

Hundred and sixty-sixth Session

166 EX/7
PARIS, 18 February 2003
Original: English

Item 3.2.1 of the provisional agenda

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

SUMMARY

The World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000) mandated UNESCO to “coordinate EFA partners and maintain their collective momentum” as well as to “refocus its education programme in order to place the outcomes and priorities of Dakar at the heart of its work”.

The Executive Board by 164 EX/Decision 3.2.2 requested the Director-General to strengthen the collective momentum in regard to the follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action in line with the priorities established in the Medium-Term Strategy for 2002-2007 (31 C/4) and the Programme and Budget for 2002-2003 (31 C/5).

In accordance with 164 EX/Decision 3.2.2, paragraph 6, the Director-General submits this report to the Executive Board at its 166th session describing the progress achieved in the implementation of and follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action, with particular regard to the implementation status of national Education for All (EFA) plans in the light of the comprehensive EFA strategy, including the necessary mobilization of resources, advocacy and communication plans, in all regions of the world without exception.

Decision proposed: paragraph 45.

INTRODUCTION

1. To give effect to 164 EX/Decision 3.2.2, UNESCO has begun to reinforce the capacity of its Education Sector in coordinating EFA partners and monitoring progress towards achieving the goals set at Dakar. This report concerns mainly UNESCO's coordination role and programme activities that involve cooperation with external partners. It describes how UNESCO has contributed to promoting EFA, particularly technical assistance to Member States in preparing national EFA plans, international coordination to strengthen EFA partnerships, and global monitoring and evaluation on the progress towards achieving the EFA goals.

Preparation of national EFA plans

2. In response to a recommendation of the Dakar Framework for Action asking countries to prepare comprehensive national EFA plans by 2002, UNESCO has provided technical assistance to Member States in two directions: in-country technical assistance and training seminars for groups of countries. During the second half of 2002, UNESCO Headquarters conducted a survey to assess the progress made in designing EFA plans in Member States. By December 2002, some questionnaires were returned from countries in all UNESCO geographical regions (11 from sub-Saharan Africa, 12 from Arab States, 14 from Asia and the Pacific, 19 from Latin America and the Caribbean, and 10 from Europe and North America).

3. According to the analysis of the survey responses and on the basis of UNESCO's field experience, there seem to be three broad categories of countries. The first category comprises OECD countries (apart from a few exceptions such as Austria, Iceland, Portugal and Turkey) and some transition countries that consider EFA a matter only for developing countries and therefore see no need to prepare/strengthen their education plans in the light of Dakar. The second category is made up of countries that consider all or part of the EFA agenda as relevant to their contexts and are engaged in preparing/reinforcing their plans accordingly. The majority of developing countries, some transition countries (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia and the Republic of Moldova) and a few OECD countries fall under this category. The third category comprises countries that consider EFA plans necessary but are still in the initial stages of preparation of their plans due to emergency, conflict, political instability or lack of capacity.

4. The survey reveals firstly that in more than half of these countries, including many developing countries, national action plans for EFA have not been developed or strengthened in response to the Dakar recommendation in this regard; and secondly that the plans for EFA require further work to include policy reforms, credible resource projections and measures for genuine partnerships in the context of the national development frameworks and existing sector strategies. The *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* describes and analyses the progress of preparation of national EFA plans and the efforts undertaken by developing countries in improving planning for EFA (see Chapter 3, Planning for Education for All).

5. UNESCO has provided support at regional and subregional levels to Member States in preparing EFA plans. A few regional events are described below.

6. UNESCO Dakar has undertaken a survey to map countries' status in regard to the preparation of their national EFA action plans. At the Eighth Conference of Ministers of Education of African Member States (MINEDAF VIII), about 30 countries confirmed that their draft EFA action plans were ready. UNESCO Dakar has so far received 27 draft plans which are being assessed. To help countries in the preparation of their plans, UNESCO Dakar, in collaboration with IIEP and UIS, has conducted capacity-building activities in the areas of education management, planning and monitoring.

7. In the Arab region, ARABEFA partners organized thematic workshops (on early childhood education, girls' education, literacy and adult education, and quality of education) from April to June 2002 to assist the Arab States in the preparation of their national EFA plans. In addition to these workshops, UNESCO Beirut sent special consultancy missions to 10 countries in the region between July and November 2002 to assist them in developing their plans. UNESCO Cairo translated into Arabic the *EFA Planning Guide* prepared by the Regional Education Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok).

