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**REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON THE GLOBAL ACTION PLAN
TO ACHIEVE THE EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA) GOALS**

SUMMARY

The Executive Board, by 174 EX/Decision 8, requested the Director-General to submit to its 175th session an improved version of the Global Action Plan and to report to the Executive Board on the work accomplished on EFA.

This document presents the improved version of the Global Action Plan to achieve the EFA goals in fulfilment of the above-mentioned requests of the Executive Board as well as an outline of the progress that has been made since the 174th session.

Decision proposed: paragraph 10.

1. With a view to further developing and improving the Global Action Plan to achieve the Education for All (EFA) goals, intensive consultations were held in April (New York), May (Paris) and June (New York) of 2006 with the most senior education professionals of the other four EFA convening agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank) through face-to-face meetings, telephone conferences and electronic communication. In effect, these interactions constituted the high-level inter-agency working group that the Executive Board had called for at its 174th session. These consultations aimed to obtain greater input from the other convening agencies so that the Plan would achieve wider consensus and stronger ownership as an instrument of collaboration.

2. In light of these discussions, and following the recommendations of the 174th session of the Executive Board, significant changes have been made to the Plan (Annex I). The major changes are as follows:

- The introductory section has been restructured in order to place the proposed actions in the Plan in the context of key factors of progress and challenge in EFA since 2000.
- EFA is set more clearly in the context of wider development objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals.
- In addition to basic educational statistics, the linkages with the changing international environment receive greater stress, such as the new pledges of development assistance and the increasing pace of United Nations reform.
- The prospect of more robust action is set against the backdrop of existing commitments to EFA on the part of the convening agencies.
- The purpose of the Plan is expressed as a “platform for reinvigorated efforts” and as a “framework for increased, ongoing cooperation among international EFA partners”.
- The Plan is designed to serve also as a “reference point to structure dialogue at national level” to give optimal support to national leadership of EFA efforts.
- The major section “Global Coordination” now links international coordination more strongly with national-level action: “Better support to the national level” (six areas of action) and “Improved coordination at the global level” (five areas of action).
- The Plan now presents and highlights specific actions, each with a short explanatory text, responding to the Executive Board’s request for a more action-oriented approach.
- Some targets and deadlines for actions have been added in order to make the Plan more time-bound. In the process of negotiations, some targets and deadlines were subsequently omitted as some partners felt there was insufficient justification for them at this stage. Further negotiations, above all at national level, will lead to greater specification of actions and their timing.
- In order to include a stronger definition of the respective roles and responsibilities of the convening agencies, each of them provided a concise statement of their comparative advantages as well as a description of their strategic directions of support to EFA over the next ten years.
- All the relevant initiatives listed by the Executive Board in paragraph 6 of 174 EX/Decision 9 have a place in the Plan.

3. These changes have moved the Plan towards becoming a basis for harmonized efforts in EFA. The consultations not only provided essential inputs into the structure and content of the Plan, but also set in motion a process of ongoing consultations which fosters collective ownership and vision. They also increase levels of awareness of common agendas, of trust and of purposeful dialogue.

4. It is to be noted that the design of the reform and reorganization of the Education Sector has taken particular account of the Global Action Plan and its implications. For example, in order to encourage greater cohesion and cross-fertilization between EFA and related aspects of UNESCO’s work – notably the United Nations Literacy Decade, the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the EDUCAIDS initiative within the field of Education and HIV and AIDS – a new Division for the Coordination of United Nations Priorities in Education has been created with responsibility for all of these areas. Moreover, the restructured Division of Basic Education is

designed to provide a more integrated approach to the pursuit of quality basic education for all by encompassing “early childhood through secondary education”. The new Division of Country Planning and Field Support will be actively engaged with processes of translating global-level understandings reached among the EFA convening agencies into appropriate forms of coordination, collaboration and joint action at country level. Furthermore, the Division of Higher Education will be better equipped to engage with EFA-related activities, not only through the Teacher Training Initiative for sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA), but also through technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and related learning and life-skills opportunities for young people, women and marginalized groups.

5. In accordance with the request of the Executive Board to ensure that the Plan is “in a suitable state for review by the heads of the five convening agencies of Jomtien and Dakar as soon as possible, at the latest by mid-July 2006”, the Director-General placed the Plan as an item on the UNDG Principals’ meeting in Geneva on 12 July 2006. The five heads of agency agreed in principle to continue to work on the Plan as a platform for collaboration. The text of this decision is in Annex II.

6. Further, the G8 Summit held in St. Petersburg on 16 and 17 July 2006 expressed a commitment to cooperation with development partners in achieving the EFA goals, and lent support specifically to the Global Action Plan in their statement on education, as part of their agreement to promote “education for innovative societies in the 21st century”. The statement on education is in Annex III.

7. The current version of the Plan is attached; it is a work in progress which will lead over the next months to yet greater collaboration among the EFA conveners, and therefore to more effective support to countries in achieving the EFA goals. For this to happen, it is envisaged that a more formally constituted high-level inter-agency working group will meet regularly to work further on the Plan, aiming at a more developed version with stronger ownership, for presentation to the sixth meeting of the High-Level Group on EFA in Cairo, Egypt, from 14 to 16 November 2006. Meetings of the high-level inter-agency working group are planned to be held in September, October and November 2006.

8. The focus of these meetings will be to ensure practical, feasible and effective linkages at the national level, and to make arrangements for piloting implementation in a number of countries, to be identified in consultation with the EFA convening agencies. The meetings of the high-level inter-agency working group will serve also to provide input into the major meetings and mechanisms of EFA. In an ongoing way, the group will have a role in adapting the Plan to changing circumstances, needs and relationships, and in learning lessons from implementation at country level.

9. The outcomes of the consideration of the more developed version of the Global Action Plan at the meeting of the High-Level Group in Cairo in November 2006 will be reported to the 176th session of the Executive Board, as will the ensuing follow-up.

10. **Proposed Draft Decision**

In the light of the foregoing the Executive Board may wish to adopt the following decision:

1. Recalling 174 EX/Decision 9,
2. Having examined document 175 EX/8,
3. Reaffirming the importance of accelerating progress towards the six EFA goals,

4. Takes note of the progress achieved through intensive high-level consultations among the five EFA convening agencies;
5. Also takes note of the changes introduced in the internal organization of the Education Sector, which reflect the directions outlined in the Global Action Plan and lend improved support to its implementation;
6. Welcomes the changes introduced into the Global Action Plan reflecting the specific concerns expressed by the Executive Board;
7. Thanks the Director-General for bringing the Global Action Plan to the Heads of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank in the context of the undg Principals' meeting in Geneva on 12 July 2006, and to the G8 Summit in St. Petersburg on 17 July 2006, and recognizes and welcomes their clear expressions of support to the process and principles of the plan;
8. Urges the Director-General to strengthen further the collective ownership of the Global Action Plan through ongoing consultations with the EFA convening agencies, with a strong focus on its implementation at country level;
9. Requests the Director-General to further improve and develop the Global Action Plan and present a revised version to the sixth meeting of the EFA High-Level Group in November 2006 in Cairo;
10. Invites the Director-General to submit to it at its 176th session the working version of the Global Action Plan and a progress report on its implementation.

ANNEX I

EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA)

**GLOBAL ACTION PLAN:
IMPROVING SUPPORT TO COUNTRIES IN ACHIEVING THE EFA GOALS**

Edition of 10 July 2006

A basis for enhancing collective effort among the EFA convening agencies

PREFACE

Why a Global Action Plan to achieve the EFA goals?

Education is a key parameter of sustainable human development and is essential for achieving international development targets. Development entails change of a societal and individual nature – education and learning of all kinds are key tools in enabling that change to take place, leading to new possibilities, new horizons and new connections. Thus efforts to achieve broad development aims and the EFA goals are closely intertwined; achieving all six EFA goals will play a significant part in realizing the whole of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) agenda. Education is also a fundamental human right and offers the hope that we can fulfil our potential as human beings.

Five multilateral agencies of the United Nations system – the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank – convened the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All in 1990 and the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000 and have carried the vision forward at international level.

Since Dakar, the world has witnessed steady progress towards achieving the EFA goals, in particular towards universal primary education and gender parity among the lower-income countries. Nevertheless, progress towards the EFA goals has not been sufficient and fast enough to meet the target dates, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia, and the Arab States. The gender parity goal for 2005 has already been missed, and 86 countries are at risk of not achieving gender parity even by 2015. About one-fifth of the world’s adult population – an estimated 771 million – remains illiterate. Quality at primary level remains a major issue worldwide, compounded by a serious shortage of trained and qualified teachers, particularly female teachers.

In response, the international community has made concerted efforts by providing technical and financial support to countries in need. In terms of financial support, there was a declining trend in Official Development Assistance (ODA) to education in the 1990s, but the year 2005 saw a positive projection of increased financial aid. While aid to basic education will likely increase in line with overall aid, its share would have to double to reach the estimated US \$7 billion a year necessary just to achieve UPE and gender parity. The reform of the United Nations system also provides a positive arena for this Plan, which, like the current reform efforts, aims at greater coherence and effectiveness among agencies, while at the same time providing a sectoral framework for implementing the principles of the reform. A similar, mutually reinforcing relationship exists with the aims of the Paris Declaration of Aid Effectiveness and Donor Harmonization.

In countries where much remains to be accomplished, stronger political will is now visible. In support of this, it is urgent, six years after the first commitment to the six EFA goals, to infuse new energy into the movement and to ensure that the ten remaining years before 2015 see concerted and complementary efforts. This requires the full engagement of all EFA stakeholders and gives a particular responsibility to the five convening agencies, and a clear understanding of their relative roles responsibilities is essential. It is to respond to this need that the Global Action Plan has been prepared, building on each agency’s comparative advantage and harmonizing actions in support of country-led national education sector plans to achieve the EFA goals by 2015.

