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**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION  
OF THE WORLD EDUCATION FORUM IN DAKAR**

**SUMMARY**

Pursuant to 160 EX/Decision 3.2.1, th

s report presents UNESCO's follow-up activities to the World  
Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, April 2000).

Decision required: paragraph 24.

## INTRODUCTION

1. The World Education Forum in Dakar in April 2000 confirmed UNESCO as the coordinator of the Education for All (EFA) movement and charged it with the task of maintaining the collective momentum of all EFA partners. Achieving the goals of the Dakar Framework for Action is the overriding priority for UNESCO's education strategy. A vigorous and effective follow-up to Dakar is at the heart of our work and is currently shaping the activities of the entire Organization.
2. Following the Dakar Forum, the Organization adjusted and streamlined Major Programme I (30 C/5) in accordance with the Dakar Framework for Action. In the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2002-2007 (31 C/4) and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2002-2003 (31 C/5), the centrality of the follow-up to the Forum has been further strengthened. Hence, *basic education for all* has been designated as principal priority for 2002-2003 and its allocations benefit from an increase of 41.7%.
3. UNESCO has embarked upon a reorientation of its education programme, reflecting the fact that types and levels of education other than basic education will contribute significantly to the pursuit of EFA targets. The Organization will also promote the improvement of the quality of education and the renewal of education systems as part of continuous efforts to ensure that education corresponds to real needs at both individual and societal levels.
4. Particular attention will be focused on issue of access and equity concerning girls' opportunities for primary schooling and, within the framework of the United Nations Literacy Decade (2002-2012), on how literacy and non-formal education can provide learning opportunities to those who have been ill served by or excluded from formal schooling. Moreover, enhancing national capacities for policy formulation, teacher education and other areas of educational development will be emphasized.

## INTERNAL MOBILIZATION WITHIN UNESCO

5. To formalize the mechanism for coordination of follow-up activities to the World Education Forum, a Dakar Follow-up Unit within the Executive Office of the ADG/ED was established in December 2000 and its Lead Manager appointed in June 2001.
6. The internal mobilization for EFA within UNESCO continues through the following mechanisms set up by the Director-General after Dakar:
  - (a) The intersectoral Strategic Group chaired by the Director-General, meets regularly to coordinate follow-up activities and to ensure that the Dakar Framework for Action is reflected in all relevant UNESCO activities.
  - (b) Internal coordination within Education Sector and sharing of information is ensured by the Assistant Director-General for Education, notably through regular monthly meetings of the Senior Staff Group.
7. The Education Sector reactivated its network of field offices and institutes by organizing a Working Meeting on the Dakar Follow-up with UNESCO field offices and Institutes (UNESCO, Paris, 18-20 June 2001). Chaired by the ADG/ED the meeting provided an opportunity to ensure the prioritization of EFA in the field and to improve information sharing on EFA-related issues. The meeting took stock of the progress of setting up of EFA mechanisms at regional, subregional and national levels. It reviewed the status of preparation

of National EFA Plans in accordance with the Dakar Framework and made a broad assessment of the technical and financial assistance required by Member States in this process. It was agreed that UNESCO's contribution to the follow-up of Dakar be guided by five key principles (the five Cs) of Coordination, Collaboration, Civil society involvement, Communication and Commitment.