8. In order to promote cooperation among countries in their planning efforts, the East and South-East Asian Subregional EFA Forum and the United Nations Inter-agency Thematic Working Group on EFA organized the third and fourth National EFA Coordinator's Meetings (Bangkok, May and October 2002). At the request of Directors of Education from Member States in the Pacific who met in Nadi, Fiji, August-September 2002, UNESCO Apia prepared a *Synthesis Report of the Pacific EFA Action Plans*.

9. UNESCO-organized subregional training workshops in Latin America (Santiago, April 2002) and the Caribbean (Port of Spain, May 2002) gave orientation to national EFA coordinators in EFA planning. An important outcome of the Santiago meeting was the establishment of a Regional EFA Forum in Latin America. Another EFA training workshop was organized in the Caribbean (Kingston, Jamaica, December 2002).

10. UNESCO Moscow organized an international workshop on Elaboration of the EFA National Action Plan (Moscow, September 2002) for EFA national coordinators and planners in Europe. UNESCO, in cooperation with UNICEF and UNDP, organized a national training workshop on Strategic Planning in the Republic of Moldova from 4 to 6 September 2002. Subsequently, in cooperation with UNICEF, UNDP and ministries of education, UNESCO organized a subregional conference related to Education for All Planning and Policy Implementation (Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, November 2002) aimed at introducing the concepts of strategic planning and management as well as techniques for educational resource projections to education specialists involved in EFA planning.

Strengthening coordination mechanisms

International coordination

11. *An International Strategy to put the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All into Operation*, published mid-2002, is recognized as a reference document proposing ways to utilize support from the international community at the country level. Focusing on five major actions (planning; communication and advocacy; financing; monitoring and evaluation; and international and regional mechanisms), it provides a clear framework for current and future actions. It complements individual EFA strategies to which agencies have committed themselves, serving as a stimulus for full cooperation in implementing the 12 strategies of the Dakar Framework for Action. The strategy was developed through extensive collaboration and participation from a wide range of EFA partners.

12. Discussion at the third meeting of the Working Group on EFA (Paris, 22-23 July 2002) focused on four key areas of the Dakar follow-up: planning, financing, advocacy and monitoring of EFA. The World Bank presented the framework of the newly launched Fast-Track Initiative for funding universal primary education. Participants, including professionals from developing countries, development partners and civil society organizations, made observations and commented on an outline of the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002* and the provisional programme of the

second meeting of the High-level Group on EFA. The meeting served as a forum for exchange of country experiences on EFA and strengthened the global alliance for the follow-up to Dakar.

13. Members of the International Editorial Board of the EFA Global Monitoring Report attended the Working Group meeting as observers and held their second meeting (Paris, 23-24 July 2002) where they commented on the outline of the 2002 Report and agreed on the theme of Gender for the 2003 Report. It approved a Vision Statement for the Monitoring Report and an outline of a Communications Strategy.

14. The second meeting of the High-level Group on EFA (Abuja, Nigeria, 19-20 November 2002) was held in the heart of sub-Saharan Africa, a region where the prospects of meeting the Dakar goals are the most challenging. The organization, structure, design and outcomes of the meeting benefited from consultations with major EFA partners and through a representative group of *Sherpas*. The well-attended inaugural public session was addressed by President Obasanjo of Nigeria and President Compaore of Burkina Faso. The meeting's participants included 15 Ministers, six representatives of multilateral and bilateral agencies, and four representatives of civil society organizations.

15. Deliberations were based on issues raised by the *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002*, the major findings of which were presented to the Group by the Director of the International Monitoring Team based at UNESCO. Participants from different constituencies informed the meeting about their perspectives and experience. The group of *Sherpas*, with additional representation of developing countries, drafted the Communiqué that was adopted by the High-level Group in its final session (this Communiqué is annexed herewith). The communiqué asks developing countries to review national legislation to ensure that it incorporates provisions for free and compulsory primary education and urges the international community to provide funding and support to developing countries outside the Fast-Track Initiative. The Communiqué highlights the importance of improving the status and working conditions of teachers, which have been exacerbated by the impact of HIV/AIDS, conflict and emergencies and enjoins UNESCO to strengthen its capacity for international coordination of Dakar follow-up activities. The High-level Group emphasized the importance of ensuring the continued priority of EFA in the next G-8 Summit (Evian, France, June 2003) and the Director-General has stressed that the next Summit is a critical opportunity to accelerate the international efforts towards achieving the EFA goals.