THE EFA GOALS

- (i) Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- (ii) Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
- (iii) Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills;
- (iv) Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;
- (v) Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality;
- (vi) Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

EDUCATION-RELATED MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS WITH RELATED TARGETS

Goal 2. Achieve Universal Primary Education

Target 3: Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling

- 6. Net Enrolment Ratio in Primary Education (UNESCO)
- 7. Proportion of Pupils Starting Grade 1 who Reach Grade 5 (UNESCO)
- 8. Literacy Rate of 15-24 year-olds (UNESCO)

Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women

Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015

- 9. Ratio of Girls to Boys in Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Education (UNESCO)
- 10. Ratio of Literate Women to Men 15-24 years old (UNESCO)
- 11. Share of Women in Wage Employment in the Non-Agricultural Sector (ILO)
- 12. Proportion of Seats Held by Women in National Parliaments (IPU)

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EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA) IN CONTEXT

1. Sustainable human development involves societal and personal change – a process in which learning and education are essential components. The vision of Education for All (EFA) is to offer to everyone a basic education of quality, enabling children, youth and adults, to grasp new opportunities, become more active citizens, and to initiate, manage and sustain positive change. International development targets, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), provide an essential development agenda with which the EFA goals have mutually reinforcing linkages. EFA and the MDGs have the same timeline – 2015 – and both aim to enhance international cooperation in support of the development plans of national governments.

2. In a global perspective, international development targets and the EFA goals must be pursued jointly, as the realization of each depends also on the other, as well as on wider parameters. Completion of quality primary education and gender equality in education are two of the MDGs, for example, as well as being EFA goals. Education and learning are a key means to achieve the other MDGs also – poverty reduction, maternal health and environmental protection are patent examples. Thus EFA is a key development approach for improvement in the quality of life, including poverty reduction, and the EFA goals will be realized in tandem with other interventions, as part of an integrated vision of human development.

PROGRESS AND CHALLENGE IN EFA

3. Progress in the six EFA goals, adopted in 2000, is visible, but yet they remain elusive.¹ Recognizing the positive achievements and initiatives thus far, governments and the international community are fully aware of the challenge, and of the risk that the 2015 EFA targets may not be universally met. Six years after the Dakar Forum, the first of those targets has been missed – gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2005 – a clear indication that there is a need for even greater concerted action.

Progress in EFA since 2000 – key indicators

- Nearly 20 million new students in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia entered primary schools.
- 47 countries achieved universal primary education.
- More girls are enrolled in primary schools.
- The number of secondary students rose substantially – more than four times the increase in the number of primary students.
- In about 70 of 110 countries surveyed, public spending on education increased as a share of national income.

4. The international community has made greater efforts to raise aid and investment in EFA, but there is still a significant financial gap. While aid to basic education will likely increase in line with overall aid, its share would have to double to reach the estimated US \$7 billion a year necessary just to achieve UPE and gender parity.

5. The international community has a responsibility to respond to national efforts in the most effective and efficient way. This Plan is a concrete step in that direction, with a strong focus on working with countries to overcome the obstacles they identify in achieving the EFA goals.

Urgent EFA challenges

- Giving children the best start: early childhood care and pre-primary education are provided in diverse ways depending on context, and percentages of children benefiting from formal pre-primary opportunities are static. What is crucial is to put in place policies which provide for a healthy and stimulating early learning environment so that children are ready to get the most out of school when they enter the primary level. Data on pre-primary learning remain patchy and there is as yet no general framework for assessing levels of early childhood care.
- Accelerating access to formal schooling: there are still approximately 100 million out-of-school children of primary school age, and 55% of them are girls. Between 1998 and 2002, the global Net Enrolment Rate in primary education increased by only 1%, from 83.6% to 84.6%. To reach those who remain out of school will require not just greater efforts, but above all different approaches adapted to the particular circumstances of disadvantaged groups.
- Making basic education free: schools fees are still collected at the primary level in 89 out of 103 countries surveyed. The fees and indirect charges levied for schooling have a disproportionate impact on the chances of the poorest to access learning opportunities.
- Giving adequate attention to adult literacy: explicit literacy policies must provide for the scaling up of youth and adult literacy s and the development of a rich literate environment, with increased budgets – currently literacy s receive only 1% of educational budgets. s must be relevant to local community needs and motivations, with adequate learning materials and trained facilitators. Good literacy s will use the languages which learners already know and offer other languages they need to learn.
- Addressing gender issues throughout education: 76 of 159 countries had not achieved gender parity in primary schooling as of 2002, and measures to ensure the equal schooling of girls and boys were not adequate to meet the 2005 goal of gender parity in primary and secondary schooling. Of the 100 million children out of school, 55% are girls, and 64% of adults without literacy skills are women. There is a compelling need to address ongoing obstacles to girls' access to schooling, as well as to tackle issues of gender equality within the school environment. Although the overwhelming need for action is in favour of girls and women, the regions where boys are disadvantaged cannot be neglected.
- Improving educational quality: Being in school or in an adult learning will not have positive impact unless it is of high quality and leads to useable knowledge and competencies. Well-trained teachers able to employ a range of pedagogical strategies are a sine qua non of quality learning. The initial and in-service training of teachers is a priority concern in achieving sustainable learning outcomes. Other areas which need attention are: good and sufficient learning materials; use of appropriate languages for learning, particularly the learner's own language in initial instruction; adequate instruction time and an emphasis on literacy as a tool of learning; clean, safe and child-friendly schools as well as good school leadership also count for much in providing quality learning opportunities.

INTERNATIONAL MOMENTUM AND OPPORTUNITY

6. This Global Action Plan (GAP) comes at a time of particular international momentum and opportunity in the wider developmental context of EFA. The year 2005 saw important steps forward and major commitments to global development, which included greater integration of development issues into geo-political dynamics, as well as specific commitments to new aid resources. Education in general and EFA in particular are a central part of these commitments.

7. Thus the World Summit in September 2005 assessed progress towards the MDGs and re-affirmed EFA as a key element in broader development efforts. The G8 countries and other donors made commitments to increase aid by approximately US \$50 billion a year by 2010 (compared with 2004 when total bilateral aid was about US \$80 billion). The G8 also agreed to cancel all outstanding multilateral debts of eligible heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC), and endorsed the EFA Fast Track Initiative. The outcomes of the UK-initiated Commission for Africa raised the profile of EFA needs in that region, with specific recommendations for areas of focus for greater investment. The Monterrey Consensus, as a compact of mutual commitments between donor and developing countries, continues to provide the framework for delivering aid. Further, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Harmonization, adopted in May 2005, opens the way to new ways of aligning aid with national development processes. This Plan places national leadership at the centre of implementing the principles of aligning international aid with national priorities and of enhancing cooperation among EFA stakeholders.

8. The reform of the United Nations also gathered pace in 2005 – overlap, duplication, inefficiency and competition among agencies are criticisms that have been levelled at the United Nations system. As part of enhancing coherence across the United Nations system, the GAP echoes and puts into practice the calls for achieving the greater cooperation and efficiency among United Nations agencies that are at the heart of United Nations reform. The United Nations Development Group *Action Plan on the Millennium Declaration, MDGs and other International Development Goals, 2006-08* aims at “renewal of resolve and urgency [...] to seize an historic opportunity to improve the lives of the poor and marginalized whilst demonstrating the value and efficacy of the United Nations system in development cooperation.” These concerns also underpin this Plan which is a means, in education, for a more coordinated approach, among the five agencies that convened the international EFA meetings in Jomtien and Dakar (henceforth ‘EFA convenors’), and subsequently among all stakeholders. The UNDG Plan goes on to align action in education with this Global Action Plan as an international framework, noting that any follow-up action in basic education will take place “within the framework of the forthcoming Global Plan of Action to Achieve the EFA Goals with which the UNDG Action Plan is completely consistent in its strategic and operational approach.” Similarly, this Plan will serve as an opportunity, in the education sector, to implement the principles of aid effectiveness and donor harmonization enshrined in the Paris Declaration.

BUILDING ON COMMITMENTS

9. Since the Dakar World Forum on Education in 2000, greater commitments to achieving EFA have been made by governments in assuming stronger leadership and expressing greater political commitment. Bilateral and multilateral agencies (the five EFA convenors and others²) are raising levels of aid and enhancing technical cooperation, and EFA has greater visibility on the development agenda. Distinct but related international initiatives, as well as targeted action addressing specific aspects of the EFA agenda, already channel international commitment; EFA also draws on key linkages with civil society networks.³ Global action on EFA takes multiple forms

– as indicated below; the GAP provides a framework for greater coordination of implementation at the national level:

- United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014): this strengthens the EFA agenda by bringing into focus the content, processes and quality of learning. The Decade enables EFA to promote values such as peace, equality, and respect for human rights, gender, environment, and cultural diversity through all aspects and modes of education - thereby equipping citizens and their societies to develop in sustainable ways.
- United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012): in full alignment with the EFA goals, this decade mobilizes national and international actors so that everyone, particularly adults who have no or insufficient literacy skills, has access to literacy learning opportunities as an essential basis for further learning and social participation. The Decade also promotes the creation of rich literate environments.
- Regionally, the second Decade of Education in Africa of the African Union (2006-2015) will give further impetus to EFA.
- The World for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) was approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, as a follow-up to the decade on the same theme, and is coordinated by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UNESCO. It aims to promote a rights-based quality education for all in which the education system is oriented towards democratic citizenship, the fostering of non-violence and peace, the elimination of stereotypes, the promotion of social cohesion, and respect for human dignity.
- The E-9 Initiative: The nine high-population developing countries – Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan – share many common challenges. Grouped together as the E-9 they present the challenge of huge EFA needs and offer the opportunity of sharing their experience of addressing them.
- Civil society partnerships: A wide diversity of civil society organizations and NGOs cooperate in partnerships. Networks for advocacy, lobbying and information exchange interact with other international EFA partners, and are active also at national level. The Global Campaign for Education and the Collective Consultation of NGOs in EFA are two key groupings.

