



United Nations Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization



The Newsletter
of UNESCO's
Education Sector

Education TODAY

LITERACY? YES. BUT WHEN?

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If efforts to teach the millions of illiterates to read and write are to succeed, some questions must be answered. Focus, a four-page dossier, looks at the scope of illiteracy worldwide, at who should be targeted, at what works and at why governments are not more active.

EDITO

To link a coming decade with a particular cause – or a coming year with a special theme – is a tradition of the United Nations System. But what proportion of UN staff – let alone of the general public – can name the current ‘decades of this’ or ‘years of that’? I suspect it is embarrassingly small. The UN tradition of designating periods for giving close attention to particular phenomena is losing credibility and effectiveness. This should worry us as UNESCO’s Education Sector gets ready to co-ordinate the UN Literacy Decade from 2003 to 2012. What can we do about it?

Our challenge is to make the Literacy Decade an effective vehicle for mobilizing energy and resources and, above all, to demonstrate by 2012 that there are more literate people in the world than if we had continued with business as usual.

We start with an advantage. While the subjects of some UN decades are controversial, no one denies the importance of literacy. It affects everyone. In her important new book, *Does Education Matter? Myths about Education and Economic Growth*, Alison Wolf demolishes much of the current political orthodoxy about the importance of state support for education. But she remains absolutely clear that ‘an overwhelmingly strong case can be made for the state’s responsibilities in basic education’.

The Literacy Decade gives us the opportunity to focus more attention and effort on this absolutely fundamental outcome of basic education. We must not see the drive for literacy as in competition with the wider push toward basic education for all. Education for All is UNESCO’s core task. We must rather make the Literacy Decade a flagship programme within the wider EFA campaign by mobilizing the commitment of those who attach special importance to the Dakar goal of reducing illiteracy by half by 2015.

If we keep our eyes on that quantitative and demanding target we shall also ensure that we adopt a practical approach to organizing the Literacy Decade. Our purpose is not to develop new theoretical frameworks for discussing literacy, nor to create new institutions. While these may be by-products, the overarching goal is to liberate hundreds of millions of our fellow citizens by getting them to learn to read and then to keep on reading.

John Daniel
Assistant Director-General for Education

Computer skills open up doors

Computers demystified for teachers, students and community members in south Lebanon

There were seven computers in the Rmeish primary school in south Lebanon but neither the teachers nor the pupils knew how to operate them. This was in 2000 in the territory returned by Israel to Lebanon.

“An assessment found that computer skills were sorely lacking in the community,” says Ramzi Salamé of UNESCO Beirut. Since then, a UNESCO project launched with the government in Bint Jbeil, Marjeyoun and El-Khiam in May 2001 has provided computer training to 650 people.

Three educational resource centres, funded by UNESCO to the tune of \$24,000, have been opened to provide basic computer training. Priority is given to school teachers, students at teacher-training colleges and parents who have children in school. If places are available, community members can also enrol. The courses are free for teachers and students; others pay a small fee.

“Although informatics was part of the new curriculum, nobody was teaching it due to lack of training,” says Joumana Nada, a 28-year old French teacher. “I can now operate a computer and I’ve started to teach the subject.”

Soldiers in activity signed up too. “We wanted to send out the message to army officers that soldiers also have the right to education,” adds Salamé. “No matter how much I know, I will remain illiterate unless I can use a computer,” says Mansour Zahredine, a 40-year-old army sergeant. Former journalist Nakad Makhoul is unemployed. He hopes it will help him find a job.



Young and old learn to use computers

“People have started buying computers and students are passing on their skills to fellow students,” says Salamé. “I wished I had taken this course before,” says 14-year-old Faten Hamadeh. “All my friends at school want to take it.” But the snowball effect doesn’t stop there. UNESCO has developed specifications for setting up computer laboratories in schools: norms concerning the danger of

exposure to sunlight, the negative effects of dust and all about electricity supply. The business community is being mobilized to overcome the severe shortage of electricity. A local restaurant owner agreed to share his generator with the Bint Jbeil centre and the Health Minister personally authorized a public hospital to provide the Marjeyoun Centre with electricity.

Another offshoot of the project is a drive to provide public schools with computers. Businesses and private individuals are donating their obsolete computers which, once refurbished and equipped with new software, are delivered to schools. To date, 500 computers have been donated and one philanthropist gave 200. “We intend to extend the strategy to the entire country,” says Salamé.

Contacts: Ramzi Salamé and Noha Bawazir, UNESCO Beirut; E-mail: r.salame@unesco.org or n.bawazir@unesco.org

Former street toughs call it a

Skills training brings street children and young delinquents in Bamako back

Mohamed Traore, 16, is enthusiastically planing away in a carpentry shop, his T-shirt covered in wood-shavings and his face running with sweat. He’s been learning the trade for three years now at the workshop run by the special youth centre in Bamako set up in 1987 by Enda Third World, a non-governmental organization.

The centre teaches disadvantaged children a skill, such as carpentry, dyeing, painting and house-building. Since it opened, 500 boys and girls have learned a trade and how to read and write.

