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## Tenth Meeting of the Working Group on Education for All

9-11 December 2009

Paris, France

Summary Report

## **Introduction**

The Tenth Meeting of the Working Group on Education for All (EFA) was held from 9 to 11 December 2009 at UNESCO Headquarters. Chaired by Mr Qiang Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education, a.i., UNESCO, the meeting attracted more than 160 people from 42 countries as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations, research institutes, civil society and the private sector.

At the critical juncture of five years before the 2015 target date for EFA and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Tenth Working Group on EFA (WGEFA) provided an opportunity to do stocktaking of partners' efforts, identify urgent and important matters, and make policy recommendations for immediate action by committed partners that were brought forward to the Ninth High-Level Group on EFA (HLG) (Addis Ababa, 23-25 February, 2010). Informed by the 2010 EFA Global Monitoring Report and recommendations by the International Advisory Panel (IAP), these meetings gave special focus on two themes: the impact of the economic crisis on education and marginalization.

The meeting's opening remarks were provided by Mr Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education a.i., UNESCO. Noting remarkable progress made in education during the past decade, Mr Tang assured participants of UNESCO's commitment to achieving the EFA agenda, in particular addressing challenges faced by marginalized populations, gender equality, youth, Africa, Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Development States (SIDS). Mr Tang invited participants to actively contribute to WGEFA discussions by sharing ideas about the Ninth HLG meeting as well as the EFA coordination architecture more broadly that would help strengthen the link between global debates and in-country activity and make a stronger impact on development in education and beyond.

### **Plenary Session 1: Progress report: follow-up to the Oslo Declaration**

The opening session began with an overview of follow-up to the five actionable points outlined in the Oslo Declaration adopted at the Eighth meeting of the HLG on EFA (Oslo, Norway, 16-18 December 2008). Introduced by Mr Tang and chaired by Mr Alioune Ndiaye, Cabinet Director, Ministry of Pre-primary and Middle Secondary Education and National Languages, Senegal, the session focused on global advocacy efforts for the six EFA goals; coordination of education, health and nutrition initiatives; educational equity in access, attendance, learning processes and outcomes; and issues related to financing and teachers.

There is tremendous competition for attention to education, in relation to other issues of health, the economy, food and environment, stated Mr Olav Seim, Director, Education for All International Coordination Team, a.i., UNESCO. To address this, the essential role education plays in reaching all of the MDGs must be stressed in all advocacy efforts of the five multi-lateral organizations that convened the World Education Forum in 2000 (five EFA convening agencies) as well as those arising from other EFA partners such as civil society, the private sector and research institutes. Mr Kailash Satyarthi, President, Global Campaign for Education, readily agreed, stating that 2010 offers opportunities to reinforce the importance of education,

and that this must also be the message of the Class of 2015 activities, including the ONE Goal campaign, which seeks to make education the center of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Remarkable benefits can be reaped from a greater understanding of the critical linkages between health and education. Approaches that seamlessly integrate these two topics into one strategy that helps countries to achieve the EFA objectives and MDGs should be developed. The impact of malnutrition on education and the benefits of basic school feeding and health service programmes cannot be ignored, and were reiterated by Ms Tara O'Connell, from the Human Development Network, The World Bank, who presented the outline of a forthcoming report entitled "*Caring for School Children: How school health and school feeding programmes contribute to EFA*", which will be finalized specifically for the next Ninth HLG meeting. Mr Marc Regnault de la Mothe, Policy Officer, School Feeding, Policy Planning and Strategy Division, World Food Programme, echoed Ms O'Connell's statements, arguing for stronger links between health, nutrition and education. Noting that school feeding is a powerful social protection instrument, particularly in times of crisis, he appealed to participants to eliminate all cost implications for school meals by 2015.

Ms Clementina Acedo Machado, UNESCO International Bureau of Education (UNESCO-IBE), reminded participants that providing inclusive education is just an actualization of the concept of education as a human right. Reminding participants of the concepts of inclusive education that were adopted by more than 110 countries at the 48th session of the International Conference on Education (ICE, Geneva, 25-28 November 2008), she presented policy dialogue and capacity development activities that were undertaken in light of follow-up to the ICE meeting and explained how inclusive education is being promoted more broadly since then, supported by multi-stakeholder efforts.

