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**REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
ON THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN IMPLEMENTATION OF
AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE DAKAR FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION**

SUMMARY

Pursuant to 166 EX/Decision 3.2.1, this report presents UNESCO's follow-up activities to the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, April 2000).

Decision proposed: paragraph 52.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Programme and Budget for education approved by the 32nd session of the General Conference reflects UNESCO's priorities. Education for All (EFA) is the major element of this programme – accounting for almost 80% of the budget. About 70% of the Education Sector budget is decentralized and cluster offices are being provided with more expertise. That is the outcome of a systematic planning process which places the needs expressed by countries within UNESCO's overall strategic plan. UNESCO contributes to achieving the EFA goals in two ways: by responding to requests from Member States for help in reaching each of the six Dakar goals and by coordinating, at the global level, the efforts of international agencies, bilateral donors, governments and civil society towards EFA.

2. Some general trends may be discerned: (a) better integration of EFA in the work of the Education Sector as a whole; (b) closer involvement of field offices and education institutes in the process of EFA planning and capacity-building at country level; (c) the emerging importance of subregional and regional forums in contributing to national efforts; and (d) increasing convergence among international partners in the follow-up to Dakar.

STRENGTHENING EFA COORDINATION MECHANISMS

International coordination

3. Over the three years following the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, April 2000) UNESCO's central leadership role in "coordinating EFA partners and maintaining their collective momentum" gradually gained wider acceptance and recognition among its international partners and in Member States. The two established mechanisms for EFA coordination – the Working Group and the High-Level Group meetings on EFA – have witnessed growing professionalism in their preparation and gained higher levels of interest and prominence. For the first time since Dakar, both meetings adopted a thematic approach in 2003 within the wider framework of EFA, and benefited from wider consultation with and better participation of key partners than in the past.

4. The fourth meeting of the Working Group on EFA (Paris, 22-23 July 2003) concentrated on four key international "flagship" programmes or initiatives through which EFA partnerships are expressed: the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI); the Fast-Track Initiative; HIV/AIDS and Education; and the United Nations Literacy Decade. The aim was to seek better ways to ensure the integration of these international initiatives into national planning processes and development frameworks such as UNDAF and PRSPs, and to improve the linkages between them.

5. The deliberations in the High-Level Group are now closely related to the findings of an analytical and authoritative global monitoring report on EFA and therefore tend to be more empirical and inter-active. The Group is far more aware of its potential impact and the need to follow through on its recommendations, particularly in regional and subregional forums. The third meeting of the High-Level Group (New Delhi, 10-12 November 2003) benefited from the extensive media coverage following the global launch of the monitoring report in New Delhi, the theme of gender, the presence of high-level representatives and the events surrounding it – the Children's Parliament on EFA and the International Seminar on Child Labour and EFA.

6. The New Delhi Statement includes an Action Agenda on EFA for governments, donor countries and international agencies as well as non-governmental and civil society organizations. The Action Agenda focuses on immediate supportive and strategic actions towards gender parity by 2005 and gender equality by 2015. The High-Level Group Communiqué asks UNESCO to:

(1) continue to play the key role in EFA coordination; (2) review and enhance its capacity for coordination; and (3) ensure more effective linkages between the Working Group, the High-Level Group and the Fast-Track Initiative Partners Group (http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/Communique_Final_EG.DOC).

7. The fourth meeting of the High-Level Group on EFA will be held in Brazil (Brasilia) in mid-November 2004 on the theme of quality in EFA. This will be followed immediately by a meeting of the Fast-Track Initiative Partners Group. The Dakar Follow-up Unit, renamed the “International Coordination Division for EFA”, was reinforced in 2004 by the secondment of two professionals from JICA and SIDA.

Regional coordination

8. UNESCO is facilitating closer linkage between EFA coordination at the international level and at regional and subregional levels so as to translate the recommendations of the High-Level Group into strategies and actions attuned to national and regional contexts. To this end, the Director-General of UNESCO addressed three conferences of African Ministers of Education early in 2004, namely, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), held in Ghana (Accra, 9 January 2004); the Portuguese-speaking Countries of Africa (PALOPS) and Equatorial Guinea (Sao Tomé and Príncipe, 13 January 2004); and the Monetary and Economic Union of Central Africa (CEMAC), held in Cameroon (Yaoundé, 16 January 2004). All three ministerial meetings were organized by UNESCO in collaboration with the regional bodies concerned. The Director-General also addressed the meeting of the Pacific Education Ministers in Samoa (Apia, 28-29 January 2004), organized by the UNESCO Office in Apia with the aim of assessing progress towards providing quality education for all and looking at ways to overcome the hurdles specific to the region to achieve this goal.