## **MAJOR INITIATIVES FOR DAKAR FOLLOW-UP**

8. The Dakar Framework for Action calls upon the international community to formulate the strategies and mobilize the resources needed to provide effective support to national efforts for reaching EFA goals and targets (Dakar Framework for Action §11). In pursuance of its advocacy and coordinating role in the follow-up to Dakar, UNESCO has endeavoured to mobilize support among the multilateral agencies and bilateral donors for the Global Initiative for resource mobilization for EFA. These efforts bore fruit at the G-8 Okinawa Summit in 2000 which strongly endorsed the commitment made at Dakar "that no countries seriously committed to EFA will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources". UNESCO's strategy for a Global Initiative was first outlined by the Director-General in his address to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) where he stressed the importance of increasing Official Development Assistance (ODA) for education in general and basic education in particular. This was developed further into a draft paper on *Development Partner Cooperation in Support of Education for All: Rationale and Strategies* that provided a conceptual framework contributing to a shared understanding of principles for international support for EFA. Strategies for increasing aid to basic education and strengthening donor coordination were also suggested. The paper was modified through a major consultation process with all relevant stakeholders, including a meeting of bilateral and multilateral development agencies and civil society (UNESCO, Paris, 28 February-2 March 2001). The participants agreed that the paper constitutes a valuable framework within which all partners of the EFA movement could support national EFA efforts in specific country contexts. It was accepted that the Global Initiative should not be interpreted merely as a fund-raising measure and should include resource mobilization, resource utilization and management.

9. Contacts established by the Director-General at the highest level resulted in the issue of a Joint Statement by UNESCO, the World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA on the occasion of the first anniversary of Dakar in April 2001 reaffirming their resolve to achieve the goals of EFA by 2015, while underlining the enormity of the challenge in sub-Saharan Africa. On the initiative of the Director-General, the World Bank and IMF agreed to work closely towards integration of National EFA Plans with PRSPs. The Director-General's visit to OXFAM headquarters in London in March 2001 and collaborative work between UNESCO and OXFAM served to influence the agenda of the Spring Meeting of the Development Committee of the World Bank in May 2001. The Committee decided to include Dakar Follow-up in the agenda for a future meeting.

10. The Director-General has undertaken regular consultations with bilateral donors in the follow-up to Dakar. One of the positive outcomes has been the signing of Agreements between UNESCO and the Governments of Norway and Sweden to provide extrabudgetary funding for the post of Lead Manager of the Dakar Follow-up Unit. Delegations from the World Bank, DFID, Norway, Sweden and Denmark have met senior officials in UNESCO Headquarters during the last three months to discuss priorities and modalities for support to UNESCO's EFA programmes and projects in the light of commitments made at Dakar. The challenge for UNESCO is to come up with a Comprehensive EFA Strategy to provide a framework for strengthening partnerships with donors and to facilitate formulation of

proposals, which respond to the needs of Member States and also meet the expectations of donors.

11. UNESCO provided a contribution to the preparations for the G-8 Summit (Genoa, 20-22 July 2001) mainly to stress the importance of enhancing funding for EFA. In the report of the G-7 Finance Ministers a lengthy passage on education endorsed education as a human right and the obligation of all governments and stated UNESCO's leadership role in the follow-up to Dakar. In the final communiqué of the Summit, the eight leaders reaffirmed their commitment to education and agreed on the need to improve the effectiveness of development assistance in support of locally owned strategies. The leaders also expressed their support to UNESCO in its key role for universal education and decided to establish a task force of senior G-8 officials to advise on how best to pursue the Dakar goals. The task force will provide its recommendations in time for the next G-8 meeting in Canada from 26 to 28 June 2002.

12. The Dakar Framework for Action requests all countries "to build on existing national sector strategies and to develop or strengthen existing national plans of action by 2002 at the latest. These plans should be integrated into a wider poverty reduction and development framework, and should be developed through more transparent and democratic processes, involving stakeholders, especially people's representatives, community leaders, parents, learners, NGOs and civil society" (Dakar Framework for Action §9). The Education Sector at Headquarters and UNESCO's field offices have mobilized and provided technical assistance and financial support, in partnership with other United Nations and international agencies, to several Member States in the formulation of EFA Plans. UNESCO has been striving to ensure that Member States link their National EFA Plans with the mechanisms of the United Nations Common Country Assessment (CCA), the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).