A clearly defined vision of inclusive education, basic parameters for measurement of equity and quality, and distribution of data related to access and learning outcomes is necessary to improve education systems and overcome marginalization, said Mr Albert Motivans, Head of Section, Education Indicators and Data Analysis, UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS). The international community must understand that several sub-categories of out-of-school children exist, between those who have had no schooling, brief contact with school and some schooling. Both presenters agreed that a measurement system should be developed that looks at educational progress globally alongside capturing differences between types of schooling and the expectations and needs of students. This tool would be extremely important in developing and reinforcing policies for those excluded from current systems, in order to build societies with equal opportunities and social cohesion.

Financing education remains a complex issue. Results of recent studies undertaken by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) exploring what incites donors to allocate financing to basic education were presented by Ms Liesbet Steer, ODI Research Fellow. Donors, she stated, are largely more influenced by donor prioritization, advocacy and aid architecture than by the ability of recipient countries to receive/use funds, nor the acknowledgement of education as a human right. Key constraints faced by donors were ineffective leadership to coordinate and monitor aid commitments and confusion about prioritization between quantity/quality and primary/post-primary, a lack of innovations and attention to alternative resources, and capacities

of their development agencies. She recommended creating a new platform to attract attention and funds, and thus making a better case for education. Evidence of increased focus on results and visionary papers such as Jacques Delors's Report entitled "*Learning: The Treasure Within*" would be beneficial in this regard.

Along the same theme of education financing, the gains and risks of removing cost barriers to education were presented by Mr Robert Prouty, Acting Head, Education for All-Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI) Secretariat. Lessons learned from success stories were discussed, in particular several case studies from the African region. Mr Prouty cautioned that a badly executed removal of cost barriers can have lasting damage on education systems for decades, and informed participants about a new publication developed by several key EFA partners that provides an overview of what is already known about school fee abolition, operational guidelines to take into account and lessons learned from five countries.

The last presentation of this first plenary session featured Ms Christine Wallace, European Commission and Mr Agus Sartono, Indonesia, who represented the two co-chairs of the Task Force on Teachers for EFA. Referring to the current 10.3 million shortage of teachers for primary education, as depicted in a 2009 report from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics, Ms Wallace and Mr Sartono spoke about the current and future work of the Task Force to support the international community in ensuring that comprehensive teacher policies are in place to address training and deployment of qualified teachers as well as their working conditions and status, and thus maintaining progress towards reducing this teacher gap.

### **Questions and answers**

The majority of this discussion centered around the need for better data and tools for enhancing learning, further debates about effectiveness and sustainability of school feeding, school fee abolition and other programmes, and commonly-agreed priorities for the achievement of EFA. The need to develop strategic partnerships in various regions to help build capacities around teacher competencies, inclusive education plans (including reaching out to rural populations) and accurate and relevant curricula was also stressed. One participant asked for information about the differences between school feeding programmes that provide hot meals but are not always nutritious versus those that provide macro-nutrient supplements that are good for children but do not necessarily give them a full stomach. It was agreed that abolishing school fees is a complex matter and is just a first step, as other factors such as hidden costs (school uniform and transportation fees), drug abuse, child labour, and negative culture attitudes about education also need to be addressed.

### **Plenary Session 2: 2010 Global Monitoring Report**

Ms Changu Mannathoko, Senior Policy Advisor, Equity and Quality, Education Sector, UNICEF, chaired the second plenary session, which featured a presentation by Mr Kevin Watkins, Director, Global Monitoring Report Team, UNESCO. Mr Watkins began by describing the uneven progress towards achieving the EFA agenda, noting that if 'business as usual' continues, 56 million children will still be out-of-school in 2015. The impact of the financial crisis puts education even more at risk than it was previously, he said, as the 'aftershock effects',

such as slower economic growth, mounting fiscal pressures and rising poverty levels will continue to hamper progress. An estimated 90 million persons are being pushed into poverty due to this crisis, with another 120 million suffering from malnutrition.