16. While the second High-level Group meeting at Abuja was more focused, interactive and outcome-oriented than the first meeting in October 2001, concerns remain about its political weight and its impact as an influential global voice on EFA. In its communiqué, the High-level Group requests UNESCO and other key EFA agencies to ensure that subsequent High-level Group meetings have higher-level representation with stronger capability of mobilizing political commitment towards achieving the EFA goals. The Government of India will host the third High-Level Group meeting on EFA (New Delhi, 11-12 November 2003).

Regional coordination

17. The Eighth Conference of the Ministers of Education of African Member States (MINEDAF VIII) (Dar es Salaam, 2-6 December 2002) adopted a Statement of Commitment, "The Education to Build the New Africa", which appeals to the international community and African governments, particularly within the framework of NEPAD, to make EFA one of the top development priorities on the continent. The General Constitutive Conference of the Forum of African Parliamentarians for Education (FAPED), held immediately prior to MINEDAF VIII, provided opportunities for parliamentarians and ministers to reiterate their commitment to EFA and exchange views on

strategies for achieving EFA. The creation of FAPED is the result of UNESCO Dakar's successful efforts in mobilizing political support for EFA in Africa through regional initiatives.

18. In collaboration with the Government of Bulgaria, the European Commission, the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) and the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association, UNESCO organized an international conference on "Lifelong Learning in Europe: Moving towards EFA Goals and the CONFINTEA V Agenda" in Sofia, Bulgaria from 6 to 9 November 2002. The "Sofia Call to Action" emphasizes the importance of motivating States in Europe and Central Asia to pursue the agendas of EFA and CONFINTEA V and make their lifelong learning policies consonant with these agendas.

19. In the Havana Declaration adopted at the meeting of Ministers of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean (Havana, 14-16 November 2002), the Ministers approved the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean 2002-2017 (PRELAC) and its Follow-up Model, and committed themselves to promoting quality and equity in EFA in the region.

20. Preparations are under way for the forthcoming ministerial meeting of the South Asia EFA Forum (Islamabad, 21-23 May 2003). At a preparatory meeting in New Delhi (9-10 December 2002) it was decided to involve not only ministries of education but also ministries of finance and of planning, as well as civil society organizations during the preparatory process in each country.

21. Following its third meeting (Beirut, Lebanon, 21 January 2002), ARABEFA, the regional mechanism for EFA in the Arab region, has continued its coordination activities. Within the framework of ARABEFA, a range of EFA-related multi-partner activities has been conducted in the areas of educational planning, advocacy and capacity-building.

Partnerships at the International Level

22. A significant step towards fulfilling the Dakar promise that "no countries seriously committed to education for all will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources" is the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI) launched at the meeting of the Development Committee of the World Bank in April 2002. Under this initiative, a first group of 18 low-income and low-enrolment developing countries, each of which had a PRSP, were selected as recipients for early and prompt external assistance in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for education.

23. UNESCO influenced the selection of the first group of 18 countries and advocated expansion of the list to cover E-9 countries with a large proportion of out-of-school children. The eligibility criteria were broadened to include credible EFA Plans that UNESCO has promoted in the follow-up to Dakar. Senior education officials, who have attended several meetings convened on the FTI by the World Bank since May 2002, have consistently stressed the importance of adhering to the broad vision of EFA enunciated in the six Dakar goals. UNESCO Offices are coordinating their efforts with resident donor groups and the World Bank to help selected countries prepare their proposals for financial assistance under the Fast-Track Initiative.

24. At the G-8 Summit (Kananaskis, Canada, 26-27 July 2002) participants discussed how they could work in cooperation with developing countries, relevant international organizations and other stakeholders to achieve the goals of Education for All. They endorsed the Fast-Track Initiative and adopted a series of recommendations to assist developing countries to achieve universal primary education for all children and equal access to education for girls by increasing their bilateral assistance significantly.