10. Other initiatives and partnerships support EFA in specific areas and will play a crucial role in implementing the *Global Action Plan*. They provide fora within which specific aspects of the EFA movement are pursued and are essential arenas of coordinated action. They include:

- UNGEI (United Nations Girls' Education Initiative): UNGEI was launched in 2000 at the World Education Forum, is coordinated by UNICEF and aims to narrow the gender gap so that girls everywhere enjoy an equal chance to obtain schooling and equal opportunities to succeed and use what they learn.
- FTI (Fast Track Initiative): FTI was created to fill four gaps relating to primary education: the resource, capacity, data and policy gaps. Donors provide coordinated and increased financial and technical support in a transparent and predictable manner while partner countries put primary education at the forefront of their domestic efforts and develop sound national education plans. By bringing donors, civil society and developing countries together around the same goals. FTI is improving the effectiveness of aid by strengthening donor collaboration, alignment and harmonization.
- UNAIDS provides the multi-lateral framework for educational action addressing HIV & AIDS. The Inter-agency Task Team on Education and EDUCAIDS aim at coordinated action in networking among agencies and in-country support respectively.

More details of these initiatives and others are provided in Annex II.

PURPOSE OF THE GLOBAL ACTION PLAN

12. In order to build on these international initiatives and to meet the outstanding challenges of EFA, the Brasilia (EFA) High-Level Group and UNESCO's Executive Board⁴ called for a clearer understanding of the roles and responsibilities among the major international stakeholders in EFA and a clearer statement of objectives. The Global Action Plan (GAP) is a response to this call, and consultations in EFA fora with a wide range of EFA partners, as well as intensive dialogue among the EFA convenors have shaped and refined the Plan.

13. The Plan focuses on four purposes:

- To serve as a platform for re-invigorated efforts on the part of all EFA stakeholders to achieve the six EFA goals by 2015;
- To provide a framework for increased, ongoing cooperation among international EFA partners as a basis for greater complementarity of effort;
- To sharpen the leadership and coordination role of UNESCO in EFA;
- To signal the strategic directions in support of EFA to which the EFA convenors will commit themselves over the next ten years.

14. Stakeholders in EFA at every level agree that the central focus of action towards the Dakar goals is the country – with clear government leadership, a well-constructed plan for the education sector and the engagement of all stakeholders around the plan — *'one country ~ one plan'*. The national plans for the education sector will provide the framework for planning and international support; EFA priorities will be identified within these plans, with regard also to the larger framework of national development strategies.

15. The GAP addresses the international level because it is here that there are strong and urgent calls for coordination to improve the effectiveness of EFA on the ground, in each country. Overlapping roles or duplication of effort, conflicting advice offered to governments, along with lack of communication or transparency among partners, are some of the problems which better coordination addresses. This implies that an appropriate and willing multilateral agency would ensure whatever coordination is most helpful at national level, under the leadership of the government. Clarity on roles in this respect will be part of using the Plan effectively at country level. UNESCO's will ensure coordination at international level, but would only do so at national level where possible or appropriate.

Using the Global Action Plan This Plan serves as:

A platform for cooperation at international level, delineating areas of action and respective responsibilities;

A reference point to structure dialogue at national level among EFA partners, so that support to national leadership and implementation in EFA is relevant, effective and efficient, building on the explicit comparative advantage of each agency.

16. The Plan is a dynamic and living document that should remain a flexible tool, sustaining dialogue in changing circumstances. It provides a platform for re-invigorated commitment and intensified support to national leadership of EFA, from the EFA convenors and other stakeholders.

The value of the plan will in part be seen in its impact on collective action and in how far each EFA convenor makes it part of their own planning processes.

STRATEGIC FOCUS OF GLOBAL ACTION

Countries with the deepest needs

17. Successive editions of the EFA *Global Monitoring Report* have indicated countries which are unlikely to achieve the EFA goals by 2015, focusing on primary education, adult literacy and gender parity. Most of these countries are located in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and the Arab region. Countries in post-disaster or post-conflict situations also have deep EFA needs with indicators often falling. External assistance, whether funds or of other kinds, may not necessarily reach these countries, because of low institutional capacity, contextual uncertainties and the difficulty of long-term planning. On the donors' part, selective priorities and political concerns may prevent investment in such countries.

18. An action plan at the international level will only have meaning insofar as it enables faster, more solid and sustainable progress towards the EFA goals at the national level.⁵ A plan should therefore focus on three areas:

- First, action will address all developing countries with EFA needs, with a special emphasis on countries that are farthest away from achieving the EFA goals.
- Second, it is equally important to address the needs of disadvantaged groups within countries, wherever they are. Such groups are found in every country, in all parts of the world, and EFA will only be achieved when their specific needs are met. The elaboration of specific plans for international action will thus give space and priority to accommodating diversity.
- Third, a well-researched understanding of the broader socio-cultural context is essential in identifying appropriate ways of learning and of delivering education, particularly for disadvantaged groups. Alternatives to the existing school system and bold innovations may need to be considered as part of ensuring that education is in fact available to all.

The whole EFA agenda

19. There is a pressing need, six years after Dakar, to focus on the whole of EFA – all six goals which, taken together, form the basic education agenda which is 'geared to tapping each individual's talents and potential, and developing learners' personalities, so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies' (UNESCO 2000: 8)⁶. This must include a re-affirmation of the vision of education as a human right and as necessary for the full development of human potential. Not only is education the 'software' of socio-economic development, but it also empowers people to make the fullest use of new opportunities which poverty reduction may bring.

Harmonizing effort

20. There is therefore a need to focus international commitment, energies and resources in an effective response to the remaining EFA needs at country level. There are many stakeholders in EFA, including United Nations agencies, civil society organizations and NGOs, groupings and alliances of countries, development banks and bilateral aid agencies and parts of the private sector. As the specialized agency for education in the United Nations system, UNESCO is charged with coordinating international action in support of EFA.

21. A plan for collective global action must ultimately achieve results at the country level, in accordance with national government priorities. Results will be visible in improvement of the EFA

indicators. In pursuit of this goal, this plan aims to strengthen the following aspects of cooperation, building on growing experience around the world:

- **Commitment to education:** Higher profile of education as the key component in developing human potential in the framework of sustainable development;
- **Coherence of policies:** Closer alignment of actions with priorities through more pro-active dialogue among partners and with governments;
- **Convergence of strategies:** sharing what works and what has not worked in a spirit of mutual learning and concern to adopt and disseminate good practice.
- **Coordination among agencies:** More effective cooperation among the EFA convenors at country level, with coordination by national government, and among broader EFA stakeholders, and more effective use of resources through mechanisms of funder harmonization;
- **Complementary action:** avoiding duplication of effort and investment, and ensuring mutual recognition of comparative advantage and strengths.

GLOBAL COORDINATION

22. The following sections present the actions and outcomes of global coordination in support of national efforts, for which the EFA convenors will be responsible and accountable. There are two areas in which coordination must be effective:

- Better support to the national level, empowering national leadership in EFA through coordinated inputs, making the most of the comparative advantage of each agency and avoiding overlap. In this area, the emphasis is on action that is coordinated among the agencies;
- Improved coordination and leadership at the global level, maintaining political momentum and ensuring coherence and complementarity among the EFA convenors and other international actors. In this area the focus is on the coordination necessary to facilitate harmonized action.

In the following sections, the actions and their timeframe

are shown in shaded boxes

BETTER SUPPORT TO THE NATIONAL LEVEL

23. In the coordination of EFA at country level, government leadership is the central element, bringing stakeholders together around a national education sector plan. This *Global Action Plan* proposes to use and strengthen existing fora in which coordination can take place, such as EFA fora, United Nations processes (CCA/UNDAF, United Nations Country Team), groupings of funding agencies (around PRS, SWAp, FTI), and other networks. Regional fora may also serve to improve coordination in support of the national level.

24. Each agency has particular ways of working which shape the relationship between the agency and the government. In exercising leadership, national governments will be conversant with agencies' ways of doing business and work with these varied dynamics. Supportive and cooperative behaviour on the part of agencies is also essential. Only then will coordination result in complementary and harmonized cooperation. The areas of joint action of support at the national level are as follows:

Supporting national leadership

25. National development strategies, whether a PRS or a national plan, will remain pivotal in all planning assistance. Strengthening national leadership in education is crucial to guiding greater harmonization of international support at national level and to coherent long-term planning and priority-setting.

EFA convenors will influence CCA/UNDAF development and implementation to become a consistent process for integration of multilateral agendas, with the full incorporation of education, and in support of national development strategies. EFA convenors will also work to influence PRS and other national development strategy processes in the same way.

26. Support will take the form of constructive dialogue that increases national capacity to identify barriers and obstacles to achieving EFA, formulate policy and assess implications, adopt good practices and appropriate strategies, and situate action on EFA in the wider framework of international trends and ideas.

27. Multilateral support to national action on EFA will take place within the larger cooperative arrangements established in the CCA/UNDAF process and of the efforts of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) to harmonize the work of United Nations agencies. This implies that education will be firmly and regularly on the agenda of CCA/UNDAF processes.

28. The Second Decade of Education in Africa, in the framework of the African Union, offers an example of a political initiative around which international agencies will plan their support and define their respective roles.

Capacity development

29. Achieving the EFA goals implies adequate capacity, from the level of school and community to teacher training in higher education institutions and administrative capacity in education ministries. EFA stakeholders are agreed on the central importance of developing capacity as a key basis for progress. In particular, capacity development will respond to needs to scale up successful experiences, use existing capacity better and adopt good practices.

Develop an integrated approach towards capacity development and a process for implementation – a joint venture among the EFA convenors.

30. This approach will specifically address ways of jointly identifying and prioritizing the capacity development needs of national EFA stakeholders with a resolute focus on impact at the sub-national, local level and with a concern to avoid overlap and duplication in capacity development activities. It will also address how to mobilize resources (technical assistance, funding) and how to harmonize programming for capacity development, in support of the national education plan, and building on the respective comparative advantage of international agencies. Beyond the development of technical capacity, three principles are fundamental:

- Enabling country-led coordination of capacity development contributions, including negotiation of preferred modalities and providers;
- Designing capacity development activities such that they always increase the country's own pool of capacity developers, in all areas of competence;
- Building strong and proficient institutions.