Mr Watkins reiterated the importance of monitoring the ‘correct’ things in respect to this crisis, looking beyond what aspects of education budgets are being cut and gaining a real understanding of whether or not countries have enough fiscal space to address issues of EFA. He addressed progress and challenges towards each of the six EFA goals, during which he noted that more children are currently enrolled in primary school than ever before, but persistent malnutrition (178 million of school-aged children were severely malnourished at some stage in their lives) continues to have dire consequences on personal development opportunities as well as affecting the efficient usage of investments in education. Strengthening the linkages between maternal and child health and development remains critical, and has thus far been largely neglected. Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) has the potential to act as a great equalizer but can also reinforce inequality.

He stressed that the 2010 GMR focuses principally on increasing the visibility of vulnerable and marginalized populations, as one of the urgent issues to tackle if basic education is to be provided for ALL. Acknowledging that measuring and understanding marginalization is a crucial first step to overcoming marginalization, he informed participants of a database developed by the GMR team and the University of Göttingen that reconfigures national household data in order to gain a better understanding of who the marginalized are, where they are located, and how these factors influence their education, among other information. He also underscored the importance of inclusive and holistic policies that address the structure and underlying causes of inequality as well as associated power structures. Inclusive education will only be achieved if interventions address “access and affordability”, “learning environments” and “legal entitlements and opportunities”. He referred to the large EFA financing gap and called for intensified efforts, including support for a comprehensive reform of the EFA-Fast Track Initiative to narrow the gap.

## **Questions and answers**

Participants welcomed the GMR’s focus on expanding fiscal space, its emphasis on better management of existing resources and its call to re-think the current aid architecture. It was agreed that better training and more hiring of inspectors would go a long way to curbing corruption related to financial management of school supplies, uniforms, fees, etc. The concept of comprehensive reform of the EFA-FTI was also well received, following the results of its evaluation, with several stating they would like to see renewed attention to funding for countries in post-conflict and post-disaster situations, as well as those with severe challenges to gender equality.

Several persons regretted the lack of mention of adult literacy in the report, noting that the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) (Belém, Brazil, 1 - 4 December 2009) was an opportunity for constructive dialogue that could be supported by the GMR through proposals of specific benchmarks for analysis. Regarding opportunities for 2010, many expressed concern about how to ensure that advocacy messages about EFA are politically and

strategically aligned for all the various platforms and outlets, focusing in particular on financing, equity as an essential factor for economic growth and serious political commitment as a requirement to achieve marginalization objectives.

### **Plenary Session 3: Impact of the economic and financial crisis on education**

Chaired by Ms Carol Bellamy, former Executive-Director of UNICEF and Chair of the EFA-FTI Board of Directors, this plenary session examined the impact of the economic and financial crisis on education from a myriad of contexts and in all regions, in particular countries of the South and the African region, donor countries and international aid, and non-governmental agencies and civil society more broadly.

Ms Rita Bissonauth, Senior Policy Officer, Human Resources Science & Technology Department, African Union Commission, spoke about the formidable challenges in education systems in Africa despite major progress, and the high costs associated with reaching out-of-school children, raising the quality of primary education, and revitalizing the higher education system. She stated that in Africa, the crisis brought to light key questions about the role of the private sector, contributions from students and households, and how to achieve financial stability.

Evidence from previous crises in East Asia during which deteriorating labour conditions, particularly for women, led to falling remittances in rural areas and adverse outcomes for education was presented by Mr Kevin Watkins, Director, GMR Team. He stressed that the financial crisis did not occur in isolation, but rather at the end of a dangerous cycle of malnutrition and already heightened levels of household vulnerability. He spoke about three options governments can take, namely 1) expanding borrowing, 2) expanding revenue collection, and 3) concessional aid. Mr Watkins also expressed strong concern about the lack of disbursement of international aid pledges, stating that this may lead to a future ‘black hole’ in funding.