9. UNESCO Beirut convened the Arab Regional Conference of Ministers of Education on EFA – “EFA National Plans: What’s Next?” (Lebanon, Beirut, 20-23 January 2004) to draw lessons from the plans that have been prepared and to elaborate a joint Arab vision regarding the future steps to be taken at both national and regional levels in order to achieve the EFA goals. The Assistant Director-General for Education gave a keynote speech on “EFA in the Arab World: Past, Present and Future”.

10. In Latin America, 19 National EFA Forum representatives participated in the Second Regional EFA Meeting to review the national EFA plans of action (Santiago, Chile, 24-25 September 2003). The agenda included discussions on the ways to reinforce the monitoring mechanisms of the regional and national EFA forums. In parallel, the international organizations involved in EFA regional coordination met to discuss the EFA agenda.

11. UNESCO Bangkok organized and hosted the fifth EFA National Coordinators Meeting (Bangkok, Thailand, 10-12 September 2003). With a National Action Plan in place in most of the 12 participant countries, the focus of the meeting moved to issues of implementation, monitoring and evaluation, education financing and donor coordination. The participant Member States asked UNESCO to serve as a source of best practices. The 2003 annual meeting of UNESCO Bangkok-Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI) Joint Training Programme on Educational Planning and Management focused on the Dakar life skills goal (Seoul, 9-12 December 2003), with the aim of contributing to the development of relevant and effective indicators for monitoring and evaluating progress towards this goal.

12. The Ministry of Education of Pakistan and UNESCO jointly organized a meeting of Education Ministers from South Asian countries (Islamabad, Pakistan, 4-5 December 2003) to

discuss subregional cooperation in education. The meeting also discussed the conclusions of the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2003/4 and recommended political actions at national and subregional levels.

E-9 Initiative

13. The fifth E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting (Cairo, 19-21 December 2003), on the tenth anniversary of this important initiative on EFA, constituted a watershed in the Initiative's development. The meeting had a special focus on the issue of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). Discussions in the experts meeting were based on the National Case Studies on Early Childhood Services Provision provided by the E-9 countries and the synthesis report Early Childhood Care and Education in the E-9 Countries: Status and Outlook prepared by UNESCO.

14. In response to a critical external evaluation of the E-9 Initiative, the nine Member States came out with a visionary and forceful Declaration that promises to reinvigorate the Initiative and provide it with a potentially effective structure for continuing its future work. While recognizing that progress has been made in EFA during the past decade, the E-9 Education Ministers acknowledged that much is yet to be done and committed themselves to revitalize and realign the E-9 Initiative in light of developments on EFA since the World Education Forum.

15. The Cairo Declaration called on UNESCO and the E-9 countries to establish a rotational secretariat located with the host E-9 country (Egypt in 2004 and Mexico, the host of the sixth Ministerial Meeting, in 2005-2006). The Secretariat will be supported by UNESCO and the national E-9 focal points. Its mandate is to effect follow-up to provide continuity and to monitor implementation of issues highlighted at the biennial ministerial review meeting. The International Coordination Division for EFA now has responsibility for coordinating E-9 at Headquarters. The next E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting will be held in Mexico in two years' time.

Assistance to Member States in preparing and implementing national EFA plans

16. Some 150 Member States have benefited from UNESCO's technical advice and assistance in the preparation and implementation of their national EFA plans of action. Most Member States have their EFA action plans in place. Out of the 46 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, where the EFA challenge is greatest, 37 countries have formulated their EFA action plans.

17. UNESCO has intensified its technical assistance in this field in recent years in light of needs assessments and in response to requests of Member States for support in preparing and operationalizing national EFA plans. Technical support has been focused on areas of critical priority for preparing credible plans: formulating sustainable policy and reform options, appraising realistic resource projections and ensuring linkages with international development frameworks like United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).

18. UNESCO's actions have concentrated on three major priorities: training workshops for groups of countries in core technical areas of EFA planning; seminars to promote exchanges of experience and best practices in preparing and implementing EFA policies and strategies; and direct in-country technical assistance in specific planning areas. Synergy is always sought with other development partners in planning joint missions and capacity-building activities at country level.

19. Training workshops have been organized for strengthening the institutional capacities of education ministries in the areas of sectoral approach, policy formulation and resource projections for EFA and the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI). Capacity-building support was also arranged in regard

to quality EFA, good governance and transparent sector management, especially for the countries that have already attained a higher level of educational development such as some Arab States, countries in transition and Latin American countries.