But it’s not easy to get that far. Mohamed and the others in the centres are troubled children and it’s difficult to win their trust and convince them of the importance of education.

“They need to have faith in their future before accepting education,” says Florence Migeon of UNESCO’s programme for the education of children in difficult circumstances.

UNESCO, in cooperation with P.A.U. Education, a Spanish publisher, launched “The White Book of Our Future” project in 2000 to get children like Mohamed to express their thoughts about tomorrow and gain confidence in the future. In the book 200 Malian street children draw and write about their daily lives and their dreams of becoming nurses, drivers or journalists. Their contributions have been published and sent to the authorities.

“We want to demonstrate the enormous but neglected talent of these boys and girls living on the street” comments Migeon. “Many of them have been in school but have often been rejected by it. We therefore need to listen to the youngsters’ own ideas about how to bring them back into society or they’ll just run away from us.”

Mohamed never wants to go back on the street. The scars on his arm and head show how tough life was then. “I lived by stealing,”

Violence in schools

Violence has penetrated Brazilian schools, according to a new study by UNESCO Brasilia



Youth violence is flourishing in Brazil, where students easily get hold of weapons

One of the major findings of the study was the availability of arms. Some 9 per cent of students said they knew where – and from whom – arms could be bought and 55 per cent of these said that getting hold of a weapon was easy. Students whose families held firearms reported witnessing more violent outbreaks than those of parents who did not. The students themselves are the most frequent victims of violence, followed by teachers and other school staff. Obtaining drugs seemed to pose no problem either. “The square right in front of the school is a trafficking spot,” says a private school teacher.

Nor are private schools spared. Although the incidence of incivilities is less frequent, the difference is not significant, the study reveals. “What surprised us was the number of students who carried guns and knives,” added Werthein.

The study, which took two years to compile, was conducted among 55,000 people – parents, students and teachers. Sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Justice, provincial ministries of education and fourteen municipalities as well as international aid agencies, the study involved 340 state and private schools in 14 major Brazilian cities. “It’s the biggest study of its kind ever carried out in Latin America,” says Werthein.

Next steps? Municipal and federal authorities are now using the study to define public policies to improve the school environment and stem absenteeism. Programmes such as the ongoing UNESCO Schools for Peace, currently running in over 400 schools, are likely to be set up or expanded. Based on earlier research pointing out that violence peaked at week-ends, this project opens schools on Saturdays and Sundays to provide cultural, sport and artistic activities and keep youth out of trouble.

Contact: J. Werthein, UNESCO Brasilia,
E-mail: uhbrz@unesco.org.br

Policeman Israel Melo da Silva was shot by students in the Senador Novaes Filho state school in Recife, Brazil, on 27 May. Ironically, the shoot out is thought to be students’ reaction to a police clampdown on drugs and arms in the school premises.

A recent UNESCO Brasilia study on gangs and drug trafficking in or near schools *Violencias nas Escolas* makes some chilling revelations. Some 4 per cent of the students surveyed said they had or have had a firearm and 70 per cent of these (almost 130,000 students) reported that these weapons were for use in schools.

“We wanted to go into the schools to get a first-hand account of the phenomenon to better understand why youth violence is flourishing in Brazil,” says Jorge Werthein, Director of UNESCO Brasilia.

day in Mali

into society

He admits. “When I was caught, I’d get beaten. But I thought it was the only way to survive. I never want to live like that again.” Today Mohamed earns enough to buy food and clothes, and has rented a house with a friend for which Enda will pay half the rent. He dreams of setting up his own workshop and becoming a famous carpenter.

The Mali experience is now reaching out. Honduras has also produced its White Book in which more than 100 children participated and the concept is now being implemented in Europe where marginalized children in Barcelona, Marseilles and Brussels will soon get a chance to express their hopes for a better future.

Contact: Florence Migeon, UNESCO Paris.
E-mail: f.migeon@unesco.org
Additional reporting: Bréhima Touré of Syfia Mali

Literacy – the 877 million

If efforts to transform the lives of hundreds of millions of people by teaching them to read and to be answered. Why are governments not more active? What works? How are the results to be



Erik Staal

“My life is tilling the soil. I don’t need to read. The Bible? They tell us about that at Mass. The news? I listen to the radio. The newspaper costs the price of a kilo of salt for my kids,” says Godfroid Bimenyimana, a 57-year-old Rwandan farmer.

Godfroid and millions like him have no desire to read and write because they do not see the direct benefits. They think it will not change their lives.

So why force literacy on people? For Professor H. S. Bhole, a literacy expert, “reading and writing are the second culmination of our humanity”, after speech. By failing to provide literacy, we deprive people of being fully human, he says.

For Claudia Harvey of UNESCO, “it’s a moral issue. Can we justify excluding 877 million from participating in the modern world

just because they are rural and difficult to reach?”

Literacy is important, says Adama Ouane of the UNESCO Institute for Education, “because it’s the key to the toolbox that contains empowerment, a better livelihood, smaller and healthier families, and participation in democratic life.”

