 summit?

African countries need to recognize that aid is useful and important but it can never replace domestic resources and national leadership. With the exception of a few countries, aid resources to education make up a very small proportion of total education budgets, with national governments carrying the bulk of the costs. Irrespective of the source of funds, governments need to spend them well to ensure effective utilization and to get the maximum benefit from each dollar in order to raise the quality of education and to improve education outcomes.

Spotlight on literacy

Literacy suffers severe neglect in national and international policy, keeping hundreds of millions of adults on the sidelines of society. This is the disturbing conclusion of the 2006 EFA Global Monitoring Report. The lack of attention to the world's 771 million non-literate adults is limiting progress towards the six Education for All goals and poverty reduction, the Report says.

"Literacy has been one of the most neglected EFA goals, yet it is vital to the success of every education endeavour," says Nicholas Burnett, Director of the Report, "The overarching goal of reducing poverty by 2015 will not be achieved unless governments and the international community act on the powerful connections that exist between improved livelihoods and the acquisition of basic literacy skills." The report calls for more investment in youth and adult literacy programmes, which it argues are an essential component of development strategies.



The global launch of the Report was held at the Whitechapel Idea Store in London on 9 November, 2005 with Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, attending. Regional launches are to take place in Bangkok, Bonn, Dakar, Nairobi, Santiago and Washington DC, ahead of the High-Level Group meeting in Beijing (28-30 November).

More about the Global Monitoring Report on www.efareport.unesco.org
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World tour

→ Over 90 education ministers and high-ranking officials came together for the Ministerial Round Table on Education for All during the 33rd session of UNESCO's General Conference last October. In a communiqué, the ministers reaffirmed that education was a fundamental human right and an essential condition for equitable and sustainable development. They called on UNESCO to continue its leadership role in promoting the EFA agenda at all levels.

→ International experts exchanged experiences on the use of information and communication technologies as a means to improve the quality of rural education during a 3-day conference held in the Chinese province of Gansu (22-24 August).

→ A 3-day workshop for university experts, directors of non-formal education agencies and radio producers was held at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria (6-9 September). The workshop was integrated in UNESCO's project "Capacity building for EFA: Improving access to community education and literacy using the radio."

→ A technical meeting of experts in linguistics and literacy assessment took place in Nairobi, Kenya (15-21 September). Participants assessed the progress being made in the development of the Literacy Assessment Monitoring Programme (LAMP).

→ The 12th International Congress of Distance Education took place at the Federal University of Santa Catarina in Brazil (18-22 September). New tendencies in distance learning were discussed, and strategies were developed to adapt Latin-American education systems to economic and technological change.

→ The symposium "Inclusion and the Removal of Barriers to Learning, Participation and Development" was held in Bukittinggi, Indonesia (26-29 September). Education experts from around the world got together with the objective of promoting EFA progress and, particularly, the development of child-friendly, inclusive and tolerant schools in Asia.

High-Level Group meets in China

The fifth meeting of the High-Level Group (Beijing, China, 28-30 November) represents a special opportunity to establish a strong and focused agenda for the Education for All drive. This meeting will draw on the data and conclusions of the 2006 *EFA Global Monitoring Report* (see article above). Other topics to be addressed include, Education for Rural People – which is of special concern to the host country – the gender parity goal that was not reached in 2005, and the mobilization of resources following aid commitments made at the G-8 Summit in July.

Peter Smith, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Education is highly optimistic about the meeting. "I am pleased with the

agenda of the meeting since it is sharply focused on the issues that matter: better funding for the long term and better cooperation with a view towards achieving Education for All goals and the Millennium Development Goals," he says.

Conceived as a 'lever for political commitment and technical and financial resource mobilization', the High-Level Group has met annually since the World Education Forum (Dakar, 2000). It brings together partners from governments, development agencies, civil society, and the private sector.