20. In order to respond to the issues that are most frequently raised in national development programmes and EFA action plans, a series of thematic workshops were conducted to facilitate exchanges of national experiences and best practices. The selected themes were: education staff policies (International Seminar on Teaching Staff Policies, Sofia, Bulgaria, June 2003); decentralization in education (International Seminar on Decentralization Policies and Strategies in Education, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June/July 2003); and financing education development plans in the context of Education for All (International Seminar on Financing and Implementing National Education Plans, Asan-si, Republic of Korea, September 2003).

21. Support in the area of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is mainly provided through policy research and capacity-building. Nine issues of “UNESCO Policy Briefs on Early Childhood” were published in five languages and distributed to all Member States and partners, assisting their efforts to develop and improve early childhood policy. Three publications in the “Early Childhood and Family Policy Series” were produced. Around 200 policy-makers from Asia, Africa, Central Europe and Latin America attended ECCE capacity-building programmes organized by UNESCO. Pakistan, Brazil and Viet Nam were assisted in conducting studies on ECCE financing and developing national policies on ECCE.

22. Through professional and financial inputs to international support teams for EFA, UNESCO contributed to primary education reforms in Nigeria, Angola, Rwanda, Mozambique, Kenya, Viet Nam and Cambodia. In Palestine, UNESCO assisted the re-entry of children into schools. UNESCO also contributed to reforms targeting free primary education in Kenya and Lesotho, teacher training and curriculum reform in Mozambique, and studies in Chad and Niger to inform the planning and introduction of a bilingual education system to bridge the gap between formal education and Koranic schools. In Sudan, UNESCO carried out a basic education sub-sector analysis and the formulation of a basic education programme that will be appropriate to the needs of its diverse society. The Government of Madagascar was assisted in formulating and implementing a joint Programme for the Promotion of Basic Education for All Malagasy Children that has reached over 10,000 youth and adult illiterates at 400 sites. Many of the above-mentioned reform inputs were made primarily through Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAp) and UNDAF mechanisms and in collaboration with bilateral partners, UNDP and the Islamic Bank.

23. To strengthen the provision of textbooks, UNESCO assisted the establishment of the Malawi National Book Policy and the setting up of the Textbook Approval Board in Mozambique. UNESCO continued to improve its cooperation with ADEA and with DFID in efforts to improve the provision of good quality schoolbooks at reasonable costs. IICBA supported Ethiopia with the publication of textbooks for the Amhara region.

24. Sixteen Arab States participated in a consultation on educational governance at local levels, organized jointly by UNESCO and the World Bank (Cairo, Egypt, 8-11 March 2003). The conference explored trends, policies and strategies that would enhance the effectiveness of local governance in implementing EFA. UNESCO and ISESCO sponsored a workshop to assist eight Arab States to plan strategies to improve the educational opportunities of and monitor results for children in abject poverty.

25. The UNESCO institutes (in particular IBE, IIEP, UIE and UIS) continue to play an important role in EFA, mainly through research, studies and capacity-building. Thirty-one trainees (of whom nine were women) from different regions benefited from the IIEP training programme (session

2002-2003) aimed at strengthening capacities of Member States in educational policy-making and planning, with a focus on EFA plans. In 2003, IBE intensified its support to national curriculum reform with an emphasis on EFA issues and the Dakar Framework for Action. UIE contributes to the implementation of the United Nations Literacy Decade by assisting Member States to incorporate specific goals for literacy, non-formal education, and adult and lifelong learning into national EFA plans.

Ministerial round table on quality education

26. Around 100 Education Ministers participated in a Round Table on Quality Education held at UNESCO (Paris, 3-4 October 2003) during the 32nd session of the General Conference to discuss concepts and ways to achieve quality education. The Ministers concluded that quality education should embrace “certain basic knowledge, values, competencies and behaviours that are specifically attuned to globalization but reflect the beauty and richness of our diversity expressed in different forms of belief, spirituality, culture and language”. They stressed the role of teachers and the importance of their training.