A measure of its importance, he says, is the fact that two of the six goals of the Dakar Framework for Action – the international pledge made in 2000 to provide education for all by 2015 – mention adult literacy. But since literacy is the “key of keys”, it permeates all six goals.

The gains for women in particular are immense. For example, a study in Bangladesh showed that women with secondary edu-

cation were three times more likely to attend a political meeting than women with no education.

What is literacy? Literacy is more than the ability to read, write and do arithmetic. It comprises other skills needed for an individual’s full autonomy and capacity to function effectively in a given society. It can range from reading instructions for fertilizers, or medical prescriptions, knowing which bus to catch, keeping accounts for a small business or operating a computer.

The scope of the problem

In 2000 there were some 877 million illiterate adults, with 113 million children not attending school. More than two-thirds (68 per cent) of these illiterates can be found in East and South Asia. Worst hit are females,

left behind

write are to succeed, some questions have measured? And why is literacy so important anyway?



who account for up to two-thirds of all illiterate adults. In some regions, ethnic or linguistic minorities lose out, in others those who live in remote areas; often they overlap. Illiteracy rates in the Arab region and sub-Saharan Africa are respectively 38 per cent and 37 per cent. In Latin America and the Caribbean they are 12 per cent.

In developed nations functional illiteracy is also widespread. An OECD adult literacy study of twenty industrialized countries found that at least one in four adults fell below the level needed for coping with demands of daily life and work in a complex society.

Why are reading skills so poor? For Winsome Gordon, Chief of the UNESCO Section for Primary Education, training in how to teach reading is weak and the school curriculum does not put enough emphasis on it. "Schools

need to spend more time on reading so that children are permanently literate by the end of the primary cycle," she says.

Motivation to learn is essential, and for many, religion provides it—to read the Bible or the Koran. For others it is the desire to write a personal letter, to earn money, to make something of their lives because they missed out on school or to help with their children's education. Or a will to be more autonomous and not to have to depend on others.

Meeting local needs

The will to learn to read is greatest when courses are in the learners' own language and relevant to their lives. Action Aid's innovative grassroots project REFLECT uses materials developed by local communities: maps, diagrams, calendars and stories, songs and drama.

INTERVIEW

Community learning in Mexico

Mexico is introducing a new concept for adult learning. Interview with Ramón de la Peña Manrique, Chairman of the Presidential Commission on Adult Learning

What is the scale of Mexico's illiteracy problem?

In Mexico, half of the population is left behind. Out of a population of 65 million adults, 5.9 million are illiterate, 11.7 million did not finish grammar school and 14.9 million have not completed junior high school. Every year 800,000 more Mexicans join their ranks.

You are president of CONEVYT, the National Council of Education for Life-Long Learning. What is it?

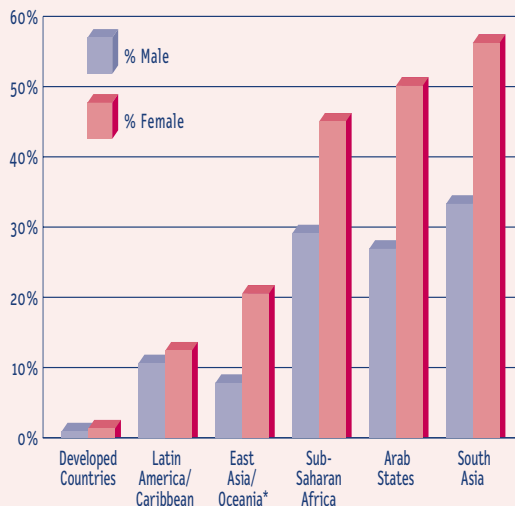
CONEVYT is an inter-secretarial commission including education, health, social development, agriculture and communications, with a budget of about \$100 million. We are responsible for creating a national educational system for those 32.5 million Mexicans left behind, offering them an education relevant for their lives and work. We are doing this through modern "community plazas". These plazas offer, satellite education programmes, videos, CDs and books; as well as educational portals on the Internet. We already have 320 plazas. This year we will have 2,000 more, and by the end of 2006 we will have 20,000.

What is the response of users?

Very good; in some cases they have developed their own internet sites. They see the computers and the portal as something magic—they say, "for the first time the first world has come to us." Between 50 and 200 attend sessions, and when we have 20,000 community plazas we will be catering for 3 million people a month.

Literacy – the 877 million left behind

Estimated world illiteracy rates, by region and by gender, 2000



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics
*Not including Japan, Australia and New Zealand

Community learning centres, run by UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) in eighteen countries from Central Asia to Papua New Guinea is another successful initiative. The centres are outside the formal education system and managed by local people. Their services are tailored to local needs, from basic literacy to education for developing skills and generating income. Unlike school, there is no standard curriculum and no fixed age group.

Small-scale efforts can often show the way forward, says UNESCO consultant Clinton Robinson. In an area where the school system hardly functions in the Democratic Republic of Congo, volunteers teach in the local language, Ngbaka, through which they introduce Lingala, the national language, and French. "It has continued despite the

war because it's run by local people, adapted to their needs, at low cost," says Robinson.