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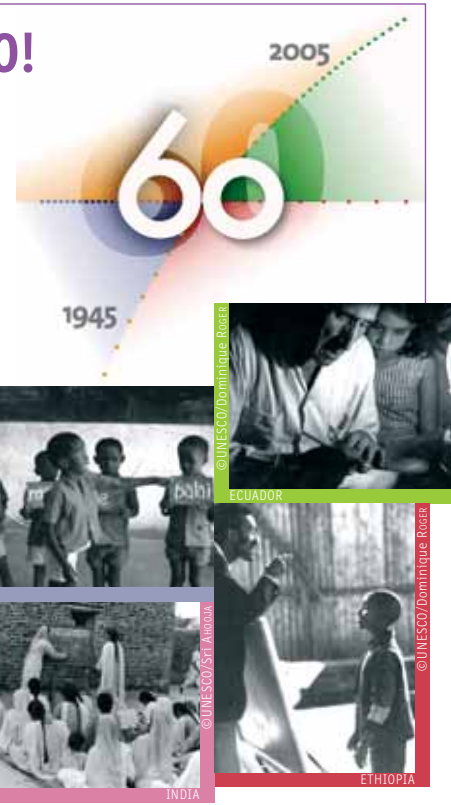
60 weeks to celebrate 60 years of UNESCO!

UNESCO is celebrating its birthday with a 60-week commemoration with each week dedicated to a topic. As the full 60 weeks unfold, 16 education-related topics are to take centre-stage, including literacy, secondary and vocational schooling, women's and girls' education and HIV and AIDS prevention education.

During an international symposium scholars reflected on UNESCO's work over the past 60 years. The symposium took place in Paris

on 16 November, 60 years to the day since UNESCO adopted its constitution. Countries and field offices are encouraged to hold their own celebrations as well.

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UNESCO assists Iraqi universities

UNESCO is strengthening its assistance in rebuilding higher education in Iraq. Initial efforts were concentrated on meeting the most urgent needs of the war-torn country by supplying universities with books as well as laboratory and engineering equipment. As Hussain Khanaka, President of the University of Kirkuk, said during a visit to UNESCO last February, "The most minimal conditions necessary to teach are non-existent."

UNESCO is now moving into a new, more ambitious phase of the programme, which is designed to encourage the renaissance of Iraqi universities and to strengthen the ties between Iraqi scholars and global research and collaboration networks.

Short-term fellowships from UNESCO are available for Iraqi academics to retrain in universities abroad. Seventy-six Iraqi

university faculty members have already been trained; 200 more scientists have funding, but still need to be placed in host institutions. In addition, working with Iraqi counterparts, the Organization has defined a framework entitled "International University Network for Iraq" to promote international collaboration in several areas, including distance learning, engineering, medicine and leadership by women. UNESCO is currently appealing to international partners to sponsor those networks.

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Education plays role at WSIS

"Information and communication technologies are an opportunity to provide revolutionary change to how we deliver and how we understand the quality of teaching and learning," said Peter Smith, UNESCO's

Assistant Director-General for Education at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis last November. "We are happy to be in the forefront of raising those questions and pushing those points so that education for all becomes a reality," he commented.

UNESCO emphasizes the role of education for building knowledge societies. A high-level debate discussed the Organization's role in the construction of knowledge societies and ways to help bridge the information divide. Specific topics included: the knowledge gap, the brain drain and language barriers that hinder accessing online information.

Additional UNESCO activities at the Summit included two round tables on the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme and 'ICTs and Persons with Disabilities' as well as a stand presenting the crucial links between technologies, knowledge and new opportunities for development.

The Summit took place on 16-18 November 2005, in Tunis, Tunisia.

Visit the virtual version of UNESCO's WSIS stand at portal.unesco.org/ci/wsis/tunis/stand

A 3-pronged strategy for education

Literacy, teacher-training and HIV/AIDS are UNESCO's priorities in education for 2006-2007. UNESCO is mobilizing its efforts in these three key areas to accelerate progress towards Education for All by 2015.