27. In the Communiqué issued from the meeting, the Ministers called on the Director-General to: (1) facilitate further studies and exchange of views with the aim of promoting quality education in Member States facing different challenges; and (2) ensure strong links between EFA, the Monterrey Consensus, the United Nations Literacy Decade, the Decade for Education in Africa and the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

Promoting and supporting EFA flagships

28. The Inter-Agency Initiative Devoted to Early Childhood Development. In 2003, six monographs on Action-Research in Family and Early Childhood were published. Early childhood situation reviews were conducted in the E-9 countries and reports were produced. The Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Viet Nam, Mongolia, Senegal and Cambodia were assisted in implementing a project to develop children’s pre-literacy skills at home. Thirteen countries in Eastern-Central Europe were assisted in reviewing their family support policy.

29. The United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) was launched internationally (New York City Public Library, 13 February 2003) by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of UNESCO in the presence of high dignitaries including the President of Mongolia and the United States First Lady (for a full report, see document 169 EX/9). In this context, UIS is initiating a new approach to literacy assessment – Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP) – that aims at improving the quality of literacy data, especially at national level but also for international policy development and monitoring, and for the design of improved literacy programmes.

30. United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI). At its fourth meeting in July 2003, the Working Group on Education for All recommended that UNICEF, as the lead agency, should take the initiative to set up “an international steering committee and prepare a plan with a timeline and indicators”. In response, UNICEF organized a strategy meeting for UNGEI partners in Istanbul, Turkey, in October 2003 that discussed the Draft Terms of Reference for an Advisory Committee. The meeting also developed a Consensus Statement on the urgent action steps that need to be taken in order to achieve the EFA goals on gender parity by 2005. Reference was made to this Consensus Statement in the Communiqué from the third meeting of the High-Level Group in November 2003.

31. UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team on HIV/AIDS and Education. The Team has published a strategy on HIV/AIDS and education, endorsed by 14 agencies. The strategy, used by all its

members as a framework for action, makes education for all central to the fight against HIV/AIDS. Under the leadership of the task team, the initiative Accelerating the Education Sector response to HIV/AIDS in Africa has held a number of seminars to help build the capacity of ministries to tackle HIV/AIDS in the context of the EFA effort. It is also carrying out an international survey on the readiness of education ministries to tackle the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

32. **Teachers and Quality of Education.** A pilot project on “Improving Teachers’ Status and Qualification in Achieving EFA Quality: Case Studies and Policy Actions in Selected South-East Asian Countries”, conducted by UNESCO, was successfully completed in 2003 in close cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Education International (EI). Major outcomes include better advocacy and teachers’ awareness of the Dakar Framework for Action at subregional and national levels, and of teachers’ central role in improving quality as an EFA goal.

33. **The EFA Flagship: The right to education for persons with disabilities – towards inclusion.** The Steering Committee of this EFA flagship has been established and had its first meeting in November 2003. The Committee has representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Disability Organization and Ministries of Education in five regions. A working group on statistics has been established to deal with the present lack of statistics on disabilities and education. This group works closely with OECD and the World Bank.

34. **The Initiative on Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis.** The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) is facilitating a broad base of stakeholders to develop standards, indicators and guidance notes that articulate the minimum level of educational services to be provided in emergencies and the early phase of reconstruction. The standards will be a common starting point for the international community and others in providing guidance and tools on how to achieve a minimum level of educational quality in difficult circumstances.

EFA Global Monitoring Report

35. The EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002 secured influence and reputation internationally in a relatively short time and emerged as the foremost reference tool for EFA during 2003. The 2003/4 Report was the first report in the series to adopt a specific theme, gender and EFA, in addition to its annual task of monitoring and assessing global progress. This was facilitated by appointing a small advisory group comprising internationally distinguished academics with research experience on gender and education issues. A large number of individuals and, in some cases, institutions, were commissioned to write case studies or background papers for the Report. In all, these amounted to some 80 papers, many of which were of high quality. All of the commissioned papers are on the website, and represent an excellent and up-to-date resource upon which all interested parties may draw.

36. The EFA Report Team collaborated closely with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), provider of most of the data on which the Report depends. Relationships with other UNESCO institutes strengthened over the year. The IBE was commissioned to contract a series of studies on curriculum, education policy and the right to education. IIEP also played a role in facilitating some commissioned work and in providing general advice when requested. UIE contributed material on adult education and life skills. Links within the rest of the United Nations system were also developed. This was done partly through meetings with UNDP (Human Development Report) and World Bank (World Development Report) colleagues, and partly through collaborative relationships such as the Millennium Development Project and other forums.