If literacy can improve people's lives, why do governments not invest more in it? Non-formal education, which includes adult literacy programmes, rarely receives more than 5 per cent of national education budgets.

Reluctant governments

A variety of theories are put forward to explain governments' reluctance. Some apparently prefer to forget about adults and concentrate on formal schooling for children to ensure literate future generations. But experts agree that this approach is too short-sighted. "Why oppose adult literacy to school and children's education when their interdependence is evident?" questions Ouane. "Literacy and empowerment of parents and communities matter just as much as for children's schooling," he says. "If parents are illiterate, it's an effort for children to have meaningful experiences at school."

Another theory is that some countries are reluctant to educate and therefore empower the masses because of the obvious link between literacy and democracy. "Governments fear that once you make people literate, they won't be able to misinform them," says Michael Omolewa, Nigeria's Ambassador to UNESCO.

But even when governments want to address the issue, they are handicapped by the information gaps: the number of illiterates, who they are and who is doing what to reach them. "On top of that, the methodologies to collect data are lacking and the capacity to assess and monitor literacy is inadequate," says Margarete Sachs-Israel of UNESCO's Literacy and Non-Formal Education Section. This means, she says, that "the impact of literacy programmes is simply not known". A study of literacy assessment practices in India, China, Nigeria and Mexico called for practical and cost-effective methodologies for literacy assessment at country and programme levels. More broadly, UNESCO is currently developing Non-formal Education Management Information Systems to collect, process and analyse non-formal sector data.

INTERVIEW

The fight for non-formal education in Pakistan

Punjab has high illiteracy rates, especially among women. Interview with Shaheen Rahman, Minister of Social Welfare, Women's Development, Literacy and Women's Empowerment in this Pakistan province.

What is the current situation in Punjab?

In the province about a third of women are literate, and 30 per cent of children are out-of-school. The situation is worst in the southern part, where about 80 per cent of all adults are illiterate. The main literacy programmes involve nearly 10,000 learning centres teaching about 360,000 people, 95 per cent of whom are young women and girls. NGOs and civil society are partners at all steps. About three-quarters of children enter some system of learning.

What are the successes?

There are no drop-outs in the learning centres. Partners are interested in ensuring that girls continue to learn. Interest is being generated, as most learners live in villages and want to study further. People in other areas are exerting pressure because they want such centres too.

Why is it difficult for some countries to tackle illiteracy?

The problems they face are: lack of economic resources; parental feelings that education doesn't pay off fast enough; the belief that girls' education is not important; lack of reading materials; and poverty. Moreover, non-formal education is facing intense problems as the formal system does not accept it as an equal partner. I have to fight like mad to get resources for non-formal education.

What progress do you think will have been made in Punjab by 2015?

Female literacy will have increased from the current 30 per cent to at least 50 per cent. We will also improve the atmosphere for learning, especially among teenage girls. Political commitment and recognition of literacy as essential for poverty alleviation will do the trick!

Why a United Nations literacy decade?

There are 990 million reasons for the 2003-2012 United Nations Literacy Decade: the 877 million illiterate adults in the world, and 113 million children not attending school.

Proclaiming the Decade, the UN General Assembly stated that creating literate environments was essential to eradicating poverty, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development. It also chose UNESCO to lead the Decade.

Its objectives include: reducing the absolute numbers of illiterate people, especially women and those living in places where literacy rates are high – notably Africa and South Asia; creating dynamic literate environments and making a demonstrable improvement in the quality of life of those who take part in literacy programmes.

The Decade is about giving a voice to the voiceless. Illiterate people are excluded, they have no lobbies or groups to fight their cause.

→ Many countries have made genuine efforts to provide literacy to their populations: among them are Botswana, Colombia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania. But a certain degree of controversy prevails as to the effectiveness of some of these campaigns.

Do literacy campaigns work?

“Literacy campaigns work every time and continue to work if we stick with them. Nothing is sustainable if it isn’t sustained,” says Bholá. The campaigns that succeeded, he adds, were typically those that took place in “mobilizing” societies and conducted by socialist movements. They involved the people and mobilized extensively. This large-scale mobilization explains their success.

The challenge to literacy campaigns of the past has been the absence of reading materials. The printed word in some Indian communities can boil down to one, written on a temple wall (Shiva). Some villages have no road signs, health services, clinics, or banks. “You can’t talk of literacy and not create a literate environment, it’s nonsense,” says Bholá. “If governments provided appropriate services, communities would automatically become literate and a print culture would follow.”

Creating a literate society is a matter of generations, says literacy expert Professor C. J. Daswani. “Taking a totally illiterate family to total literacy is a matter of planning for three generations,” he says.

To shift from the absence of print to a dynamic literate environment requires a quantum leap. This is, nevertheless, one of the aims of the UN Literacy Decade which starts in 2003 (see box).

Some new literates have found solutions to the lack of things to read: they create their own materials by writing about their lives, local events and the history of their people, and share their texts around.