The first prong is the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment. With the catchy acronym LIFE, this 10-year plan is to strengthen literacy programmes in the 34 countries that are home to 85 per cent of the world's non-readers. The main strategies of LIFE are to increase international aid, to support national policies and to be a clearing-house for shared information. Ten countries have been invited to participate in the first phase of the initiative: Bangladesh, Egypt, Haiti, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal and Yemen.

The second prong is the Teacher Training Initiative in sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA), a 10-year project for 46 countries where the shortage of qualified teachers is most severe. In these countries, 4 million new teachers will be needed to meet the Education for All goal of universal primary schooling by 2015. Strategies will include helping countries implement their own education plans, improving the status of teachers and reversing trainee dropout and teacher flight.

The third prong is EDUCAIDS, a partnership between UNESCO and several other United Nations agencies to help governments and institutions mount a jointly developed HIV and AIDS educational campaign. EDUCAIDS will offer young people simple educational materials. The materials will be standardized and comprehensive, yet adapted to the sensitivities of each country and community. Four countries are to benefit in 2006: Cambodia, Jamaica, Moldova and Namibia.

LIFE

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TTISSA

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EDUCAIDS

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NOVEMBER

16

On the occasion of its 60th anniversary, UNESCO is hosting an international symposium on the Organization's history Paris, France

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16-18

The role of UNESCO in the Construction of Knowledge Societies through the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme Tunis, Tunisia

Contact: Hassmik Tortian, UNESCO Paris
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28-30

5th High-Level Group on Education for All • Beijing, China

Contact: Abhimanyu Singh, UNESCO Paris
E-mail: abh.singh@unesco.org

28-30

Pacific Workshop on Inclusive Education "Getting all children into school and helping them learn" • Apia, Samoa

Contact: Jill van Den Brule, UNESCO Paris
E-mail: j.vandenbrule@unesco.org

30 November – 2 December

Second International Barcelona Conference on Higher Education: "The financing of universities" • Organized by the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI) and Technical University of Catalonia
Website: www.guni2005.com

DECEMBER

5-8

Contribution of non-formal education to HIV/AIDS Preventive Education • Kampala, Uganda

Contact: Susan Nkinyangi, UNESCO Nairobi
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8-9

Towards a new Education System for rebuilding the Iraqi Society: From vision to practice • Paris, France

Contact: Kamel Braham, UNESCO Iraq Office
E-mail: k.braham@unesco.org

JANUARY

23-24

Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union Khartoum, Sudan

Contact: Patricia Toïgo, UNESCO Paris
E-mail: p.toigo@unesco.org

19-20

4th Regional Scientific Committee Meeting for Asia and the Pacific Jakarta, Indonesia • Organized by UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge

Contact: Min-Chul Shim, UNESCO Paris
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● **Catalogue of Documents on Education, 2003-2005: Supplement** contains bibliographical references of documents produced by UNESCO in the field of education between 2003-2005. It complements the *Catalogue of Documents* published in 2003. Trilingual (French, Spanish, English). E-mail: sdi@unesco.org

● **African Perspectives on Adult Learning: The Psychology of Adult Learning in Africa** by Thomas Fasokun, Anne Katahoire, Akpovire Oduaran. This book analyses the cultural factors that influence the behaviour and thinking of adult learners. It looks at psychology as an applied discipline that can help adult educators be more effective in their work. Published by UNESCO's Institute for Education (UIE). Website: www.unesco.org/education/uiie • E-mail: uiie@unesco.org



● **Capacity Building of Teacher Training Institutions in sub-Saharan Africa.** This book offers a synthesis of the evaluations undertaken in different teacher training institutions in sub-Saharan Africa and also lists UNESCO's current actions and partnerships in the region. Available online in English and French: unesdoc.unesco.org E-mail: l.sia@unesco.org