31. Key areas in which to develop capacity may include:

- Initiating and managing the programming cycle, including research, planning, strategy development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation at national and sub-national level. This will include enabling countries to develop capacity at local level to collect and analyse relevant data as input into decentralized decision-making processes;
- Management of personnel and financial resources at national and sub-national level, including maintaining the professionalism and commitment of teachers and effective accountability for budgeting and spending;
- Learning lessons from successful sub-national initiatives and ways of scaling them up to provincial/national level;
- An increase in the quality of teaching and of curriculum development, and the use of more effective pedagogies – with attention to pre-service teacher training institutes, in-service training opportunities, and open and distance learning;
- An expansion of the possibility of community-based learning for all age groups, through the promotion and equipping of participatory stakeholder fora at local level.

Communication and advocacy

32 EFA is everyone's concern – from parent to president, from classroom to cabinet, from farmer to funder. Only adequate communication will ensure that all those concerned become engaged as actors in the process of achieving the six Dakar goals. Advocacy for the place of education in development, for the EFA goals as a sine qua non for reaching the MDGs, and for the right of every human being to learning and education will be at the heart of communication strategies.

Drawing on their wide-ranging experience, EFA convenors will develop media and advocacy plans to support national implementation of all six EFA goals and to link them with broad development objectives.

33. To accomplish these outcomes, at least the following six key areas need attention:

- Partnerships with the media which focus on EFA – its successes, challenges, outcomes and connections with the wider development agenda;
- Pro-active mutual information-sharing among agencies, based on institution-to-institution and person-to-person communication channels, and harmonization of messages in the promotion of EFA among agencies;
- Sustained engagement in and support for the annual EFA Week as a key global advocacy event;
- Promotion at national level of advocacy for greater community engagement in EFA;
- Active reference to each other's work in EFA in documents and publicity, and clear links between websites;
- Production of dynamic and complementary EFA publicity materials by each agency.

Resource mobilization

34. The Dakar Framework for Action made a commitment to making resources available wherever credible plans are in place. Bilateral aid, the EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI) and other sources have mobilized additional resources and pledged yet more; the private sector in some contexts provides a range of inputs. However, critical funding gaps remain for achieving all the EFA goals, and efforts to mobilize the necessary resources remain crucial.

EFA convenors will continue to urge governments to devote at least 6% of GNI to education, including basic education, and to lobby donors so that by 2010 a significantly increased proportion of the extra official development assistance that has been pledged will be directed to basic education⁷.

35. The major part of resources for EFA will flow from national budgets and it is important to work with governments to raise budgetary allocations to education in general and to basic education in particular, in line with needs. In addition, external aid is crucial to meeting the EFA goals in many developing countries, particularly in low-income countries, and can serve as a catalyst for policy development and for other funding initiatives. New pledges of development financing, as well as new commitments to debt cancellation bode well for increased development funds in general. Education must be one of the central investments for which these new funds are used. In addition to putting EFA on the agendas of major international groupings, it is important to facilitate resource mobilization through every available means. In addition to aid, other measures such as debt cancellation (HIPC and other arrangements), debt swaps and public-private partnerships should also be deployed. EFA convenors should multiply their efforts to articulate the EFA agenda in summits and major international conferences, and represent the EFA agenda in planning, technical and academic fora on development aid.

Further research will be undertaken on the size of the financing gap for EFA, with an emphasis on regular monitoring and re-assessment, supporting the costing of national education sector plans as well as estimates of global needs.

36. The external financing required for EFA Goal 2 (primary education, with gender parity in primary education from Goal 5) has been estimated at US \$7 billion per annum⁸. Estimates of the total cost to reach the adult literacy goal are US \$2.5 billion per annum. There is little or no costing of the other goals. Refining these estimates will underpin resource mobilization for each of the constituent parts of the EFA agenda, and for the whole of that agenda.

EFA convenors will work to increase the transfer of resources to EFA through existing and innovative financing mechanisms. This will include ensuring that, by the end of 2008, FTI will serve as a channel for financial assistance to at least 60 countries, and the linkages between FTI funds and greater ongoing bilateral support will be clear.

37. In the search for greater external support to EFA, the World Bank will play a key role, both in channelling resources and facilitating other, largely bilateral, funding. EFA-FTI provides seed money and capacity development resources to selected countries and expects to expand to more. FTI funds should leverage greater, longer-term and more predictable financing. As aid is more effectively coordinated by national leadership and driven by national priorities, FTI is a potential channel of funds for EFA goals beyond the original focus on primary education (with associated elements of gender equality and quality).

EFA convenors will lobby for new and increased external financial assistance for the EFA goals of adult literacy, early childhood care and education, and lifeskills and vocational s for young people; FTI, bilateral and other channels will be explored.

38. Current estimates of funding needs for EFA do not include all six goals, nor take a comprehensive view of how the costs of the whole EFA agenda are related to the costs of meeting the MDGs or aspects of sustainable development more broadly. Identifying funding for all the six goals will dovetail with broader development funding processes.

EFA convenors will work with governments to develop policies that facilitate strong public-private partnerships in support of EFA, in countries where such partnerships are currently weak.

39. A clear framework for policy development will build on experience and lessons learnt from existing public-private partnerships.

Effective use of aid for EFA

40. As commitments to increased amounts of development aid are made around the world, it is crucial that aid is used, and seen to be used, effectively. The evidence of aid effectiveness will be found in the tangible and visible results in improved educational opportunities and in the increasing impact of enhanced learning outcomes on socio-economic development. It will also be shown through the reduction of the transaction costs to recipients, improved absorptive capacity and greater efficiency in the use of funds.

Working with the OECD/DAC, EFA convenors will promote aid effectiveness at country level by 1) ensuring that the education sector is fully part of the implementation of the Paris Declaration and 2) using FTI as a sectoral instrument of in-country Paris Declaration processes. The World Bank will play a central role in these efforts.

41. This has three linked implications:

- Active negotiation, with government coordination, in fora at national level (EFA forum, UNDAF, FTI, and others), among bilateral donors and multilateral agencies on the principles of aid effectiveness;
- Collection and systematization of data on the education activities of all stakeholders in a particular country, for both planning and monitoring purposes;
- Rapid extension of national coordination among donors to countries with the most urgent needs and eventually to all countries, expanded to deal with the whole of the EFA agenda and driven by national development priorities.

Widening the scope of monitoring EFA

42. Evidence and analysis of EFA trends through regular and detailed monitoring at national, regional and global levels enhances policy formulation and identifies areas of neglect or difficulty. The *EFA Global Monitoring Report* provides internationally comparable data, and the next step is to widen monitoring at national and regional levels.

With EFA convenors, other international partners and national governments, UNESCO will coordinate reviews of EFA progress in 2006-2007 at national level, leading to regional syntheses and in concert with the GMR global review of progress, and as part of a longer-term review and research process to inform national priorities.

43. The 2008 edition of the GMR will present a review of global progress towards the six EFA goals. As a complement, EFA partners will facilitate reviews at national level, with the aim of capturing and analysing disparities within countries to improve policies, thus developing better indicators and greater capacity for monitoring the implementation of EFA. National analyses will be synthesized into regional reports. This process will also give attention to developing national capacity in the collection and analysis of more finely disaggregated data, capitalizing on the experience of UIS and its links with other United Nations agencies and the World Bank. A central

concern will be to improve the quality and timeliness of data. Further areas of attention include the assessment of learning outcomes and the impact of education on development.

44. These efforts will be part of a longer-term process (5-7 years) of review and research. UNESCO will use analysis of these data to support forward-looking planning for structuring subsequent EFA work, in the light of the obstacles and trends which are identified.

Working with EFA convenors and national governments, UNESCO will serve as a catalyst for the promotion and subsequent implementation of a peer review process for agencies and countries.

45. As agencies, both multilateral and bilateral, increasingly work in complementary fashion in EFA, they should also be able to evaluate each other's contributions at the international level. Evidence from the GMR will be used in peer review processes, which can be developed through the Working Group (WGEFA) and the High-Level Group (HLG).

46. Peer review among countries should examine the political and institutional frameworks of support for EFA, as well as the ways and means of implementing it in the local context, building on the experience of OECD/DAC and ADEA. The E-9 grouping and other South-South networks will also serve as platform for developing evaluation through peer review, and links will be made with the broader monitoring of aid effectiveness at national level, in the context of the implementation of the Paris Declaration.

47. Working towards the implementation of peer review in the context of countries willing to engage in this process would entail:

- Elaboration of an agreed evaluation framework (aims, methods, instruments, processes and timing, content areas) for the purposes of EFA;
- A process which includes the participation of existing EFA groupings at national level, such as an EFA forum, civil society alliances, and funding agency coordination groups;
- Commitment to use the results of peer review to re-orientate policies and improve practices.

IMPROVED COORDINATION AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL

48. International coordination of efforts in EFA is essential in order to facilitate the collective support to national action elaborated in the previous section. The Dakar Framework for Action mandated UNESCO to coordinate the EFA movement, at the international level. This entails maintaining momentum and enhancing political will, ensuring harmonious cooperation and regular exchange, and efficient management of the coordination mechanisms. This section spells out these areas of action.⁹

Maintaining the momentum of EFA

49. In Dakar in 2000, the international community made commitments for 15 years – a span of time over which the collective momentum on behalf of EFA should not only be maintained but if possible increase. This requires constant outreach to keep EFA on global, regional and national agendas, advocating for the connections between EFA and the wider socio-political agenda.

UNESCO will take the lead in promoting inclusion of reference to EFA and the GAP in the outcomes of the St. Petersburg G8 Summit in July 2006 and in advocating that EFA remains on the G8 agenda in subsequent years.