37. The 2003/4 Report was launched in time for the meeting of the High-Level Group in Delhi, India, in November 2003. Reactions in meetings where it has been presented have been lively and mainly highly supportive. Criticisms, where they have occurred, have largely focused upon the lag between data collection and publication. These criticisms arise partly from a lack of appreciation of what is possible in the production of internationally comparable data. Lags of two to three years are standard for data of this kind, because it is difficult to check and agree detailed national information for around 200 countries more quickly. It also reveals some misunderstanding of the impact of data lags on the reliability of the conclusions drawn. In general, although more recent data would be desirable, the conclusions are not particularly sensitive to the lag. In most cases, national aggregates take longer to change significantly than one or two years.

38. In 2003, the summary of the Report was available in three languages by launch date. Next time, all six language versions will be available. It is also to be noted that the Report was fully available on its new, dedicated website on the launch date. The EFA Global Monitoring Report has become the most-used Education website in UNESCO, and it attracts a high proportion of all UNESCO web inquiries. Meanwhile, some 20,000 English copies of the report have been printed and some 8,000 of the French version. Demand is high, and copies are being widely distributed.

39. The Report has been very successful in attracting donor support during its first 18 months of existence, and we are confident this will continue. To date, the funding commitments to the Report are as follows: United Kingdom, \$4,728,750 (2002-2004); Sweden, \$1,864,117 (2002-2005); Netherlands, \$106,160 (2002-2003); Germany, \$1,086,840 (2003-2005); Norway, \$298,913 (2003); and Ireland, \$1,811,400 (2003-2005), totalling \$9,896,180. In addition, UNESCO committed \$100,000 in the 2002-2003 biennium and \$214,000 in the 2004-2005 biennium, and meets the salary of the Team Manager and the administrative overheads incurred by the Report team in Paris. However, a financing gap of \$6.6 million remains to be filled for the period 2005-2007.

Strengthening partnership with civil society

40. Civil society organizations have been recognized as key actors in supporting, improving and transforming education systems, thus contributing to the achievement of the EFA goals. UNESCO has contributed to the regionalization of the Collective Consultation of NGOs to facilitate exchange and joint action on various EFA issues. In 2003, UNESCO contributed to reinforcing participation of national civil society organizations, networks and coalitions in EFA policy dialogue at international level. In cooperation with the UIE, UNESCO supported the contribution of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA to the CONFINTEA V Mid-Term Review 2003: Status and Future Prospects of Adult Learning (Bangkok, 6-11 September 2003).

41. In order to prepare civil society input to the CONFINTEA V Mid-Term Review, UNESCO and the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA supported the organization of on-line forum discussions and workshops with civil society organizations in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Arab region. The contributions are available in the Virtual Library on Non-Formal Education, which is part of UNESCO's Education Website. At the World Social Forum in Mumbai, India, UNESCO and its civil society partners supported workshops on education and lifelong learning.

42. UNESCO cooperates with civil society organizations in assisting countries to design and implement their EFA plans, especially concerning literacy and non-formal education. To enhance professionalism among educators, UNESCO continues its cooperation with the professional associations – International Reading Association, National Reading Associations in Africa, International Association for Counselling and the African Association for Guidance and Counselling. The capacities of civil society organizations are being enhanced through the

implementation of a capacity-building programme in support of EFA in 11 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Advocacy, communication and awareness-raising for EFA

43. Global EFA Week 2003, devoted to girls' education, called on governments to open the doors of learning to women and girls. On 9 April 2003, at the initiative of the Global Campaign for Education, 1.8 million people broke the world record of the largest simultaneous lesson in history. UNESCO is joining hands with the Global Campaign in preparing the Global EFA Week 2004 (19-25 April 2004) which will feature the world's biggest lobby by children for children. This lobby is a chance for more than 100 million children all over the world, who do not have access to school, to voice their right to education and for civil society to urge political leaders on their behalf to make that right a reality. The voices of children will be heard in national parliaments/legislatures, in state assemblies and in village councils.

44. The EFA website is regularly updated with the latest news on EFA around the world. The two issues of the Sector's quarterly newsletter Education Today (June and October 2003) carried a two-page spread on current EFA issues. A special issue of the EFA electronic bulletin was produced on the occasion of the Working Group on EFA meeting (22-23 July 2003) and disseminated to over 1,500 addresses. An EFA advocacy pack, containing a poster, a six-minute video on the six Dakar goals, postcards and stickers, was produced in English, French and Spanish, and distributed widely. Versions in Arabic, Chinese and Russian are foreseen in the coming months.