Mr Robin Horn, Education Sector Manager, Human Development Network, The World Bank, continued the discussion about international aid by informing participants of the results of a study that looked at 30 years of donor financing for development, looking in particular at the effects of previous crises on aid flows in both wealthy and poorer countries. Results indicated sharp downturns in expenditures and spending within developing countries, often offset by international aid. He stated that the current crisis is unique and difficult to smooth out, which might make a serious impact on developing countries.

Mr Ian Whitman, Head of Programme for Cooperation with non-member Economies, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), concurred, stating that as the current crisis began in developed countries, many donors will not be able to support the negative impacts in developing countries, such as rising demand for education and training, increasing unemployment rates (and youth unemployment in particular), and cuts in public finance and administration costs within the education sector, that has long-term impacts on teachers and school systems. He also stated that OECD set up an online collaborative platform called the “OECD Lighthouse” which provides information,

evidence and analysis on the impact of the crisis on education, with concrete examples of how governments and institutions in different countries are coping.

Ms Monique Fouilhoux, Deputy Secretary-General, Education International, expressed on behalf of all NGOs tremendous concern for the future of education budgets. She urged the international community to look closely at what is happening in transitional and developing countries, as their populations are suffering the most. She called on the IMF and European Banks to adopt more flexible conditions that allow governments to reduce budgets without resorting to cutting the number of civil servant workers, such as eliminating teacher posts. Our approach needs to be global and integrated, Ms Fouilhoux stated, and focused on reform, greater transparency and predictability. She indicated her support for a conference dedicated to issues of education financing, and informed participants that the impact of the financial and economic crisis will be a large part of discussions of the Fifth meeting of UNESCO's Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA (CCNGO/EFA) that will meet in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in early 2010. We must invest now to think about future generations, she said, noting the crucial role of political courage.

### **Questions and answers**

Many participants questioned the 'bleak' context displayed by presenters during this session, and emphasized the importance of advocating about the many positive examples of countries still achieving economic growth, putting in successful social protection measures, strengthening links between education and employment, more efficient and innovative means of using resources, and greater numbers of qualified teachers for recruitment as more turn away from the private sector and towards public service for employment opportunities. More countries than ever before are opening dialogue with teacher unions and multi-year agreements have been made on salaries. This process of transparency and dialogue should exist with all stakeholders, including with the IMF. It was agreed that resources must be transferred from wealthy areas to poorer regions, including prioritization within countries. Frustration exists with respect to wasteful spending, notably in light of banking bailouts and their implications on reductions in education spending.

One participant stressed strong concern over the lack of political will in several regions when it comes to translating this will from paper to action. The discussion ended with a plea for group workshop sessions to come to an understanding about the commitments and contributions the international community needs to make in the coming year to try and overcome fiscal challenges.

### **Group Work: Impact of the economic and financial crisis on education**

Subsequently to the plenary session, participants of the Working Group were divided into three groups to discuss the following topics in greater detail:

- Monitoring the crisis in the education sector: case studies
- Approaches to protect the most vulnerable populations
- Innovative approaches to scale-up financing for basic education in countries with the greatest need

Among other topics, participants shared lessons learned in trying to capture the impact of past crises and considerations on their application in current contexts, the benefits of social protection

measures that successfully address the vulnerability of households and strengthen their resilience and ability to cope with economic shocks, the potential added-value of innovative and alternative financial modalities (such as debt-swaps, multi-stakeholder partnerships and non-traditional donors) and how to monitor governance and corruption within the education sector. Case-studies and initial ideas were presented by resource persons from all regions and contexts, from the perspective of representatives of Government ministries, civil society, private sector, research institutions and UN and development agencies.

It was agreed that the economic crisis should be viewed as an opportunity to strengthen national monitoring systems and establish key baseline measurements for the future. Leading indicators could be developed, that look ahead to nine months or more, so that appropriate measures and decisions can be made in advance of impending crises. This rang particularly true for situations of conflict. Guidelines for abolishing schools fees produced by UNICEF and the WB, with contributions from many other agencies and partners, including the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO-IIEP), was well received, and was deemed a solid ‘first step’.