13. UNESCO has launched in May 2001 a survey through a questionnaire at country level with a view to appraising the status of National EFA Plans and to ascertaining the needs for technical support in plan preparation at country level. The questionnaire was comprised of two components: (i) stocktaking of current status of the preparation/strengthening of education development plans as well as the integration of EFA Goals; and (ii) type of technical support required at country level. As of July 2001, 43 countries and territories have responded. Other completed questionnaires are being received by UNESCO and will be processed for and communicated to all partners involved in the preparation of EFA Plans. Most countries that responded to the questionnaire require technical support for the preparation of EFA Plans. UNESCO is coordinating this work in collaboration with its EFA partners.

14. At the regional and subregional levels, UNESCO regional offices are coordinating the EFA activities. Under their leadership, a number of EFA mechanisms have been set up to coordinate the identification of needs, fundraising, assistance to countries in the development of national action plans, capacity-building of ministries of education, etc. The following mechanisms have been established:

- (a) ARABEFA, the EFA Forum for the Arab States;
- (b) The Subregional Forum for East and South-East Asia (SRF);
- (c) The country-driven subregional forum for South Asia (decided at the South Asia meeting of ministers (Kathmandu, 10-12 April 2001));

- (d) The Central Asia Education Forum to be established later this year by UNESCO and UNICEF following national EFA round tables in five countries of the subregion;
- (e) Although no official mechanism has been established in Africa, various activities have been carried out, coordinated by UNESCO Dakar. UNESCO's field offices in Africa met in Dakar in December 2000 to discuss the most appropriate support to give to each country. UNESCO and UNICEF have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to support the generation of national EFA Plans of Action, encourage effective participation of NGOs and strengthen donor coordination in order to avoid duplication and fragmentation. UNESCO-Dakar has convened, in collaboration with education development partners, a meeting of African EFA National Coordinators (Paris, 17-19 September 2001);
- (f) Following the establishment in February 2001 of the *Inter-agency Regional Group on EFA in Latin America and the Caribbean*, UNESCO continues its function as a technical secretariat. UNESCO-Santiago has undertaken a mapping exercise of agencies' competencies and activities to ensure better DFU coordination and a website of the Regional EFA Inter-agency Group is under construction. A *workshop on the Health-Promoting Schools Initiative in Chile* coordinated by UNESCO and PAHO/WHO, with Chilean governmental and non-governmental organizations marked a *pilot case* for a joint project on regional basis. Finally, a *Regional Network on Educational Innovations* to collect, document, and promote best practices in basic education is under preparation.

15. To cope with the major deficiencies in data availability and quality, and to improve the monitoring of EFA, an EFA Observatory was established within the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). The Institute has conducted several regional workshops in 2000-2001 bringing together over 300 education and statistics experts from 180 countries to sensitize them to new procedures for collecting additional data to measure educational quality. UIS organized an Expert Group Meeting on EFA Indicators (25-26 June 2001) which highlighted the importance of collecting better information on non-formal education and the quality of basic education. The meeting also recognized the scope for more flexibility at the country level to fine-tune existing EFA Indicators to the diverse needs of developing countries.

16. UNESCO has developed or consolidated a number of inter-agency flagship programmes on some of the major thrusts of Dakar, although the lead in each case is not necessarily UNESCO's. Generally, the flagship programmes are focused on specific EFA-related issues and problems requiring extra help from or accelerated action by a number of partner agencies. The integration of flagships into regular educational activities is the responsibility of each country. UNESCO has actively participated in all the flagship programmes, notably in the following three critical areas:

- (a) *Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH)*  
The FRESH initiative launched in Dakar 2000 is led by UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank, in collaboration with Education International and several other agencies. The partnership signals the commitment of these agencies to assist national governments to implement school-based health programmes in efficient, realistic and results-oriented ways. FRESH has four basic components: (i) stressing school policies; (ii) a health supportive school environment; (iii) skills-based health education; and (iv) school health services. UNESCO has provided assistance to in-service teacher training on school health issues in Saudi Arabia and the World Bank is expected to provide US \$39 million for FRESH

action in 11 African countries. UNESCO focuses in particular on promoting the inclusion of school health into National EFA Plans. The Declaration adopted at the XVII World Conference on Health Promotion and Health Education (Paris, 18 July 2001) endorsed the inter-agency initiative FRESH and called for the implementation of its four core components together in all schools and supported by effective partnerships between the education and health sectors at all levels, with the full participation of communities, parents, children and youth. The Declaration commits the partners to work towards the achievement of the goals of EFA, notably through fostering the integration of efficient school health programmes into National EFA Plans and supporting their implementation.