25. A meeting of a donors group comprising funding and technical assistance agencies convened by UNESCO and the World Bank, and co-chaired by Canada and the Netherlands and hosted by the European Commission (Brussels, 27 November 2002), considered proposals from the FTI Secretariat for external assistance to seven Fast-Track countries and agreed to support them. This requires an additional US \$400 million over the next three years (2003-2005).

Flagship programmes

26. UNESCO promoted and participated in EFA Flagship Programmes to harness inter-agency resources and expertise to assist countries in their efforts to achieve Dakar goals.

27. United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). A side session on Education for All: Achieving Gender Parity was organized in New York by UNESCO and UNICEF on 8 May 2002, during the United Nations Special Session on Children. An Asian regional UNGEI network was launched in Bangkok in May 2002, comprised of United Nations agencies and international NGOs. It undertakes advocacy in favour of girls' education and promotes networking at national and regional levels to achieve the Dakar goal. The ARAB-EFA Regional Thematic Workshop on Girls' Education (Cairo, 10-12 June 2002) provided technical support to EFA Country Focal Points in planning for Girls' Education as a thematic programme priority in National EFA Action Plans.

28. *Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH)*. In 2002, UNESCO launched a strategy to promote inclusion of the FRESH framework in national EFA action plans through training and capacity-building of EFA national coordinators from ministries of education. By November 2002, EFA coordinators from more than 60 developing countries had participated in workshops. Alongside the advocacy and in-country school-level activities, work on the creation of a FRESH school health website is progressing. In 2002, UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank and Education International jointly published a document and a leaflet, entitled *FRESH: A Comprehensive School Health Approach to Prevent HIV/AIDS and Improve Learning Outcomes*.

29. *UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team on Education*. In March 2002, UNESCO/IIEP established the UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team on Education, which is composed of all UNAIDS co-sponsors as well as CIDA (Canada), DfID (UK), EU, Ireland AID, SIDA (Sweden), USAID, Education Development Center (USA) and the Urban Institute (USA). The team focuses on mobilizing commitment to preventive education and acts as a forum for the exchange of information on the role of education in mitigating the effects of the HIV/AIDS crisis. The Task Team organized a subregional seminar *Accelerating the Education sector response to HIV/AIDS in Africa in the context of EFA* (Mombasa, Kenya, 11-15 November 2002).

30. New Flagship Programme on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion. The secretariat of this flagship, established in 2002, is housed jointly at UNESCO and the University of Oslo, Norway. UNESCO prepared a conceptual paper on Overcoming Exclusion through Inclusive Approaches in Education with a particular focus on the situation for learners with disabilities. An Internet-based course for flexible learning is being prepared. An interim steering committee, consisting of representatives from Uganda, India, Brazil, Norway, UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank, OECD and the International Disability Association (IDA), will meet in Oslo, Norway, on 6 and 7 March 2003 to discuss and decide upon activities that are presently planned by the secretariat.

31. *New Flagship Programme on Education for Rural People*. Following its official launch at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, August-September 2002), UNESCO and partners have organized a series of workshops on various aspects of the Flagship. FAO and UNESCO propose to jointly publish *Education for Rural Development: Towards New Policy Responses* in March 2003.

Cooperation with civil society organizations

32. Civil society organizations have been recognized as active partners in promoting EFA at global, regional, national and community levels. UNESCO joined hands with key civil society partners in education to organize the 2003 Annual Meeting of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA “Towards Comprehensive Visions and Approaches to Education for All” (Porto Alegre, Brazil, 19-23 January 2003). The meeting assessed civil society participation in education planning processes and discussed alternative thinking and practices in education and their relevance for quality education and social change. UNESCO has ensured the presence of civil society organizations at all important meetings on EFA, notably the third meeting of the Working Group on EFA and the second High-level Group meeting on EFA.

33. In order to prepare civil society input to MINEDAF VIII, UNESCO organized the Regional Collective Consultation of NGOs in Malawi (30 September-2 October 2002). UNESCO published a working document for MINEDAF VIII, *The Challenge of Achieving EFA in Africa: Civil Society Perspectives and Positions* and organized the Special Session between African Ministers of Education and African NGOs on the “Future of EFA”.