Mobile libraries satisfy the demands of other groups and, more recently, the multi-purpose community centres in Africa and Asia, equipped with newspapers and Internet, are increasingly responding to the needs of medical students, farmers and housewives.

What would Godfroid from Rwanda think of these new developments? Some years on perhaps he too – much like his fellow farmers in Uganda’s community centres – will be getting the market price of his farm products from the Internet. ●

INTERVIEW

Literacy challenges in Nigeria

Adult education in Nigeria dates back to the eleventh century. But how is this nation of nearly 150 million people meeting literacy challenges today? Interview with Michael Omolewa, literacy expert and Nigerian Ambassador to UNESCO.

What measures is Nigeria taking to uphold its adult education tradition?

Our tradition remains strong, with emphasis on acquisition of knowledge as an instrument of empowerment. But rural people and women have often been left behind. In 1971 we set up the National Council for Adult Education to ensure that programmes meet learners’ needs because if they don’t, they regard education as a waste of time and won’t participate.

What were the results of the ten-year literacy campaign started in 1982?

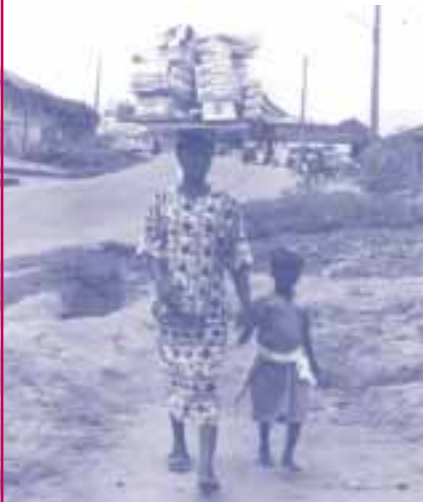
We recorded many achievements: we created the structure – the National Commission for Mass Literacy, with support from organizations such as UNDP and UNESCO. NGOs have demonstrated that they can make an independent contribution. One big programme, started with help from the British Council, created drop-in literacy centres for market women.

What would be major achievements for the United Nations Literacy Decade?

For people to know the value of literacy and its indispensability in global society. The hope is to push forward the EFA goals, and the Decade will supplement EFA efforts by targeting specific groups denied access. In remote areas, stakeholders – governments, NGOs, teachers – who have not been able to perform effectively will be challenged. ●

A view from the grassroots in Africa

Education planners and statisticians are currently struggling to develop national EFA plans of action before the end of the year. But how are people living the education crisis prevailing in many countries? *Education Today* reports from Africa.



UNESCO/Kehinde Osumrayi

In poor towns and cities of Africa, as elsewhere in countries of the South, people live several to a room, which makes doing homework difficult. In Senegal, 60 per cent of children end their education after primary school. In Niger, only 9 per cent of secondary-age children go to school.

“If education for all is to succeed, we have to look after the teachers,” says a Cameroonian teacher. What kind of education can I give a child when I’m hungry?” “On a salary of 50,000 CFA francs (\$73), what else can I do?” says a French teacher in Cotonou, who earns extra money at weekends ferrying people around the city on his motorcycle.

Attitudes get in the way too. “If my daughter goes to school, she’ll get ideas and I won’t be able to control her any more,” says a mother in Dakar. “Having a man is worth more than all the diplomas,” says Béatrice Murorunkwere, a 24-year-old Rwandan who was a brilliant student until she dropped school to get married when she was 14. The reluctance of African parents to send their daughters to school is also fed by the habit of some teachers of demanding sex in return for good marks.

But the education of girls is steadily increasing everywhere. In Madagascar, Namibia and Botswana, there are more girls than boys in some classes.

Other educational challenges threatening to wipe out much of the advances made are HIV/AIDS, civil conflicts and high population growth.

* *Education Statistics 2001 – Regional Report on sub-Saharan Africa* can be obtained from uis.resource-centre@unesco.org or visit www.unesco.org/statistics

Reporting: Syfia International

Four out of every ten children of primary school age in sub-Saharan Africa do not attend classes and adult illiteracy is high, reveals a recent report from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.* And of the lucky few in school only a small proportion reach a basic level of skills.

But one thing is statistics. Another is how Africans themselves are living the education crisis. When asked, most people, especially the younger generations, say that education is absolutely essential. Today, educational advances in the region are often thanks to efforts by civil society, taking over from the state. The proliferation of private schools in every country is also a proof of parents’ readiness to make sacrifices to give their children an education.

However, family poverty and the need to send children out to work continue to be the main reasons for lack of educational progress. In Dakar, children beg at midday for a bite to eat for lunch. “At our school, most children’s parents are illiterate and don’t have a job,” says a headmistress in Douala.

Joining forces for EFA

A global movement such as education for all naturally calls for the involvement of a host of stakeholders – in this case governments, development agencies, non-governmental organizations and civil society. How can such a large group of partners work coherently together, without duplication or gaps?

The newly-developed *International Strategy to Operationalize the Dakar Framework for Action* is a call to join forces in this way. The Strategy sets out areas of joint action under five main headings: planning, financing, advocacy and communication, monitoring and evaluation, and international and regional coordination.