One participant suggested a more concrete document be developed that would indicate, for example, specific figures of out-of-school children as well as what impact concrete measures could accomplish, coupled with what achievements could be realized with additional donor support. This would be of particular relevance for those countries submitting applications to the EFA-FTI. It was agreed that in 2010, a more formal plan should be outlined that includes all major relevant meetings for advocating increased financial resources for education (Davos, HLG, G-8, G-20, MDG Review Summit), as well as a timeline for undertaking EFA-FTI reform.

#### **Plenary Session 4: Marginalization and inclusion**

Chaired by Mr Kailash Satyarthi, President, Global Campaign for Education, introduced the session by asking participants to put a human face to the marginalized, urging them to think of marginalized persons as individuals when deliberation about key recommendations rather than a nameless group.

Mr Tewodros Habte, Senior Foreign Relations Expert, Ministry of Education, Ethiopia, began by describing the social protection measures and programmes developed in Ethiopia to address challenges faced by marginalized populations. Access to formal school opportunities was maximized and mobile school programmes developed; leading to particularly impressive sustained enrolment growth in underserved and rural regions. Inadequate awareness about opportunities, socio-culture attitudes, and financing gap remain the largest challenges to the education system in Ethiopia.

Mr Robert Langley Smith, a consultant working the United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI), presented the initiative’s input on the equity and inclusion issues presented in the 2010 GMR. Referring to a limited analysis of the interaction between various factors and conditions that create ‘systems’ of exclusion, he suggested that the GMR could have benefitted from looking at social inclusion as a conceptual framework, to spark greater debate about the interactions between poverty and gender inequality. Mr Smith welcomed the Deprivation and



Marginalization in Education data set tool introduced in the GMR, but pointed out its limitations with respect to regional and inter-regional differences. He also stated that perhaps too much attention was given to financing issues and that more space could have been given to present strategies and case studies.

Following the same theme, Mr Motar Hossain, State Minister, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Bangladesh, cited advancement in gender parity in Bangladesh, looking in particular at the Bangladeshi plan to have all six to ten year old children in school by 2011, and all children educated by 2013. This national plan requires new strategies and policies related to teacher training and development, educational assessment tools and guidelines for those with special needs, among others.

Participants were reminded by Mr Arjen Kool, Education Specialist, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands, that child labour remains an important marker of marginalization. He informed participants of an International Meeting on Child Labour scheduled to take place in The Hague in May 2010 to explore how development efforts in the education sector could better contribute to the elimination of child labour as well as how to mainstream such ideas into education systems, through the abolition of indirect fees, improvements in quality and relevance of education, promotion of school construction in poorest regions, reinforcement of flexible formal school systems and programmes for transitional education.

Inclusion International President Ms Diane Richler ended this plenary session by drawing attention to the lack of educational opportunities for those with disabilities. Referring to the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (Salamanca, Spain, 1994) during which the international community pledged to provide inclusive systems, she reminded participants that inclusion must mean that students with disabilities attend regular schools and classrooms with their non-disabled siblings and peers with the supports they require. This will necessitate a real paradigm shift that is still unseen in many countries. She spoke about encouraging prospects in both developed and developing countries, although data shortage limits accountability. She mentioned encouraging prospects, including good practices and stronger commitments such as ratifications by governments of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008).

## **Questions and answers**

Participants stressed that equity and poverty are two important dimensions of exclusion, and that limited analysis currently exists identifying the various forces, influences and conditions that create a 'system' of exclusion. Greater research should be conducted to identify the true multiplier impacts of gender roles, HIV/AIDS, poverty, ethnicity, child labour, disability, etc, and should be disseminated in a transparent manner so that governments can be held accountable for decisions taken in relation to persistent challenges. For example, data about family expenditures can be collected and presented as reasoning to eliminate school fees. Data collection, however, should be undertaken with caution, as technical and political issues leading to wrong information collected and disseminated could lead to dire consequences. Participants asked that UNESCO, through UIS and the GMR, oversee this process.