45. The quality of the presentation on EFA made at the coordination segment of ECOSOC (July 2003) and the agenda notes for the United Nations system Chief Executives Board (CEB) meeting (April 2003) and United Nations Development Group (UNDG) meeting (October 2003) have elicited praise and contributed to enhancing EFA visibility within the United Nations system. UNESCO is represented in the United Nations Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality and has contributed to the preparation of its Report on Achieving the Millennium Development Goal of Universal Primary Education.

Contribution to the Fast-Track Initiative and other resource mobilization efforts

46. The FTI Donors Group that met in Norway (Oslo, 20-22 November 2003) answered the call from the High-Level Group for "a clear framework to improve the effectiveness of the FTI and to mobilize resources for endorsed countries". This meeting resulted in: the extension of the FTI to all low-income countries; the establishment of a multi-donor Catalytic Fund to assist those FTI countries that do not have an adequate donor presence; and a Facility for Programme Preparation to help countries without an education sector plan to develop one. It was also decided that the FTI Donor Group will meet back-to-back with the meeting of the High-Level Group on EFA (Brazil, November 2004). A Steering Group for the FTI Secretariat has been established, which will be composed of the current Bureau of the World Bank, UNESCO and the two co-chairs of the Donors Group. UNESCO's membership of this Steering Committee will serve to enhance the impact of the High-Level Group and emphasize the Organization's coordination role in EFA. UNESCO can take satisfaction from having contributed to these major developments on FTI.

47. It is important to recall that so far, at least \$210 million of additional donor resources have been mobilized for the first set of FTI countries. A further \$235 million has been committed to the new FTI Catalytic Fund for 2004/7 from four donors (Belgium, Italy, Netherlands and Norway). Six FTI countries were granted a total of \$35m from the Catalytic Fund for 2004: Gambia (\$4 million), Guyana (\$4 million), Mauritania (\$2 million), Nicaragua (\$7 million), Niger (\$8 million), Yemen (\$10 million).

48. UNESCO offices have been coordinating their efforts with resident donor groups and the World Bank to help selected countries prepare their proposals for financial assistance under FTI. Since the FTI is now open to all low-income countries, UNESCO will continue to assist such countries in developing credible national EFA action plans for mobilizing financial support.

49. Reaffirming the Dakar commitment that no countries seriously committed to Education for All will be thwarted in their pursuit of this goal by a lack of resources, the Director-General of UNESCO signed the “Nordic Memorandum of Understanding” between UNESCO and Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden in support of EFA activities (Paris, 20 October 2003). This Memorandum proposed a funding approach that allowed UNESCO to use a pool of donor funds in a flexible manner, while ensuring better integration of extrabudgetary funding with the priorities in the Approved Programme and Budget. This facilitated a move away from a fragmented donor-driven project-based approach towards a coherent programme that reflects UNESCO’s priorities as articulated in the sector’s new approach in the proposal entitled: “Capacity-Building for EFA: Extrabudgetary Programme for Technical Services to Member States”. This was elaborated through a comprehensive consultation process involving the whole of the Education Sector, field offices and relevant institutes, and constitutes a coherent presentation of the technical services UNESCO can offer at country level to assist Member States in realizing the six Dakar goals. The programme is divided into two parts: support to capacity-building in educational planning and support in implementing these plans. UNESCO thus offers strategic assistance in response to requests from Member States and in accordance with UNESCO’s comparative advantages. The support in 2003 was concentrated on EFA planning, with more than 60 countries receiving assistance. UNESCO received a contribution of \$4.3 million from Nordic countries during the year: Norway (\$1,700,000), Denmark (\$1,200,000) and Sweden (\$1,400,000).

50. During 2003, a contribution of \$800,000 was received from Italy to support the “Capacity-Building for EFA” programme through projects embedded in the programme.

51. The “Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Education for All Programme”, established in 2002, aims to provide assistance to the implementation of activities related to the Dakar Framework for Action, mainly in the Asia and the Pacific region. In 2003, UNESCO received approximately \$ 934,900 for EFA projects in the region.

Proposed draft decision

52. In light of the above, the Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 166 EX/Decision 3.2.1,
2. Having examined document 169 EX/10,
3. Reaffirms its commitment to the importance and centrality of the follow-up to the World Education Forum in UNESCO’s education programme;
4. Requests the Director-General to ensure that, as recommended by the third High-Level Group, UNESCO continues to play the key role in EFA coordination as stated in the Dakar Framework for Action, reviews and enhances its capacity for coordination, and ensures more effective linkages between the Working Group on EFA, the High-Level Group and the FTI Partners Group;

5. Invites the Director-General to submit a report to it at its 171st session on the progress achieved in the implementation of and follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action.