34. Various activities took place at regional, subregional and national levels to promote the collaboration with civil society organizations, such as the launching, in collaboration with the African Network Campaign on EFA and the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA, of the capacity-building programme for civil society organizations in sub-Saharan Africa in support of EFA (Dakar, Senegal, 14-15 July 2002). UNESCO Beirut, in coordination with UNESCO Cairo, Doha and Rabat, hosted the first Arab NGOs meeting in January 2003. This was the first attempt to mobilize NGOs of the region to participate in the EFA process, both at the country level and regionally.

Monitoring and evaluation of EFA

35. Following the request of the first meeting of the High-level Group (29-30 October 2001) for an authoritative, analytical, annual EFA Global Monitoring Report drawing upon national data and assessing the extent to which both countries and the international community are meeting their Dakar commitments, UNESCO convened an advisory International Editorial Board in January 2002 composed of 15 experienced professionals from governments, multilateral and bilateral agencies, UNESCO’s Institutes and NGOs, from both the North and the South. The Editorial Board agreed on the nature of the Report and the process of producing it. As recommended by the Board, UNESCO recruited internationally renowned experts to lead the Monitoring Team. The Director of the Report Team is Professor Christopher Colclough, on leave from the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, United Kingdom, and the Deputy Director is Steve Packer, seconded from the Department for International Development, United Kingdom. Other members of the team include a senior expert, seconded by the Government of the Netherlands, and the Head of the EFA Observatory of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. The team started work in June 2002. This Team has been funded by grants by the Government of the United Kingdom (\$4.5 million over three years) and the Government of Sweden (\$1.6 million over three years). Document 31 C/5 earmarked \$100,000 for the Report.

36. The *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002, Education for All: Is the World on Track?* was published in English in November 2002, just before the second meeting of the High-Level Group. It assessed overall progress towards the six Dakar goals, national political and financial mobilization and the extent to which the international community has responded to the commitments made in Dakar in 2000. The Report examined national EFA planning processes and it provided new estimates of international financial requirements to achieve EFA by 2015.

37. The Report was launched in London and received worldwide press coverage. It has been translated into French, Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Spanish and Portuguese, and other language versions are foreseen. The Report was used at the donors meeting on the Fast-Track Initiative, in Brussels in November 2002 and at UNESCO regional meetings of Ministers of Education in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.

38. A strong advocacy and communication strategy is being developed by the Monitoring Team, in order to distribute and use the Report widely (through the media, debates, focus meetings). It aims at creating a strong identity for the Report, foster ownership in all regions, reach out to several audiences, provide matter for debate and create expectation around the publication for the years ahead.

Advocacy and communication

39. Preparations are currently under way for the celebration of the Global EFA Week 2003 (6-13 April 2003), “Building Momentum to Eliminate Gender Gaps by 2005”. The role of UNESCO is the mobilization of major actors – UNESCO sectors, field units and Institutes, EFA partners, NGOs, teachers, schools, universities and the general public – in marking the third anniversary of the World Education Forum. A particular effort is being made at the national level to raise awareness in the highest political and administrative circles. A special website (www.unesco.org/education/efa/efa_week/index_new.shtml) provides full information on the event. UNESCO Beirut invited education journalists to an awareness meeting for the support and advocacy of EFA.

40. The quarterly Newsletter *Education Today* continued the publication of a two-page dossier on Education for All in each issue with articles on national, regional and international EFA activities. The EFA website has been regularly updated with news and information about EFA events and activities at the regional and national levels. The trilingual EFA Bulletin covered the meetings of the Working Group on EFA and the High-Level Group on EFA.

41. Senior management of UNESCO has played an important role in providing a high profile to Dakar follow-up activities in international and regional fora and in advocacy for EFA in Member States. The Director-General has consistently stressed that EFA should have the highest priority among UNESCO’s programmes. As a prominent advocate for EFA across the world, he has continuously emphasized its importance in his speeches on important occasions such as the Working Group and High-level Group meetings on EFA and MINEDAF VIII. The Assistant Director-General for Education has also made speeches and presentations on various important occasions to encourage the international community to further its efforts to promote EFA. Such occasions include the Meeting of “Nordic Solidarity” organized by the Nordic Council of Ministers (Oslo, 3 June 2002) and the meeting of Ministers of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean (Havana, Cuba, 14-16 November 2002).