Focusing on the country level, it outlines the international support provided by multilateral and bilateral development partners and non-governmental organizations.

The Strategy was elaborated by an International Task Force composed of key EFA partners and chaired by John Daniel, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education.

Its implementation will be debated at the 3rd Meeting of the Working Group on EFA at UNESCO Paris on 22 and 23 July.

Print copies are available from the Education Sector; electronic version at www.unesco.org/education/efa

Contact: Ulrika Peppler Barry, UNESCO Paris; E-mail: u.peppler@unesco.org

Much more on

3 questions to Christopher Colclough

Editor of the EFA Monitoring Report, the second issue of which will appear in November 2002

1 What is the focus of the second EFA Monitoring Report?

This year's report will look at progress towards education for all, taking each of the six goals separately (primary education, gender, quality, etc.) and providing indicators by country. It will also focus on government planning, civil society participation, and on how the EFA Forums are working. And finally, it will look at financing, the international community's role and the extent to which resources from abroad will be needed.

2 The Monitoring Report is billed as the global annual report on EFA. What will make it such an authoritative report?

That will depend on the resources that go into it and the experts brought in to work on it. Although based at UNESCO in Paris, the people putting the report together will be part of an independent team, advised by an editorial

board. It's a collaborative effort and the product of many agencies. Independence has been an important aim of the international community; this independence lends it authority.

3 Where will the data come from?

A lot of the core data will come from the annual statistical exercise run by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. But we will be getting data from other sources; on the aid framework, they will come from the OECD and the World Bank, and we will also use data on EFA planning from selected national agencies. One can't get around the fact that the annual data collection exercise involves a lag. For the moment it's about 3 years; we might be able to reduce it to two. But realistically one will always be dealing with international data that are two years behind. That's just a fact of life.

Education for All Week celebrated around the World

Thousands of people in more than ninety countries took part in the annual EFA Week, to mark the international pledge made at the World Education Forum (Dakar, April 2000) to provide Education for All by 2015. The Week was celebrated this year from 22 to 26 April.

Teachers, pupils, parents, civil society organizations and international agencies were involved. UNESCO and the Global Campaign for Education jointly organized a worldwide children's drawing competition on "What I Want to Be When I Grow Up". Mass rallies and marches took place in cities such as Washington, Jakarta, Delhi,

Cotonou, Dhaka, Johannesburg and others. In villages and towns, seminars, street theatre, press conferences, football matches, TV debates, workshops for parliamentarians, and radio phone-ins marked the occasion.

"EFA Week is gaining ground," says Abhimanyu Singh, Lead Manager of the UNESCO Dakar Follow-up Unit. "This year's mobilization was impressive, but next year we want to do even better."

Visit the Education for all website (www.unesco.org/education/efa) to find out more about EFA Week and send a friend an efa-card featuring one for the six Dakar goals.

World tour

→ The World Bank's recently proposed "fast-track" initiative to mobilize funds to assist an initial group of twenty-three countries to reach universal primary education has drawn strong support from the international development community.

→ The UNESCO Institute for Statistics organized ten regional workshops in education statistics between March and June 2002. The workshops brought together several hundred experts from Education Ministries in all regions.

→ Ministers of Education and of international development from the Nordic countries met in Oslo in early June to discuss the role of education in development co-operation and the harmonization and acceleration of efforts.

→ In a Memorandum of Understanding signed on 3 May, African Regional Offices of UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and the World Bank agreed to mobilize technical and financial resources to support EFA efforts in the region.

→ The African Regional Forum on EFA was established in April under the leadership of UNESCO Dakar. Three subregional meetings have since been organized to exchange information and develop tools to assist teams in charge of producing the national EFA action plans.

→ Training workshops on national EFA planning have taken place in Latin America and the Caribbean. A sub-regional coordination mechanism headed by UNESCO Santiago was set up at the Regional Meeting on Education for All in Latin America, in April. UNESCO Kingston is currently exploring the setting up of a similar mechanism for the Caribbean.

Learning about slave trade

How to teach about the tens of millions of Africans who were shipped across the Atlantic to a life of bondage?

Slave Voyages, a new educational resource for teachers, is the second volume in a trilogy that tells the history of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Produced by UNESCO's Associated Schools for its Transatlantic Slave Trade Education Project, it seeks to present a balanced view so the teacher can have a variety of perspectives. National coordinators of the project have welcomed the publication. "This is the resource we have all been waiting for," said one coordinator.

Slave Voyages follows *Slave Voices*, which has already been distributed in participating schools in the three regions concerned: Africa, the Americas and Europe. A third volume, *Slave Visions*, is planned.

Contact: Elizabeth Khawajkie or Jean O'Sullivan, UNESCO Paris. E-mails: e.khawajkie@unesco.org; j.osullivan@unesco.org



Educating for the world of work

High quality, relevant and cost effective technical and vocational education and training (TVET) for all is the stated aim of the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre, officially opened in Bonn on 8 April. The Centre's focus is on information exchange, networking and international co-operation.