50. The G8 members are a critically important political force in promoting and supporting the achievement of the EFA goals by 2015. UNESCO will work closely with the host of the 2006 G8 meeting, the Russian Federation, to develop an agenda that gives due attention to EFA. Relations with the G8 will evolve between 2006 and 2015, as the EFA deadline approaches and as G8 members deepen and extend their interests in financing educational development in developing countries – this process will be aligned with the financial aspect of the E-9 partnership.

EFA convenors will work together to integrate the EFA media and advocacy strategies of the key EFA partners, in particular UNESCO, UNICEF, FTI and the Global Campaign on Education.

51. Partnerships between international EFA stakeholders and the media (such as newspapers, television, radio, and the worldwide web) will be a major means of reaching broad audiences, as will the wide dissemination of the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*. In addition to strong international visibility, there is need for more communication at national and regional levels, particularly around good practices and effective innovations. The developing FTI communication strategy will enable greater exchange on funding relationships and policy changes in education systems. Joint action at the international level will improve communication among agencies (internal communication) through this plan, and in consequence ensure better advocacy (external communication) for EFA.

EFA convenors will consult on and design a coordinated plan to keep EFA high on international political agendas.

52. The EFA convenors will work to raise the profile of education in general and EFA in particular on the agendas of groupings such as ECOSOC, regional organizations, the OECD, and many more fora where advocacy will keep EFA on the broader development agenda.¹⁰

Enhanced policy input based on evidence and research

53. As circumstances, trends, needs and contexts change, policies must adapt on the basis of solid evidence provided through research. The international community has a responsibility to signal where evidence may be weak or outdated and requires a further investment in research.

Under the coordination of UNESCO, EFA convenors will identify research priorities that will result in more successful strategies for achieving the EFA goals and the aims of the two decades by 2015.

54. Evidence from the *EFA Global Monitoring Report* and other sources throws up issues where deeper knowledge is required to inform EFA policies and international commitments. An example would be the dimensions of the teacher shortage across the world. Through EFA meetings and events, and in other ways, issues for further research will be identified and steps taken to address them. Identifying key areas, particularly with respect to countries that are farthest away from reaching the EFA goals, will take as full account as possible of existing research findings; cooperation with institutes and universities will enhance these processes.

South-South cooperation

55. South-South cooperation already offers opportunities for exchange and mutual learning through a range of fora and mechanisms. However, a more deliberate and expanded approach will turn this into specific input and investment, in part supported by donor countries.

By mid-2007, EFA convenors will take specific measures to strengthen and link existing networks of South-South cooperation in EFA.

56. Cooperation among developing countries of the South has the particular advantage of sharing experience across contexts which face similar challenges, opportunities or constraints. Regional and inter-regional networks provide platforms for strengthening cooperation in EFA; these include the E-9 grouping, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC), the Regional Committee on Education in Asia and the Pacific (EDCOM) and others. At the E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting in Monterrey in February 2006, the E-9 countries made commitments to continue to address their own EFA challenges as well as to use their expertise to assist less well-positioned developing countries to achieve the EFA goals. This and other South-South partnerships will provide support for teaching and learning best practices, strengthening institutions, innovative financing, developing capacity, and ICT innovations across the wide range of developing country needs, beginning with those who are most in need. UNESCO will also work with partners to explore the potential of financial support from developed countries for South-South cooperation, in a triangular relationship through, for example, partnership between E-9 countries and FTI. Lessons from existing experience of South-South cooperation will inform specific measures in promoting collaboration to achieve the EFA goals.

Integrated EFA mechanisms

57. The global mechanisms for EFA have promoted dialogue and impetus since Dakar, and there is now a need to use them fully in keeping the focus of all EFA efforts sharp and clear.

On the basis of its convening role, UNESCO will create an integrated agenda across the EFA coordination mechanisms in order to include the full range of EFA-related policy concerns of the international agencies and initiatives, as they pertain to achieving the Dakar goals.

58. These mechanisms include the High-Level Group, the Working Group, the E-9 meetings and other occasional events; the process will entail ways of integrating other meetings, such as those of FTI and UNGEI, and of negotiating the agendas among agencies. Side meetings will be thematically linked to the major events they accompany. An integrated agenda will be ready by the November 2006 meeting of the EFA High-Level Group in Egypt.

UNESCO will improve the effectiveness of EFA coordination mechanisms by re-aligning the sequence of the publication of the GMR and the EFA meetings, by mid-2007.

59. Using the evidence of the GMR more effectively for policy development will mean that the EFA Working Group meets after its publication each year, with the High-Level Group following later. When the GMR is published, the Working Group could meet to examine and discuss its findings, drawing out the policy implications. These would serve to better inform the agenda of the High-Level Group and enhance its impact on the momentum of EFA. These changes have been suggested both by EFA partners and by UNESCO's 2005 General Conference.

Strong partnerships through ongoing consultations with EFA partner agencies

60. In responding to the calls made by the Executive Board and the Brasilia EFA High-Level Group that the Global Action Plan be drawn up in close consultation with partner agencies, in particular with the other four convening agencies of Jomtien and Dakar (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank), consultations have taken place in the following ways:

- Through the deliberations of the EFA Working Group (July 2005), the FTI Technical Meetings (September 2005, March 2006), the EFA Ministerial Round Table (October 2005) the Beijing EFA High-Level Group (November 2005) and the Monterrey E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting (February 2006), where the broad directions of the Global Action Plan have been supported and endorsed.
- Through the debates of the 33rd Session of the General Conference of UNESCO, particularly in regard to biennial planning (33 C/5) and medium-term strategy development (34 C/4).
- Through bilateral discussions with high-level representatives of Member States, multilateral and bilateral agencies, and civil society.
- Through visits to and technical exchanges with key partner agencies, preparing for a high-level meeting of heads of convening agencies in mid-2006 to affirm, if possible, the Global Action Plan.

61. In facilitating progress in EFA it is vital to foster further partnerships in support of specific aspects of the EFA agenda; these partnerships will build on wider links in the United Nations system (for example, with ILO, FAO, WFP and WHO), networks of civil society organizations, regional groupings and private sector associations.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS OF THE EFA CONVENORS

62. The over-riding objective is to assist countries to achieve the EFA goals by 2015. EFA convenors will only be effective in doing this if they focus on a limited number of strategic directions which are, at one and the same time, general enough to allow for flexibility and adaptations at the regional, national, and local levels, while being specific enough to translate a global strategy into concrete planning and budgeting processes.

63. In defining the respective roles and responsibilities of the five Dakar convenors, the comparative advantage and the value that each one adds to the EFA movement should be clear – this is presented succinctly below. There follows a concise presentation of the major directions in EFA which each of the five agencies envisages over the next ten years. As this Plan develops further, it will include in the annex those of other major players including NGOs.

UNESCO	UNESCO, as champion of EFA, provides international leadership for creating learning societies with educational opportunities for all populations; it also provides expertise and policy input, and fosters partnerships to strengthen national educational leadership and the capacity of countries to offer quality education for all. It also monitors progress in EFA and promotes dialogue and exchange by convening EFA stakeholders regularly.
UNICEF	As a partner in the MDGs and as one of the founding partners of the EFA movement, UNICEF supports countries through a strong presence and extensive involvement, providing technical support across several key sectors; it also champions children's right to education and gender equality in education and acts as a "first responder" to countries for education in emergencies due to civil conflict or natural disasters
World Bank	The World Bank enables EFA partners to dialogue with Ministries of Finance, and also delivers or manages large-scale financing, helps ensure that priority consideration is given to education, and EFA in particular, and that adequate financing is made available.

- UNFPA Over the last three decades, UNFPA has supported efforts to integrate population, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and gender issues in both formal and non-formal education s. UNFPA’s contribution to education has centred around three aspects: 1) promoting policies to ensure access to basic education, especially for girls; 2) supporting curriculum and materials development and teacher training to ensure relevance and improve the quality of education in population, gender and life skills and 3) supporting comprehensive adolescent sexual and reproductive health s including promoting education on reproductive health and HIV prevention for young people.
- UNDP UNDP undertakes advocacy at the global and national levels to raise awareness of the linkages between EFA goals, poverty reduction and the MDGs such that they can be pursued in a mutually reinforcing manner. At the national level, it works through the Resident Coordinator system managed by UNDP, and through partnerships and interventions in its areas of practice to help build political support for education through promoting pro-poor policy choices and measures in national development strategies and frameworks and through strengthening cross-sectoral linkages in implementation.

UNESCO

64. UNESCO has a role of intellectual leadership for educational innovation and reform and as a partner in policy development with its Member States. It serves as champion of the overall EFA vision. Its work in education is based on the respect of the universal right to education and on the role of education in promoting peace. As the coordinator of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) and the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD), UNESCO further enriches the EFA movement.

65. This Global Action Plan, and the process for evaluating and renewing it, will be the UNESCO Education Sector’s compass for the next 10 years. In devising a new Medium-Term Strategy (2008-2013) on the basis of extensive consultations, UNESCO will articulate its contribution to a comprehensive response to the remaining EFA challenge across the six goals. UNESCO’s work in education will be informed by the following strategic directions:

- **“From Access to Success”**: This means enrolling all eligible learners in school, including marginalized populations, and enabling them to remain there and to achieve success. Addressing gender issues across all marginalized groups is a critical concern. In the framework of education as a fundamental human right, enabling ‘access to success’ requires a constant emphasis on developing contextually effective strategies and improving the quality of education and the assessment of learning processes and outcomes. As part of an emphasis on inclusion and a response to the diversity of needs of all learners, the contribution of EDUCAIDS will be part of these strategies in many contexts. EFA stakeholders should work together to develop and promote imaginative approaches to education and learning that include all — for success.
- **Literacy**: The Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) is a global strategic framework for collectively accelerating literacy efforts in 35 countries where at present 85% of populations with insufficient literacy competencies reside. Within LIFE, integrated learner-centred literacy and life skills s ensuring gender equality are planned in local context of language and culture, including through non-formal approaches. LIFE will be implemented through a three-

pronged approach focusing on universal quality basic education, scaling up of good youth and adult literacy s, and creation of literate environments.