● **Discovering Literacy: Access Routes to Written Culture for a Group of Women in Mexico** by Judy Kalman. This book, winner of UNESCO's International Award for Literacy Research,

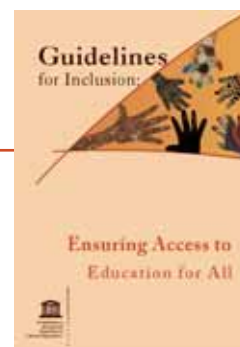
examines the many routes taken by a group of people living in a small town on the edge of Mexico City to fully participate in written culture. It has many insights into the daily use of literacy and draws important conclusions regarding the significance for adult education of literacy in its local context. Published in English and Spanish by UNESCO's Institute for Education (UIE).

To order: publishing.unesco.org

● **Meeting Basic Learning Needs in the Informal Sector: Integrating Education and Training for Decent Work, Empowerment and Citizenship** edited by Madhu Singh. This book puts forward the idea that basic education plays a crucial role in overcoming oppressive and indecent working conditions. It includes case studies from South Asia, Latin America and Egypt. Published in English by UIE/UNEVOC/Springer • Price: 109.95€ To order: www.springeronline.com

● **The Education of Nomadic Peoples in East Africa.** This synthesis report, commissioned by the African Development Bank, was carried out in 2001-2002 in Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. It looks into the challenges and opportunities for using education to meet the development needs of nomadic communities. Published in English by UNESCO's International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP). Website: www.unesco.org/iiep

● **Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All.** This document aims to help change attitudes regarding inclusion, so that Education for All can indeed accommodate all learners. It serves as a policy tool and a basis for discussion for formulating and revising EFA national plans. E-mail: j.vandenbrule@unesco.org Website: unesdoc.unesco.org



● **Education for Sustainable Development – Asia-Pacific Region.** A resource pack containing two books designed to give a snapshot view of the current state of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the Asia-Pacific region. The *Situational Analysis*, published in English, assesses the extent to which countries in the region have integrated ESD policies and programmes into educational settings. The *Working Paper*, published in English and Chinese, is an open document that provides coordination, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the implementation of ESD. Website: www.unescobkk.org

● **Gender Inclusive Scientific and Technological Literacy for Enhancing Life Skills.** This CD-ROM presents the report of an EFA Capacity building Project, carried out in Argentina, Burkina Faso, Egypt and Nepal. The project, based on nation-wide surveys, was designed to help the integration of basic gender-inclusive science and technology education into EFA national plans. E-mail: d.bhagwut@unesco.org

● **Education for Girls and Disadvantaged Children: A Virtual Library.** This CD-ROM assembles a collection of critical works by several international organizations, about education for girls and disadvantaged children. It is a one-stop virtual library designed for those who do not have a high-speed internet connection to access such works on the web. Published by UNESCO in Kathmandu. E-mail: kathmandu@unesco.org

● **Links Between the Global Initiatives in Education.** Since 2000, the United Nations has launched four global initiatives on education – The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Education for All (EFA), the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) and the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). This book, published in English and French, explains their common traits and differences. Available online: unesdoc.unesco.org E-mail: esddecade@unesco.org



● **Perspectives on Distance Education: Lifelong Learning & Distance Higher Education.** This collection of research papers looks at the profound changes that education systems are facing in the era of globalization. Offering new insight to distance education topics from funding methodologies to quality assessment procedures, it serves as a practical manual for planners and decision-makers. Co-published in English by UNESCO/Commonwealth of Learning. Website: unesdoc.unesco.org

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Assistant: Martine Kayser • Design: Pilote Corporate • Layout: Sylvaine Baeyens

Photo credits (cover): Berthold Egner; UNESCO/ASPnet/Karin Hunziker; UNESCO/Brendan O'Malley;

UNESCO/Georges Malempré; UNESCO/Spier-Donati • ISSN 1814-3970

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