It was agreed that greater financing is crucial, but should not be advocated for as sufficient in and of itself to reach marginalized populations. Inclusion means a real paradigm shift by all partners. Governments must be persuaded to fulfill their legal and constitutional responsibilities and strengthen inclusive education systems through multi-stakeholder efforts. Specific measures within school and beyond, includes abolishing indirect fees, improving quality and relevance, addressing sanitation and water provision issues, providing language classes and training for migrant workers, and hiring and retaining competent teachers. UN agencies have a role to play in collaborating to develop an international 'tool' to address marginalization. The Belem Framework for Action was referred to as one such tool containing recommendations about adult literacy and life-long learning. Concern was expressed by several participants that gender is largely omitted in the 2010 GMR, although it is addressed indirectly in many chapters.

### **Group Work**

Subsequent to the plenary session, participants were again divided into three groups to examine the following topics in greater depth:

- Understanding and measuring educational marginalization
- Policies and programmes to address educational marginalization and support inclusion
- Holistic and multi-sectoral responses to level the playing field

Group discussions focused on improving data collection, analysis and dissemination to support more equitable education policy-making and to improve learning outcomes; exploring what constitutes appropriate educational policies and interventions that effectively challenge marginalization issues (such as policies that address language, culture, non-formal frameworks, etc); identifying which processes and frameworks outside of the education sector (such as legislation, social protection, public finance and broader development frameworks), could be effectively harnessed to support educational policies. It is crucial to commit to the systematic collection of data broken down by categories of exclusion to understand the dimensions of marginalization, identify patterns of individual and group disadvantage, reasons why marginalized populations are/are not attending school, and how they learn in school in order to better design appropriate policies and develop targeted messages that entice those currently outside the education systems. Dedicated, long-term funding to support these efforts is needed.

Participants stressed a need to create synergies between education and other areas such as peace, conflict prevention, environment, labour, mitigation and economic growth in order to involve more partners and leverage greater resources. Civil society, including children and youth representatives, should mobilize and engage with lawmakers to ensure adequate resources and legal protections for marginalized populations and appropriate supporting policy frameworks. In particular, beyond the topics themselves, the distinctive role of Governments, civil society, Parliamentarians and the private sector within and outside of the education system was discussed.

### **Plenary Session 5 continued: Identifying key recommendations**

Each of the six groups presented their recommendations and a discussion ensued. Chaired by Mr Duncan Hindle, Director-General of Education, Ministry of Education, South Africa, participants

agreed on the final recommendations to be brought forward to the Ninth HLG meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Final recommendations can be found at the end of this report.

### **Plenary Session 6: The way forward**

The next HLG meeting will be co-organized by UNESCO, the Government of Ethiopia and the African Union with focus on the same two themes. Mr Tewodros Habte, Ethiopia, and Ms Rita Bissoonauth, African Union Commission, informed participants about the current status of preparations for the High-Level Group meeting on EFA, addressing both content and more practical arrangements.

Interested WGEFA participants were invited to join the Preparatory Group which was created in autumn 2009 to prepare for the 2009 WGEFA and the 2010 HLG meetings. It was agreed that the draft consolidated recommendations developed by this WGEFA would be sent by the Secretariat to participants for their further comments and used as the foundation for developing a draft Declaration for the HLG meeting.

### **Closing Session**

Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General, UNESCO, expressed her appreciation for the work undertaken by meeting participants in the continued promotion of EFA, both in their respective countries and in global meetings like the HLG. She spoke about the importance of focusing on marginalization and the impact of the crisis – themes that are closely linked, global in scope, and crucial to address poverty and hunger and further the common EFA agenda.

Ms Bokova spoke about the need to be bolder in building social and political coalitions, and urged participants to stress – at every occasion possible – the concept of education as a fundamental human right that is transformative and empowering. She referred to recent events in Qatar, Belem, Cairo and Kuwait, during which she emphasized that ensuring quality learning through life is indispensable for reducing inequalities and building more peaceful societies, as well as the upcoming 19 January 2010 launch of the 2010 GMR report in NY in which Secretary-General Mr Ban Ki-Moon will also participate.

Education will take center stage at the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Ms Bokova, said, with a first-ever public session on education issues that will help the international community re-orient policies on globalization and sustainability to include an education component. Moreover, 2010, with the G-8 and G-20 Summits, the MDG summit and the FIFA World Cup, to name a few, will provide a number of significant opportunities to convince governments that no country has climbed the human development ladder without steady investment in education. Civil Society Organization, Non-Governmental Organization and the media should play a leading role in this. UNESCO, too, should take a strong stance, Ms Bokova said.