- **Education for work:** There is a deepening need to enrol and graduate more students in secondary education, whose curricula should have as a goal to create “Thinkers who work and workers who think”. Secondary and post-secondary education, as well as technical and vocational education and training (TVET), must be linked to the development of an appropriate workforce. Educational and training opportunities for out-of-school youth, along with non-formal learning, have a major place. Both literacy and education for work entail a creative and relevant approach to lifelong learning.
- **Teacher training** is a priority development area. There is a need to identify best practices and pursue training and professional development aggressively. UNESCO will focus on this through its Teacher Training Initiative in sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA), through links with other initiatives, as well as through stronger links with higher education. Also, UNESCO should lead and coordinate the global effort to quantify the widening “teacher gap” and devise potential solutions to it, in alignment with the UNESCO-led EDUCAIDS initiative.
- **Technology** will transform the use of time, space and responsibility: UNESCO should identify the transformational capacity of technology to support high-quality learning in all formal and non-formal settings. As a critical, cross-sectoral component of the organization’s capacity, it will include the development of the Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE), the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA), and the Higher Education Division to create ‘centres of excellence’ at universities for teacher training and human resource development.

66. UNESCO will support these educational directions in at least the following ways:

- **Capacity development** at the regional and national levels: UNESCO and its Education Institutes will address the clearly articulated need for the continued development of educational staff in ministries, schools, universities, and other contexts. These include, but are not limited to, the in-country capacity to plan, to manage, and to conduct research and evaluation s on the effect of education at all levels.
Further, it will further develop its role and capacity to provide policy advice based on rigorous analysis. Key to this process will be gathering, collating, and disseminating information in ways and formats which promote fruitful policy dialogue. Harnessing its expertise in Paris, its institutes and in the field, UNESCO will strengthen and focus its input into the policy agenda, both in international and regional fora and at country level.
Calls for UNESCO to exercise more strongly its role of intellectual partner and EFA advocate were made by Education Ministers at the Round Table on EFA in October 2005, and again at the High-Level Group meeting in Beijing in November 2005. UNESCO will respond in two ways in 2006 and 2007: by reinforcing the role of its Education Sector as a clearing-house of ideas and by strengthening its field operations to give better support to governments in policy formulation and the articulation of their priorities with development partners.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** as part of the 2008 Review and Stocktaking of EFA Progress (RASEP) and working with a longer-term cycle of national and regional reviews, UNESCO will work towards an integrated framework and dependable network for the monitoring and evaluation of EFA.
- **National planning:** UNESCO will work to strengthen national educational planning, by improving the basis for national educational needs assessment. As part of this, UNESCO will use its National Education Support Strategies to articulate its particular support to countries in line with national educational development priorities and as input into CCA/UNDAF processes.

- **The UNESCO Education Portal:** As part of its standard-setting and clearinghouse functions, UNESCO will reinforce its role in sharing knowledge in the field of education and EFA, with an emphasis on educational practice and delivery. A global portal will enable dissemination, exchange and learning among EFA partners, with a focus on what they are doing to achieve the goals, whether, for example, in policy or practice, finance or pedagogy. As a further feature, the platform(s) should present clearly UNESCO's strategic objectives, organized by initiative and by each of the 6 EFA goals in order to show clearly what UNESCO is contributing to achieve EFA, presented in terms of results attained in the field or through research.
- **Accountability to and partnership with Member States:** As the financial, economic and social aspects of sustainable development and educational strategies become increasingly intertwined at the global as well as regional and national levels, the Education Sector's role as the intellectual partner and advocate for national educational strategies and plans is more important than ever.¹¹ UNESCO will continue to work with Ministers of Education in developing countries towards ensuring that its s and activities are better aligned to support national plans and strategies in EFA. Regular monitoring and evaluation of the impact of UNESCO's interventions will be carried out in conjunction with Ministers of Education.

UNICEF

67. UNICEF brings the following comparative advantages and added value to the EFA movement:

- A tradition of working with national stakeholders and providing regular support for problem-solving. i.e. "accompanying" countries through a strong presence and extensive involvement, with education staff strength of over 360 experts across 155 countries, 7 regional offices and Headquarters.
- The ability to provide technical support to countries across several key sectors, through a cross-sectoral capacity that involves expert and experienced staff in education and such areas as Health and Nutrition, Water and Environmental Sanitation, HIV/AIDS, Child Protection, and Early Childhood Development.
- The ability to use and share technical models and tools, developed on the basis of experience in different settings, and to set standards for implementing feasible solutions (E.g. Quality through Child Friendly Schools; or School-in-a-Box as a tool for rapidly setting up conditions for learning in emergencies).
- The influence and credibility to champion and advocate for children's right to education, through a mandate for children and accumulated expertise/experience in campaigns on rights and in a rights-based approach to education programming.
- A proven track record as a "first responder" and effective coordinator of support to countries for education in emergencies due to civil conflict or natural disasters.
- A proven track record of designing and implementing a wide range of innovative solutions in education to benefit disadvantaged populations, and often with the potential for improving education systems in general for the benefit of all.
- The capacity to contribute to education statistics and analysis with data from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) that complements the authoritative administrative data on education from UNESCO-UIS; and also makes possible broader analysis, linking education and other social/economic indicators.
- A reliable pattern of growth in expenditure for support to education s in its Medium Term Strategic Plans (MTSP) as a priority; as well as a strong track record on leveraging resources for children, in education and other areas.

- A major contributor to knowledge building in education through harnessing and analysis of experiential knowledge as well as through research and evaluation.
- Expertise and experience in the area of gender in education, based on years of successful programming and advocacy in girls' education as a UNICEF priority.

B. Strategic Intent, Key Commitments and Directions:

- UNICEF will allocate 18% to 21% of resources in its Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP 2006 – 2009), to support basic education and gender equality. If fund raising expectations are realized, education expenditure will amount to between US \$376 million to US \$438 million in 2006, rising to between US \$407 million and US \$475 million in 2009. This trend is expected to continue up to 2015.
- Leveraging funds for joint work with other United Nations agencies (UNESCO, WFP, etc) and for strategic partnerships (UNGEI); and advocating for increased funding to countries through sector oriented channels like EFA-FTI will be a high priority.
- High priority will be given to working with local institutions, technical staff and management systems on a regular and sustained basis, to help cultivate national capacity to execute education plans effectively and use resources more efficiently.
- In terms of scope, the focus of UNICEF's work in education will cover the 0 to 18 age group, involving work on: ECD (including parenting education), the primary school and non-formal alternatives; secondary school and other post-primary destinations (NFE, TVET); and use of mass media and IT in the community; etc
- Capacity building within UNICEF will be given high priority for the agency to fulfil its obligations and meet the expectations of partners in their joint efforts on: education in emergencies; gender in education; access, quality and learning achievement issues; and the robustness of education systems.
- UNICEF will continue to lead and support the UNGEI partnership in order to provide strong advocacy and technical support for girls' education specifically and for gender issues in general, to countries and for initiatives like EFA-FTI.
- In programming for support to countries, UNICEF will work with key partners to support country plans and priorities for achieving goals and targets in key areas of access, gender, quality, learning achievement, education in emergencies and robustness of education systems as indicated in the UNICEF Education Strategy 2006-2015.
- When an emergency is declared in any country it automatically becomes a high priority country for UNICEF. In addition countries will be given high priority where education is threatened by factors like: HIV/AIDS epidemic; lack of water, sanitation and hygiene; low enrolment levels; and high gender disparity.
- Programming to address education and conflict and education in emergencies, as well as education in post-conflict countries and education in fragile states.
- UNICEF is committed to strengthening partnerships for education around the EFA movement led by UNESCO and will work with partners to provide high quality advocacy, technical support and capacity development through joint work that is based on the competencies and comparative advantages of each partner.

WORLD BANK

68. With the caveats that all World Bank country-level actions are driven by the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) which is agreed upon on a country by country basis, and that resource transfers are generally done through sector-wide or multi-sector channels, the Bank is provisionally willing to commit to:

- Maintaining resource transfers to countries at about \$2 billion a year with about 50% of that going to basic education.¹²

- Mobilizing additional resources for EFA using its platform with finance ministers and its macroeconomic dialogue with the countries, and by ensuring that a fair share of resources released through debt relief are allocated to EFA.
- Working in partnership with other donors and stakeholders to help manage the implementation of education programmes funded through large-scale trust funds channelled through the Bank. Between 2002-2005 the Bank has implemented/is implementing programmes worth \$3.6 billion funded by more than 30 agencies.
- Continue to host and to provide leadership support to the FTI programme with the goal of bringing 40 more countries into the partnership by 2008.
- Building a programme of high quality analytical work on basic education in at least 20 of the 40 lowest performing countries.
- Ensuring that EFA, and education more generally, continues to enjoy pride of place in key Bank strategic and policy documents such as the PRSPs, Country Economic Memoranda (CEM) and Country Assistance Strategies (CAS). This would ensure that education is accorded an appropriate place in macroeconomic and resource allocation decisions at the country level.
- Ensuring participation in and contribution to all key meetings of the Dakar 5.