(b) *The 10-Year United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI)*

Launched by the United Nations Secretary-General at the World Education Forum in Dakar in April 2000, UNGEI is a coherent United Nations system-wide collaborative programme led by UNICEF to improve the quality and level of girls' education and to eliminate gender bias and discrimination in education. Within the framework of UNGEI, UNESCO has made efforts to ensure that gender-related components are included in National EFA Plans. The role of UNESCO is to support UNGEI and, wherever possible, to influence leaders to make commitments in favour of gender equality in education. UNESCO has prepared a working document on Gender Equality in Basic Education – Strategic Framework, with special reference to non-formal education for girls and women.

(c) *AIDS, schools and education*

At the initiative of UNAIDS, an inter-agency working group on AIDS has been established, which brings together United Nations agencies, bilateral donors, international NGOs, international teachers unions and education associations. UNESCO has participated in elaborating a draft of a new global strategy framework on AIDS, school and education. UNESCO has also developed its own strategy for HIV/AIDS, which places preventive education in an overall context of continuous support and care. It identifies five core tasks: (i) advocacy at all levels; (ii) customizing the message; (iii) changing behaviour and vulnerability; (iv) caring for the infected and the affected; and (v) coping with the impact.

Moreover, UNESCO houses the secretariat of the inter-agency network on Education in Emergencies organized by UNESCO, UNICEF and UNHCR. The network will help to reinforce the coordination between structures for humanitarian assistance and Dakar follow-up.

UNESCO is currently considering the establishment of a flagship programme that focuses upon teachers – specifically, upon the improvement of teacher education – to better enable large numbers of teachers to provide quality basic education for all. It envisages a programme to strengthen quality teacher education in Africa in collaboration with ILO, UNICEF, Education International and other partners.

## **MECHANISM FOR EXTERNAL COORDINATION**

17. To maintain the collective momentum of all EFA partners, UNESCO has set up two follow-up mechanisms in accordance with the Dakar Framework for Action.

(a) *The Working Group on Education for All*

The Working Group on Education for All is one of the mechanisms for the implementation of UNESCO's mandate to coordinate the follow-up to Dakar. Its function is professional and consultative, providing a forum for exchange and discussion of the varied experiences with EFA in countries, regions and international organizations, and for recommending concrete actions. Chaired by the ADG/ED, the Group comprises some 40 key actors, including representatives of governments, regional bodies, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies and non-governmental organizations. In its first meeting in November 2000, the Group made key recommendations in five major areas: (i) preparation of National EFA Plans; (ii) UNESCO's role in EFA follow-up; (iii) the role of NGOs; (iv) financing of EFA; and (v) the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

The second meeting of the Working Group is being organized on 10-12 September taking into consideration the importance of preparing the meeting of the High-level Group on EFA that will be held on 29 and 30 October 2001 at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris. In preparation for this meeting, the group will deliberate on three substantive matters of particular concern: (i) the formulation, assessment and funding of National EFA Plans; (ii) a comprehensive strategy for EFA; and (iii) the monitoring report for the High-level Group.

(b) *The High-level Group*

The first meeting of the High-level Group will take place during the 31st session of the General Conference on 29 and 30 October. The Director-General has invited 29 leaders of governments, bilateral and United Nations agencies, and non-governmental organizations. The Permanent Delegations were actively involved in the selection process of three ministers of education or ministers of international cooperation per region through the six Electoral Groups. Keynote speakers will include Heads of State and agencies. The High-level Group will, as stated in the Dakar Framework for Action (para. 19) serve as "a lever for political commitment and technical and financial resource mobilization". It will more specifically focus on the following three issues: (1) maintaining high political commitment for EFA internationally, regionally and nationally, including building on civil society in global advocacy action and in the formulation of national EFA strategies; (2) mobilizing international financial support for EFA, including the role of debt relief and the role of the corporate sector; and (3) defining strategies for progress based on the Monitoring Report.