The value of TVET today is increasingly recognized. "Improving education for the world of work can help increase workers' incomes, provide them with more choices in their working lives, help alleviate poverty and empower individuals who would otherwise be marginalized," says Centre Director Rupert Maclean.

One of the Centre's current initiatives is developing co-operation in TVET among the fourteen countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). This takes the form of a knowledge management project which will allow countries to share policy documents, blueprints, syllabuses, curricula, teacher-training materials, assessment and certification among each other. Training will also be provided to country teams.

Contacts: Rupert Maclean and Hans Kronner, UNESCO-UNEVOC, E-mails: r.maclean@unevoc.de; h.kronner@unevoc.de

Figuring it out in Latin America

In 1998, the Latin American Laboratory for Evaluation and Quality in Education at UNESCO Santiago tested students' learning achievement in Maths and Spanish in Grades 3 and 4. The Laboratory has now decided that its Second International Study, to appear in early 2004, will seek to find out if learning achievement has changed one way or the other in the interval.

The Laboratory is also teaming up with the World Bank to look at learning achievement in Grade 3 in Central America. This study is expected by end 2002.

Contact: Juan Enrique Froemel, UNESCO Santiago, E-mail: jfroemel@unesco.cl

An Association for Guidance and Counselling

Many teachers are not trained to provide the guidance and counselling needed to help young people in their adolescent years. To cope with this challenge, the African Association for Guidance and Counselling was set up in Nairobi in April to provide professional support to counsellors and facilitate networking with international partners. The UNESCO-supported Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development Programme was initiated in Africa in April 1994 to develop non-academic services in this field for children and young people. So far the programme has trained over 8,000 trainers in 27 African countries and is now moving towards online services.

Contact: Winsome Gordon, UNESCO Paris, E-mail: w.gordon@unesco.org

Oasis of Dreams

The village of Neve Shalom/wahat Al-Salam in Israel is an extraordinary place. Jewish and Arab children study together in its elementary school and Israeli and Palestinian adolescents and their teachers are enrolled in a conflict resolution outreach programme called "School for Peace". The elementary school is one of the 7,000 schools belonging to the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network.

In this village, Jews and Palestinians have founded a community aimed at living peacefully together while maintaining their respective cultural heritage and language.

"*Oasis of Dreams: Teaching and Learning Peace in a Jewish-Palestinian Village in Israel*" is a book about this experience, based on a nine-year study by Professor Grace Feuerverger. It is a story about hope in the midst of deadly conflict.

Order from Routledge Falmer, 7625 Empire Drive, Florence, KY, U.S. 41042-2919, Fax: 1 800 248 47 24

Policy briefs on early childhood

In March 2002, UNESCO launched a series of policy briefs on early childhood education and family support issues. The briefs provide practical information on early childhood policy options and offer critical analyses of various policy issues.

They are intended to brief policy-makers, stimulate dialogue among early childhood development stakeholders and increase their capacity to develop viable early childhood policies focused on the child's holistic development.

The third issue in the series, focusing on Sweden's childcare reform is now available.

Previous briefs dealt with the choice between early childhood care, development and education; and planning.

Contact: Soo-Hyang Choi, UNESCO Paris,
E-mail: sh.choi@unesco.org

Responsible youth consumption

It is estimated that if the rest of the world were to consume like the developed world, we would need the equivalent of four extra Earths. As half the world's population is under 20, young people's consumption patterns are decisive for tomorrow's world.

A new Training Kit on Responsible Consumption, published by UNESCO and UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), guides youth through the concept of sustainable consumption. Issues include the food crisis, car dependency, mass tourism, renewable energies, climate changes, animal testing and child labour.

The Kit is part of the YouthXchange project launched following the UNESCO/UNEP survey of the consumption patterns of 10,000 youth in twenty-four countries.

Contact: Julia Heiss, UNESCO Paris,
E-mail: j.heiss@unesco.org
Visit: www.youthxchange.net

JULY

1–3

Forum on the Impact of Open Courseware on Higher Education in Developing Countries
UNESCO Paris • Contact: m.patru@unesco.org

22–23

3rd meeting of the Working Group on Education for All
UNESCO Paris • Contact: u.peppler@unesco.org

23–24

Meeting of the Editorial Board for the EFA Monitoring Report • UNESCO Paris • Contact: u.peppler@unesco.org

AUGUST

1–2

Improve and Innovate in Science Education in Latin America and the Caribbean
UNESCO Santiago • Contact: bmacedo@unesco.cl

5–6

Meeting of Vice-Ministers of Education in Latin America
Organized by UNESCO • Santiago, Chile
Contact: machado@unesco.cl

26 August – 4 September

The World Summit on Sustainable Development
Organized by the United Nations
Johannesburg, South Africa
Contact in UNESCO: v.chinapah@unesco.org

SEPTEMBER

8

International Literacy Day
(this year also celebrated on 9 and 10)
Contact: n.aksornkool@unesco.org