UNFPA

69. UNFPA has increased its support to global initiatives including involvement in strategic partnerships such as Education for All (EFA), the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), the launch of the Literacy Decade, and the Global Initiative on Preventive Education on HIV/AIDS (GIPE) and the FRESH (Focusing Resources on School Health) Initiative. Moving forward with the Education for All Initiative (EFA), especially in those countries or regions furthest away from attainment of the EFA goals, UNFPA can commit to:

- Taking a leadership role in comprehensive gender-sensitive sexuality education (including HIV prevention) through a life skills approach that enables adolescents and youth to develop their identities, values, critical thinking and exercise their rights.
- Facilitating the integration of comprehensive and gender-sensitive sexuality education including through peer approaches into primary and secondary school level curricula and into out-of-school adolescent and youth s.
- Contributing to improvement in the quality of education through introduction and integration of relevant and participatory teaching and learning methodologies on sexual and reproductive health topics.
- Actively advocating for national and sub-national policies and innovative s to improve retention of girls in school, delay age at marriage and reduce gender bias in the classroom and in the curriculum.
- Advocating for education (particularly sexual and reproductive health education) elements in national sectoral plans and strategies, as part of efforts to include sexual and reproductive health into PRSPs, SWAps, maternal and newborn roadmaps, etc.
- Establishing linkages between MDG on education with MDGs 3, 4, 5 and 6 and actively promoting strategies aimed at reducing poverty and gender inequities, and human rights protection for the poor and disenfranchised populations, including women and young people.
- Supporting community-based initiatives (such as Literacy for Empowerment or LIFE) aimed at empowering women and girls, linking them to livelihoods and micro-credit schemes to reduce sexual and reproductive health risk factors.

- Incorporating education in sexual and reproductive health s aimed at promoting stigma reduction and social rehabilitation of affected communities, such as women living with HIV/AIDS or affected by obstetric fistula.
- Supporting the use of alternative channels for education to reach out-of-school youth, such as information communication technologies (ICTs) and distance learning methodologies to promote sexual and reproductive health.
- Promote and support skills building, literacy development and vocational opportunities for women and young girls, including those involved in basic health care delivery, such as midwives and community health volunteers.

UNDP

70. UNDP's strategic directions in support of EFA over the next ten years are as follows:

- Support for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) lies at the heart of the organization's strategic goals. UNDP's current and second Multi-year Funding Framework (MYFF) (2004-2007) aligns this support within the context of its practice areas and through cross-sectoral advocacy, capacity and strategy development through via MDG and Human Development Reports. In this context UNDP is strongly committed to the attainment of the EFA goals with a belief that it makes good development sense and that to ensure development effectiveness and cost-effective use of public resources, the MDGs and EFA goals must be pursued in a mutually reinforcing manner.
- As the "United Nations' global development network", UNDP provides a platform for sharing of effective strategies and for action at the national level, particularly in the context of strengthening capacities for use of methodologies, instruments and tools for mainstreaming of MDGs in development plans and budgeting processes. Through the Resident Coordinator system which it manages, UNDP also contributes to the coordination of United Nations agencies' work and to the follow-up of United Nations conferences at the national level. The Resident Coordinators will work with key partners and agencies to ensure that the EFA agenda and education in general, are well integrated into the common United Nations strategies and actions (e.g. CCA/UNDAF) to provide support to national development strategies.
- As chair and member of the UNDG, which is an instrument for United Nations reform, UNDP will work to ensure that linkages between the achievement of EFA and MDGs are made in the UNDG agenda and strategy documents, and in the United Nations reform process.
- UNDP will contribute to the EFA through focusing on the adoption of policies and actions at country level, with special emphasis on developing capacities, sharing knowledge, working in partnerships and advocating the case for linkages with poverty reduction, empowerment of girls and women, and participatory governance and local development. [UNDP's five practice/focus areas are: 1) democratic governance, 2) poverty reduction, 3) crisis prevention and recovery, 4) energy and environment and 5) HIV and AIDS.]
- UNDP contributes to EFA through its active participation in all EFA-related meetings and key meetings of the five EFA convening agencies.

FROM INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK TO NATIONAL ACTION

71. This plan is a working and dynamic document which will best facilitate joint and coordinated action when it is used as a point of reference by partners in EFA in dialogue and in building cooperation.

72. The implementation of this plan will be monitored and evaluated. Monitoring will take place in an ongoing way through meetings of senior professionals from the five EFA convening agencies and other stakeholders. These meetings should follow a regular pattern (at least three/year) and integrate inter-agency planning for the larger EFA meetings. Annually, the EFA High-Level Group

will also examine progress in implementing the plan. Proposals for independent external review in 2009 and 2012 of the processes, partnerships and results of implementing the plan will be developed.

73. The key arena for action in EFA is at national level, in the context of each country's educational policy and plan. This Action Plan provides a coherent framework for coordinated and complementary action by international agencies in support of country-level implementation. The areas of strategic focus suggest how such support may be targeted, given the endless range of needs and possibilities. The areas of support to national action have been identified in many EFA discussions as essential to the promotion and implementation of EFA in every context.

74. However, beyond that, specific priorities and their phasing/timing, methods and approaches, costings and allocation of resources – these will all be determined at country level, in context.

75. In order to launch the plan as a means of strengthening and shaping coordinated action at country level, it will be important that the EFA convenors and other EFA partners disseminate it to their field offices and sensitize staff to its purpose as a reference point in planning and cooperative support to EFA. It may further be presented and debated in meetings, training and retreats organized by EFA partners.

76. Coordinated support at national level will result from a commitment to dialogue that is regular, focused, and of high quality, at the national level and at the international level. At national level, multilateral and bilateral partners are committed to greater coordination, harmonization and alignment with national priorities as part of the wider development processes, in particular the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Dialogue at that level, orchestrated by the government and involving all EFA stakeholders, will be the lifeblood of cooperation. At international level, dialogue will ensure that agendas are complementary and mutually supportive, on condition that agencies pass on to their national level representation both information on and commitment to the spirit of dialogue.

77. Coordination responsibilities for the overall EFA effort and the contributions of each agency are an integral part of this Plan, which does not prescribe solutions or actions; it rather suggests processes and areas of action in support of the national level, around which dialogue may proceed.

ANNEXES

1. TIMELINE

The timeline is presented in three parts:

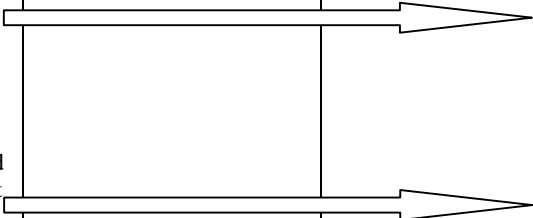
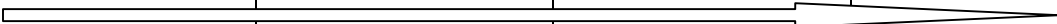
- Part 1 details regular, mostly annual, events which either contribute directly to EFA coordination or offer an opportunity to link EFA with wider development agendas; this list is not exhaustive, but a working tool;
- Part 2 presents a timeline over the five years 2006-2010, noting events, trends and pledges relating to EFA;
- Part 3, yet to be elaborated, will present the later years of EFA endeavours, 2011-2015.

Part 1. Regular meetings, events and actions (working list)

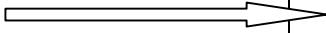
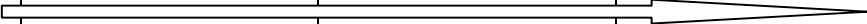
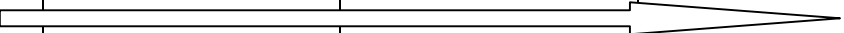
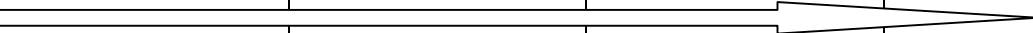
Areas		Regular meetings, events, actions	
Alliance building & Political momentum	EFA Meetings	International coordination WGEFA (annual) HLG (annual) FTI Partnership meeting (annual) FTI technical meetings (biannual) Regional meetings (e.g. UNESCO Bangkok, South-Asian Ministers' EFA Forum) E-9 Ministerial Meeting (biennial) CCNGO	Regional coordination Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC) Ministers of Education of African Member States (MINEDAF) AU Conference of African Ministers of Education (COMEDAF) Regional Committee on Education in Asia and the Pacific (EDCOM)
			Thematic partnerships United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) Education for Rural People The Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)

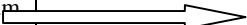
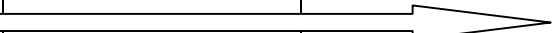
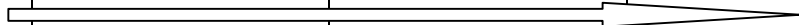

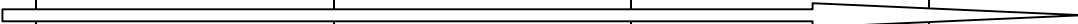
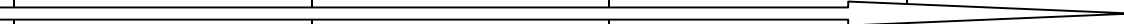
Areas	Regular meetings, events, actions	
	Other major events for advocacy on EFA	International meetings G-8 (July) ECOSOC United Nations Inter-agency Committee on DESD United Nations Forum on Indigenous Affairs (May) World Congress on Indigenous Education OECD/ED OECD/DAC High-Level meeting World Economic Forum (January) Commission on Human Rights Commission on the Status of Women Committee on the Rights of Child Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Inter-agency Consultative Group on Secondary Education Reform Regional meetings Parliamentary Forums and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) ADEA African Union
	Agencies' meetings	Meetings of governing bodies UNESCO's Executive Board (biannual - April and October) and General Conference (Biennial - October) WB/IMF's Development Committee (biannual - Spring – March/April and Fall – September/October) UNICEF's Executive Board (3 times - January, June and September) UNDP/UNFPA - Executive Board (2 regular sessions in NY – January and September & Annual Session in Geneva - September)
Communication & advocacy	Events EFA Week International Days International Mother Language Day (21 February) International Women's day (8 March) Africa Day (25 May)	International Literacy Day (8 September) World Teacher's Day (5 October) World AIDS Day (1 December) International Human Rights Day (10 December) United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation (20 December)
Monitoring	Reports GMR (Annual - November) FTI Status Report (Annual - November) Global Education Digest by UIS (annual) UNDP Human Development Report (annual)	State of the World's Children (UNICEF – annual) World Development Report (World Bank – Annual)

Part 2: Timeline (2006-2010)

Section	Sub-section	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<i>Better Support to the National Level</i>	Supporting national leadership	Influence CCA/UNDAF development and implementation as a consistent process for integration of multilateral agendas with the full incorporation of education supporting national development strategies Work to influence PRS and other national development strategy processes in the same way				
	Capacity development	Develop an integrated capacity development approach and a process for implementation				
	Communication and advocacy	Develop media and advocacy to support national implementation of all six EFA goals and to link them with broad development objectives				