She emphasized the crucial nature of large-scale cooperation, notably to assist countries lacking fiscal space to counteract the economic crisis and address labour market challenges and the

HIV/AIDS pandemic alongside providing education to the millions of out-of-school children, illiterate adults and all those in between who receive an education of poor quality.

**Tenth Meeting of the Working Group on Education for All  
(Paris, 9-11 December 2009)**

**Policy Recommendations**

**1. Measuring and understanding the most vulnerable populations**

Renewed attention to, and more consistent and effective monitoring of, fiscal space and exclusion will be necessary to guide policymaking. Governments should invest in effective education management information systems (EMIS), and ensure more integrated platforms across sectors, especially at the decentralized level. Development partners should support this work by focusing on the most urgent needs in terms of technical capacity and the information infrastructure.

- ▶ EFA partners commit to the systematic development of national and comparative conceptual frameworks and diagnostic tools, such as household surveys, to capture key benchmarking indicators among the most disadvantaged groups. They also pledge to make available long-term external funding, whether through the EFA-Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI) or another source, for the specific purpose of collecting data on marginalized groups.
- ▶ EFA partners will use and further develop the Deprivation and Marginalization in Education (DME) data set, a new international tool produced by the EFA Global Monitoring Report Team that charts the dimensions of marginalization and identifies patterns of individual and group disadvantages to inform policy design and public debate.
- ▶ We recommend that willing development partners conduct research on how best to link the development of data on social inclusion to the actual provision of support to excluded populations.
- ▶ The five multilateral organizations that convened the World Education Forum in 2000 and other development partners will collaborate to provide support to national education and finance ministries in monitoring national fiscal space and efficient use of resources. Donors will scale up their efforts in translating their commitments into public spending plans through setting clear aid budget plans.

**2. Policies and programmes to protect the most vulnerable populations**

***Making education available and affordable:***

Access to education remains a challenge. Looking beyond regular school attendance, expanding access should include monitoring age in grade progression, worthwhile achievement and the inclusion of marginalized groups.

- ▶ Taking into consideration local contexts, we will support school fee abolition policies at primary and secondary levels and other initiatives targeted at poor and vulnerable households such as free uniforms, textbooks and school materials, transportation and scholarships. This might require a combination of measures and systems such as pro-poor subsidies and fee-free

schools, or direct grants to schools to cover lost revenue from school fees or for operating costs that contribute to the enhancement of the quality of education.

► National governments will partner with communities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to deliver services to marginalized groups by integrating non-state provision into national education systems and ensuring an appropriate environment, including regulatory frameworks. Governments should remain the guarantors of the right to basic education for all.

► Opportunities generated by new information and communication technologies, including their impact on reducing marginalization and cost-effectiveness, should be independently evaluated.

► National governments will explore more flexible approaches to education provision, including multi-grade and mobile schools as well as different forms of adult education and literacy training.

### ***Learning environments:***

Enrolling in school is only the first step to receiving an education, as far too many children attend classes but are “silently excluded” as a result of poor learning environments, such as education materials that are not relevant to their needs and unqualified teachers. To address this, comprehensive teacher policies should be evaluated, and learning and teaching materials, curriculum, language of instruction, intercultural understanding and pedagogy should be tailored to particular contexts. Additionally, although inclusion encompasses all learners, strategically focused interventions might be needed to provide the best value for money, especially where the recession limits financial resources.

► National governments will review teacher policies to ensure appropriate teacher recruitment and deployment, working conditions and training to address marginalization, including incentives and career development plans to attract teachers to remote and marginalized areas.

► The international community will further document and disseminate good practices and experiences related to enhancing learning environments and improving education quality.

► National governments will, where appropriate, review and enhance policies on education provision and learning environments to address the needs of marginalized populations, including individuals with disabilities, youth and adults who lack basic literacy skills, girls and women, ethnic minorities, nomadic populations and out-of-school children and youth. In doing so, the involvement and support from development partners such as civil society organizations, communities, and young people will be ensured.