Resource mobilization for UNESCO

42. In order to strengthen its coordination role and programme activities, UNESCO needs to mobilize additional resources from EFA partners. A new approach to cooperation with donors in relation to EFA was established and two key papers were produced: *UNESCO Policy Statement on Cooperation with Donors for the Dakar Follow-up Actions* and *Extrabudgetary Programme for Technical Services to Countries implementing the Dakar Framework for Action*. This approach gives UNESCO the possibility to streamline its extrabudgetary programme, making it supportive of and complementary to the regular programme activities, and allows UNESCO to decide on the Member States and the thematic areas for which the support will be given.

43. This policy has been well received by donors. \$5.3 million were raised in 2002 under this programme: Norway (\$1,500,000), Denmark (\$1,600,000), Finland (\$500,000), Italy (\$1,400,000) and Spain (\$300,000).

44. UNESCO organized three information meetings with bilateral donors: with the Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland), with Benelux countries (Belgium, Flanders, Netherlands and Luxembourg), and with the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Canada and Ireland.

45. In light of the foregoing the Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 166 EX/7 on the implementation of and follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action,
2. Reaffirms its commitment to the importance and centrality of the follow-up to the World Education Forum in UNESCO's education programme;
3. Requests the Director-General to further strengthen UNESCO's capacity to fulfil its international coordination role, as recommended by the Communiqué of the High-level Group, and to maintain the collective momentum in regard to the follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action in line with the priorities established in the Medium-Term Strategy for 2002-2007 (31 C/4) and the Programme and Budget for 2002-2003 (31 C/5);
4. Invites the Director-General to report to the Board at its 169th session on the implementation of and follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action.

ANNEX

Communiqué from the Second Meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All

Abuja, Nigeria

19-20 November 2002

1. We, the participants in the second meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All, met, at the invitation of the Director-General of UNESCO, during 19-20 November 2002 in Abuja, Nigeria. The Government of Nigeria generously hosted the meeting. In fulfilment of our mandate to promote political commitment and mobilize technical and financial resources, we examined the progress that is being made towards the achievement by 2005 and 2015 of six Education for All goals agreed upon at the World Education Forum in Dakar in April 2000.
2. We welcomed the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002 (Education for All. Is the world on track?) as a valuable tool to hold governments and the international community to account for the delivery on commitments set out in the Dakar Framework for Action and the Millennium Development Goals. We find it alarming that, on present trends, only 83 countries have achieved or have a high chance of achieving by 2015 three of the six Dakar goals that can currently be quantitatively monitored – Universal Primary Education (enrolment and completion), gender equality and adult literacy.
3. In view of the urgency of the goal of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, we urge that countries at risk be assisted to accelerate progress on girls' education and specifically address cultural barriers. Multisectoral programmes and strategies must be implemented to combat forms of exploitation and other constraints that adversely affect female participation and performance in education. The production of gender-disaggregated data for secondary education must be given urgent and high priority to ensure monitoring at this level.
4. The impetus given by the World Education Forum to plan for the achievement of Education for All in a comprehensive, inclusive, gender responsive and outcome driven way must be sustained and urgently translated into action. External prescription, planning and reporting overload must be avoided and coordinated support for national processes at the country level promoted. In order to avoid parallel planning processes, we underline the necessity to view planning for EFA flexibly and according to the circumstances of individual countries. This may mean either a specific plan for EFA or one that is integrated with other education sector or wider development plans – with due attention paid to all six Dakar goals. The opportunities afforded by Poverty Reduction Strategies and the Fast-Track Initiative to promote EFA and the education-related Millennium Development Goals must be exploited.
5. National plans must be set in the economic context of countries and present a holistic approach to educational development that addresses challenges such as HIV/AIDS, conflict, crisis and transition to democracies. Country plans to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic must enable the education sector to more strongly prevent the further spread of HIV, as well as engage the entire sector in addressing the impact of AIDS on the supply and demand for quality education.
6. We are seriously concerned by the reported decline in Official Development Assistance for basic education during the 1990s. Despite recent commitments from some countries, existing evidence suggests a serious gap in international support to achieve the EFA goals even after countries undertake maximum efforts to improve domestic resource mobilization and efficiency. We urge the international community to accelerate progress to deliver on the commitments made at

Dakar. These commitments have been followed by the development compact agreed upon in Monterrey which necessitates mutual accountability and responsibility for global development between governments in the North and the South. We welcome and support the Fast-Track Initiative as one of the means to facilitate such compacts at the country level, building on existing development processes and matching credible plans with needed resources. The Initiative should be complemented with alternative instruments to reach other countries over time. International funding and technical assistance agencies must develop strategies for assisting countries outside the Fast-Track Initiative in their achievement of EFA. Country-led coordination and harmonization of procedures and reporting must be undertaken effectively with support from the international funding and technical agencies.