OCTOBER

1–2

International Conference on Education for All: Towards Equality, Quality, Accessibility and Excellence in Literacy organized by the University Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysian National Commission for UNESCO, UNICEF Malaysia and UNESCO Jakarta
Putrajaya, Selangor, Malaysia
Contact: fhaq@ukm.my

5

World Teachers' Day
Contact: r.halperin@unesco.org

17–18

Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Recognition of Qualifications
UNESCO Paris • Contact: s.uvalic-trumbic@unesco.org

30 October – 2 November

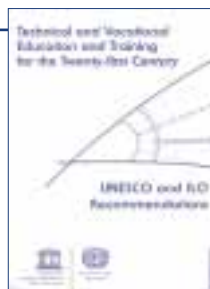
International Sub-Regional Workshop on Information and Communication Technologies in Teacher Training in Central and Eastern Europe • Kiev, Ukraine
Contact: m.patru@unesco.org



● **Financing Secondary Education in Developing Countries: Strategies for Sustainable Growth** by Keith Lewin and Françoise Caillods. This analysis shows that several developing countries will face acute problems in financing their secondary education expansion if present cost structures continue to prevail. The book develops several options for financing the development of secondary education. Available from UNESCO Publishing, 370 pages, 19.82 euros*.

● **The 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers: What it is? Who should use it?** An 8-page brochure published jointly by UNESCO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to popularize knowledge and use of the only international normative instrument covering the rights and responsibilities of the world's 60 million teachers.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training for the Twenty-first Century: UNESCO and ILO Recommendations. This 68-page booklet presents two major policy statements by UNESCO and the International Labour Organization (ILO). UNESCO's concern is centred on technical and vocational education, while the ILO focuses on training for employment, decent work and the welfare of workers.



● **Using Assessment to Improve the Quality of Education** by Thomas Kellaghan and Vincent Greaney. National and international assessments provide information on whether students are acquiring appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes in school. This booklet describes the nature, models, and purposes of national assessments and how information derived from them has been used in various countries. (Fundamentals of Educational Planning, 71, IIEP) Available from UNESCO Publishing, 98 pages, 12.20 euros*.

● **The Book: A World Transformed** edited by Eduardo Portella. This volume examines the role of books in different parts of the world and asks where the book goes from here. If absorbed into the web, will it go into extinction or find a new vitality? Seventeen authors – art historians, philosophers, psychoanalysts, essayists and a caricaturist – contributed to this book. Available from UNESCO Publishing, 188 pages, 21.34 euros*.

● **Learning Throughout Life: Challenges for the Twenty-first Century.** This book brings together the main issues discussed at the follow-up 1999 conference in Lisbon to the report *Learning: The Treasure Within*, prepared by the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century. Available from UNESCO Publishing, 160 pages, 14 euros*.

● **Elementary ICT Curriculum for Teacher Training.**

This 76-page booklet provides guidelines on the different options available when using information and communication technologies (ICTs) in teacher training. One clear message is that pedagogy not technology, should be in the forefront when applying ICTs to teaching and learning. Available from the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE). To order: www.iite.ru. \$20. E-mail: info@iite.ru

● **Teacher Education Guidelines: Using Open and Distance Learning.**

Education ministries and teacher-training colleges are called upon daily to make hard choices regarding how to expand teacher education through open and distance learning. How effective is it? What technologies should be used? At what cost? Answers to these questions can be found in this 68-page booklet.

● **Handbook on Career Counselling: A Practical Manual for Developing, Implementing and Assessing Career Counselling Services in Higher Education Settings** is a practical manual for higher education institutions wishing to start a career counselling centre or strengthen their services to students in this area (UNESCO doc. ED-2002/WS/09).

● **High-level Group on Education for All.**

This document presents the proceedings of the first meeting of the High-level Group on EFA, (UNESCO Paris, 29-30 October 2001). (UNESCO doc. ED-2002/WS/7).

● **International Expert Meeting on General Secondary Education in the Twenty-first Century: Trends, Challenges and Priorities.** Beijing, 21-25 May 2001. Final report. (UNESCO doc. ED-2001/WS/38).

● **Gender Equality in Basic Education in Latin America and the Caribbean** provides a general review of gender equality in basic education in the region. It argues for a more targeted approach to specific population groups. Available in English and Spanish.

Peddro (the newsletter of the PEDDRO project on the prevention of drug abuse through education launched by UNESCO, the European Commission and UNAIDS). This special issue focuses on drug abuse and AIDS, and analyses, inter alia, the state of emergency in Eastern Europe and Asia and preventive education for drug users. Contact: H. Oussedik, UNESCO Paris, E-mail: hm.oussedik@unesco.org



Unless otherwise stated, all publications are available free of charge from UNESCO's Documentation and Information Service, Education Sector. E-mail: oai@unesco.org

* To order from UNESCO's Publishing Office: <http://upo.unesco.org/default.asp>

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Education Today, Executive Office, Education Sector, UNESCO • 7, place de Fontenoy • 75352 Paris 07 SP • France
Tel: 33 1 45 68 21 27 • Fax: 33 1 45 68 56 26/27 • E-mail: t.murtagh@unesco.org

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