18. A Monitoring Report currently being prepared by UNESCO in collaboration with major EFA partners, notably UNICEF and the World Bank, is expected to be the key document at the High-level Group meeting. The report aims at presenting the progress of the EFA movement, particularly by highlighting important trends and findings, and will be a valuable tool for advocacy and information sharing purposes.

19. The changing landscape and roles of civil society in education as well as the commitments made in Dakar have created new challenges for the EFA partnership. In view of this, UNESCO will organize a special meeting on the involvement of civil society in Education for All as part of the 46th Session of the International Conference on Education (5-8 September in Geneva). A panel consisting of ministers of education and civil society representatives from three countries in different contexts and regions will be highlighting examples of successful cooperation in policy formulation, planning and action in EFA.

20. A major achievement in the past year is the reform of the Collective Consultation of Non-Governmental Organizations on EFA. UNESCO and some 100 NGOs from around the world agreed at the annual meeting of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA (CCNGO/EFA), in Bangkok, July 2001, on a new partnership mechanism to facilitate and accelerate dialogue, joint reflection, research and capacity-building as well as monitoring and evaluation. One of the main objectives is to create a more dynamic regionalized network of NGOs active in education. The proposed working procedures will guide the work for a transitory period of one year during which the consultation process will be further extended to include NGOs particularly active in EFA.

21. At the same time, UNESCO is supporting the setting up and consolidation of regional NGO networks on EFA. UNESCO, the World Bank, CCNGO/EFA and the Working Group on Non-formal Education of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) organized a seminar on NGOs' contribution to EFA goals in sub-Saharan Africa (Bamako, November 2000) and a follow-up seminar in Dakar in May 2001. NGOs from Asia and the Pacific gathered in Bangkok in July to share effective and innovative experiences and lessons learnt by NGOs in implementing EFA activities in the region. Finally, in August, Latin American NGOs gathered in Santiago de Chile. These workshops all reinforce the EFA partnership and create new space for interaction between governments and civil society.

## **ADVOCACY**

22. UNESCO is also giving much importance to promoting and sustaining the Education for All movement. An intersectoral team is currently devising a global communication and advocacy strategy on EFA. The Organization also continues to publish the three-language bi-monthly electronic Bulletin describing progress in EFA at national, regional and international levels. It reaches several thousands of people involved in the EFA movement. A new EFA website has also been created to provide up-to-date information on the state of education (currently available in English; the French version is under preparation). Efforts are being made to provide country information on EFA including the status of national EFA forums and national EFA action plans.

23. Special attention has been given to strengthening communication with Permanent Delegations and key focal points in Member States. On the occasion of the first anniversary of the Dakar Forum the Director-General met with Permanent Delegations to brief them on progress made and future strategies and the Secretariat has involved Permanent Delegations in the nominations of regional representatives for the high-level group. Moreover, UNESCO field offices are in regular contact with national EFA coordinators in regard to Dakar follow-up activities. In recognition of the importance of EFA's regional dimensions, UNESCO's four regional education offices are being supported to play a key role.

## **DECISION REQUIRED**

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

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 162 EX/7,



2. Welcomes the Report on the Follow-up Action to the World Education Forum in Dakar;
3. Reaffirms its commitment to the importance and centrality of the follow-up to the World Education Forum in UNESCO's education programme;
4. Invites the Director-General to report to the Board at its 164th session on the progress of implementation of and follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action, notably with regard to the status of national EFA plans of action, the elaboration of a comprehensive EFA strategy, including the global initiative and the communication and advocacy plan;
5. Requests the Director-General 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 Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2002-2007 (31 C/4) and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2002-2003 (31 C/5).