7. Concrete actions are needed, especially at the local and national levels, to broaden and intensify the involvement of civil society (including the poor, religious/faith and business communities) in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of EFA. Timely information and outcomes must be shared openly with committed civil society organizations. Funding and technical assistance agencies and governments need to support capacity-building of civil society to enable it to participate effectively in the EFA process. Policies and legislation recognizing the important role of civil society should be elaborated. Indicators for successful partnership need to be developed.

8. To improve policy formation and monitoring of all six EFA goals, more accurate and timely quantitative and qualitative data are needed. This calls for intensive capacity-building for the collection and effective use of data for national policy and planning processes at the local, national and international levels. We welcome the announcement by the Government of Canada of \$5 million over five years for the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and encourage other partners to intensify their support for such capacity-building efforts. We see the necessity for building on the synergy between the six EFA goals and the two education Millennium Development Goals.

9. We resolve to intensify our advocacy at global, regional and national levels for increased political commitment and resources to accelerate progress on EFA.

10. As next steps we particularly recommend that:

- (i) Governments in the South must ensure that free and compulsory primary education is a right reflected in national legislation and in practice. National strategies to achieve the goals of Education for All must receive its necessary share of government budgets and benefit from all possible funding sources, including debt relief.
- (ii) Strong and committed action is required by Governments to improve the status and working conditions of teachers to address the anticipated shortages signaled by the monitoring report. This anticipated shortage is being exacerbated by the impact of HIV/AIDS, conflict and emergencies. This action is particularly important as young people are no longer attracted to the teaching profession in some countries.
- (iii) Regional and subregional forums, starting with Regional Education Proyecto Regional de Educación para América Latina y el Caribe (PRELAC) (November 2002), Conferences of the Ministers of Education of African Member States organized by UNESCO (MINEDAF) (December 2002), and regional initiatives, such as the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and Forum for African Women's Educationalists (FAWE) that promote South-South collaboration are important opportunities for mobilizing political commitment and resources for EFA.

- (iv) The meeting of funding and technical assistance agencies in Brussels (November 2002) offers an important opportunity for bilateral and multilateral agencies to coordinate their commitment to deliver on the promises made at Dakar and Monterrey.
- (v) The G8 meeting in Evian, France in 2003 presents a critical opportunity for this influential body to continue and to accelerate the valuable contribution made through its Task Force on Education.
- (vi) An advocacy strategy on EFA must be designed and coordinated by appropriate agencies, to address specific areas of concern in different countries and regions (for example girls' education by UNICEF and teachers' conditions by UNESCO).
- (vii) Every advantage should be taken of the coming United Nations Decade for Literacy and the proposed United Nations Decade for Education for Sustainable Development to advance the EFA agenda.
- (viii) Maximum use must be made of opportunities presented by the High-Level Group, the annual monitoring report, the annual EFA week and high-level international events on development issues to underline the importance of education for global development.
- (ix) UNESCO should strengthen urgently its capacity to fulfill its international coordination role.
- (x) UNESCO and other key EFA agencies must devise and implement a strategy to ensure that subsequent High-Level Group meetings have higher-level representation with stronger capability of mobilizing political commitment for the EFA goals.

11. We acknowledge that important advances have been made in many countries that were not reflected in the data available to the Monitoring Report Team. We encourage the Monitoring Report Team to include case studies of good practice and successful experiences in achieving the EFA goals and of providing free education as part of the analysis of forthcoming reports. Future reports should also contribute to clarifying the concepts and indicators that would permit more effective monitoring of the three goals of early childhood care and development, adult literacy and learning needs of youth and adults through skills development.

12. We welcome the invitation of the Government of India to host the next meeting of the High-Level Group in November 2003.