### ***Holistic and multi-sectoral responses to level the playing field;***

To further reach the marginalized and protect the most vulnerable populations, inclusive, holistic education approaches and strategies must be integrated into broader frameworks of multi-sectoral policies for social inclusion. Marginalized populations’ educational needs can only be met if cultural practices, social norms, power structures, and other issues that can generate exclusion are addressed and resolved. The participation of different partners and stakeholders in managing such policies and programs is a determinant of success. Such partnership would allow greater sustainability and could leverage greater resources.

► National governments, in cooperation with development partners, will scale-up successful well-targeted, multi-sectoral approaches, including cash transfer and school feeding programmes that complement education investments, to address marginalization and to create stronger

synergies between education and health, nutrition, economic growth, peace and conflict prevention and mitigation.

► The international community will secure funding for global social protection initiatives such as the “Rapid Social Response Programme”. Additionally, risk-management interventions such as employment programmes will be further promoted in order to build the resilience of vulnerable households, increase employment opportunities for young people and create and retain employment linked to child-relevant infrastructural investments.

► EFA partners will build on existing efforts to tackle issues related to child labour and education, following up on the recommendations of the recent expert meeting on this subject organized by the government of the Netherlands and building on preparations for the Hague Global Conference on Child Labour in May 2010.

► Civil society, including children and youth representatives, should mobilize and engage with lawmakers to ensure adequate resources and legal protections for marginalized populations and appropriate supporting policy frameworks.

► EFA partners will verify that national legislation is aligned with human rights principles and that educational policies and programmes are aligned with and adhere to such legislation.

### **3. Towards increased, effective financial and political support for education**

The global financial crisis has provided a stark reminder of the realities of global interdependence. Education has a significant role in preventing financial, economic, food and climate crises, but resources are scarce. It is important to make a better case for education with a focus on development outcomes and results if it is to compete effectively with other sectors for scarce resources and political support. The financial and economic crisis is also a time for innovation, in line with the commitments of the Paris Declaration (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action on aid effectiveness (2008).

Recognizing that the vast majority of resources are provided by national governments, education systems must reorganize their systems to use resources more efficiently and build up reserves to prevent future crises, supported by international aid. They must be serious about redistributive budgeting and transfer resources from rich to poor areas. International aid should be directed to support governments in increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the total education resource package.

► National governments will increase or at least strive to protect current budget allocations for EFA, with renewed focus on greater efficiency and equality in budget spending and distribution. With the support of development partners, they will strengthen national capacities, where appropriate, and present a unified voice for preparing strategies, managing in-country resource flows and coordination mechanisms.

► Development partners will aspire to deliver aid commitments that have been pledged and will increase aid and up-front support in a sustainable and predictable manner to counteract revenue losses from 2008 and 2009. We must ensure that support from the IMF is flexible and consistent with achievement of the EFA goals.

► We support urgent and ambitious reform of the EFA-FTEI, including paying greater attention to conflict-affected countries, based on its evaluation findings.

►EFA partners agree to further explore innovative financing engaging with non-traditional donors and involving universities and research institutions. We will increase the capacity of aid, better advocate about its role, and strengthen monitoring of aid portfolios of all new donors through global, regional and national processes. Renewed attention to South-South and triangular cooperation will also be included. EFA partners will explore the possibility of creating a new fund to encourage innovative approaches to raising and delivering funding through risk-taking and lesson-learning.

►EFA partners will increase assistance to areas affected by conflict as part of humanitarian aid, incorporating innovative financing modalities.

►UNESCO and EFA partners will review the HLG to provide better political leadership, including how to increase international mutual accountability using an improved evidence base to hold donors to account. Education financing and other challenges should be at the forefront of G-20 discussions. We must develop a well-sequenced and aligned plan that makes optimal use of opportunities presented by the 2010 World Economic Forum annual meeting, “1 Goal” Campaign, EFA-FTI reform and replenishment, the G-8 summit, the G-20 summit, and the MDG Summit to make the resources available for education.