Section	Sub-section	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	Resource mobilization	<p>Undertake further research on the size of the financing gap for EFA, with an emphasis on regular monitoring and reassessment, supporting the costing of national education sector plans as well as estimates of global needs.</p> <p>Continue to urge governments to devote at least 6% of GNI to education, including basic education</p> <p>Lobby for new and increased external financial assistance for the EFA goals of adult literacy, early childhood care and education, and life skills and vocational channels for young people will be explored.</p> <p>Work with governments to develop policies that facilitate strong public-private partnerships in support of EFA, in countries where such partnerships are currently weak.</p>		<p>By the end of 2008, FTI will serve as a channel for financing assistance to at least 60 countries, and the linkages between FTI funds and greater ongoing bilateral support will be clear. (WB)</p>		<p>A significantly higher proportion of the extra ODA pledged in 2005 is dedicated to basic education.</p>
	Effective use of aid for EFA	<p>Promote aid effectiveness at country level by 1) ensuring that the education sector is fully part of the implementation of the Paris Declaration and 2) using FTI as a sectoral instrument of in-country Paris Declaration processes</p>				

Section	Sub-section	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	Widening the scope of monitoring EFA	Coordinate reviews of EFA progress in 2006-2007 at national level, leading to regional syntheses and in concert with the GMR global review of progress, and as part of a longer-term review and research process to inform national priorities (UNESCO with partners/governments)	 <p>Develop and subsequently implement a peer review model for agencies and countries. (UNESCO with EFA partners, governments)</p> 			
<i>Improved Coordination at the Global Level</i>	Maintaining the momentum of EFA	<p>Promote inclusion of reference to EFA and GAP in the outcomes of the St. Petersburg G-8 Summit in July 2006</p> <p>Consult on and design a coordinated plan to keep EFA high on international political agendas</p> <p>Work together to integrate the EFA media and advocacy strategies of the key EFA partners, in particular UNESCO, UNICEF, FTI, and the Global Campaign on Education</p>	Advocate for EFA on the G8 agenda in subsequent years (UNESCO)			
	Enhanced policy input based on evidence and research	Identify research priorities that will result in more successful strategies for achieving the EFA goals and the aims of the two decades by 2015.				
	South-South cooperation		Take specific measures to strengthen and link existing networks of South-South cooperation in EFA.	7 th E-9 Ministerial Review meeting (Indonesia)		8th E-9 Ministerial Review meeting

Section	Sub-section	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	Integrated EFA mechanisms	Create an integrated agenda across the EFA coordination mechanisms in order to include the full range of EFA-related policy concerns of the international agencies and initiatives(UNESCO)	Improve the effectiveness of EFA coordination mechanisms by re-aligning the sequence of the publication of the GMR and the EFA meetings (UNESCO)			
Strategic Directions of the EFA Convenors	UNESCO	ED Sector Management Reform Formulation of the Medium Term strategy Implementation of in-house plan for DESD		Implementation of the Medium Term Strategy		
	UNICEF	Formulation of the Medium Term strategy	Implementation of the Medium Term Strategy			
	World Bank	Implementation of the Education Sector Strategy updated in December 2005				
	UNFPA	Establish linkages between education and MDGs, particularly regarding goal 3,4 5, and 6. Facilitate sexuality education and improve reproductive health-related areas, including delaying marriage age.				
	UNDP	Achieve MDGS with Multi-year Funding Framework (MYFF, 2004-2007) Provide a platform to share effective strategies and action at the national level, particularly in the context of strengthening capacities for use of methodologies, instruments and tools for mainstreaming of MDGs in development plans and budgeting process				

2. INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN EFA

UNLD

Voted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003 – 2012) will generate momentum, within the EFA framework, so that women and men everywhere of every age can access literacy as a tool for learning and a means to take part in society, in ways that are relevant locally and that open up wider opportunities. UNESCO is the coordinating agency and a broad engagement of partners is a basic premise.

UNDESD

Established by decision of the United Nations General Assembly, the DESD (2005 – 2014) aims to promote the values and behaviour patterns of sustainable development through both the content and the process of education. EFA works to provide learning opportunities, for which DESD offers both ethos and content. With UNESCO as the coordinating agency, the Decade cuts across the United Nations system and calls for the active engagement of governments and civil society, from national down to community level.

WPHRE

Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, the WPHRE Plan of Action provides: (i) a definition of human rights education in the school system based on internationally agreed principles; (ii) a user-friendly guide to developing and/or improving human rights education in the school system, by proposing concrete actions for implementation at the national level; and (iii) a flexible guide which can be adapted to different contexts and situations.

Civil society partnerships

The Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA (CCNGO) is a key dialogue partner of UNESCO which facilitates civil society participation in the Dakar follow-up; it links more than 600 international, regional and national NGOs and networks.

The Global Campaign for Education is a civil society initiative – a coalition with strong membership from teachers' unions and other NGOs and which campaigns vigorously with international aid community for more resources for EFA, organizing, for example, the annual Global EFA Action Week.

UNGEI

Partners in the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) mobilize resources for both targeted project interventions and country s as well as large scale systemic interventions designed to impact on the whole education system. UNICEF leads the initiative and provides the secretariat, and partners include other United Nations agencies, governments, civil society and the private sector.

HIV & AIDS and Education

Two initiatives serve to foster cooperation on these linkages. The first, the UNAIDS Inter-agency Task Team on Education, is convened by UNESCO and provides a platform for advocacy, networking and harmonization among international partners – agencies, civil society, bilateral funders, etc – raising the profile of, on the one hand, the impact of HIV & AIDS on education, and on the other, the role of education in HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. The second, EDUCAIDS, is a multi-country initiative under UNAIDS to support the implementation of comprehensive national educational responses to the HIV and AIDS epidemic; it is led by UNESCO with collaboration of key stakeholders.

Education for Rural People

Most groups who are marginalized from high-quality and relevant learning opportunities are in rural areas. This partnership focuses on the specific learning need of rural people, in terms of access, quality, the environment and outcomes of learning, both for adults and children. It also aims to improve institutional capacity in planning and implementing education for rural people. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and UNESCO jointly lead this partnership which includes a wide range of governmental and non-governmental partners at international and national levels.

CGECCD

The Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development is an international consortium consisting of more than 30 agencies (donors, NGOs and foundations) involved in ECCE, the first Dakar Goal, in developing countries. CGECCD aims to facilitate a global understanding of the critical importance of ECCE to social development and poverty reduction, advocate for improved investments, policies and actions at the national, regional and international level, and strengthen national and regional capacities to generate, disseminate and share ECCE information and knowledge, and advocate for the support of young children's overall development.

FRESH

The FRESH initiative - Focusing Resources on Effective School Health - provides an over-arching framework for international agencies, civil society and others to cooperate in promoting the linkages between school health and quality education. Under the FRESH banner, partners work separately and together to produce tools and resources for school health promotion, including providing relevant training for health and education personnel. The FRESH partners also respond to country requests for policy input and capacity development to support school health s. FRESH draws on the particular strengths of each partner agency and brings ministries of health and education together for dialogue at national level.

Education for people with disabilities

Disability is both the cause and consequence of poverty, and the partnership aims to act as a catalyst to ensure that

the right to education and the goals of the Dakar Framework are realized for individuals with disabilities. The partnership includes United Nations agencies, international and national disability organizations and donors. With a secretariat shared between the University of Oslo and UNESCO, the partners pursue the need for policy makers and NGOs to work directly and in partnership with local, national, regional and global organizations comprised of and representing individuals with disabilities and their families.

Teachers and the quality of education

The crucial role of teachers in achieving quality education and the need to give attention to teacher status and conditions form the basis of this partnership. It aims to facilitate dialogue among teachers, their institutions and associations on promoting quality teaching and sound learning, and it builds on the initiatives of the three partners: ILO, Education International and UNESCO.

Education in situations of emergency and crisis

Structured in an open and flexible manner, the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) aims to reach out to education practitioners around the world working in situations of emergencies and crisis. INEE promotes access and completion of education of high quality for all persons affected by emergencies, crises or chronic instability. It also promotes inter-agency communication and co-operation in order to improve responses to emergency education. The partnership, whose secretariat is housed in UNICEF, involves a wide range of multilateral and civil society organizations and foundations.

Thematic partnerships

Known also as 'EFA flagship s', other thematic partnerships developed following the 2000 World Education Forum in order facilitate collective action to address some of the broad objectives laid out in the Dakar Framework for Action in ways that support and enrich the national EFA plans.

New partnerships

New partnerships emerge to focus collective energy on parts of the EFA agenda. Following agreement at the 2005 EFA High-Level Group in Beijing, a Global Task Force on Child Labour and EFA is in the process of being established through collaboration between UNESCO, ILO, UNICEF, the World Bank and the Global March against Child Labour. New alliances are developing around the international drive to abolish school fees in primary education.

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- ¹ The Plan does not rehearse in detail the current status of EFA in the world nor discuss the substantive challenges in achieving it – these are adequately documented in the annual EFA *Global Monitoring Report* whose data and analyses provide a vital stimulus for the coordinated action that the GAP proposes.
- ² Other partners which show commitments to EFA include the following: 1) the Inter-Parliamentary Union (**IPU**) through mobilizing parliamentarians for promoting EFA, educational legislation and budgets; 2) the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (**OHCHR**) and the **Human Rights Council**, including the **Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, the **Committee on the Rights of the Child**, and the **Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education** on issue of the right to EFA; 3) the International Labour Organization (**ILO**) on child labour and the status of teachers; 4) the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (**UNHCR**) on education for refugees and displaced children; 5) the World Health Organization (**WHO**) on health (including HIV/AIDS) education; 6) the World Food (**WFP**) through the school feeding ; 7) and the United Nations Environmental (**UNEP**) on environmental education.
- ³ The links between EFA, the MDGs, the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Literacy Decade are explained in the brochure *Linkages between the Global Initiatives in Education*, (Education for Sustainable Development in Action, Technical Paper No. 1 – 2005). UNESCO, Paris.
- ⁴ The Dakar Framework for Action (paragraph 19) called on UNESCO to “continue its mandated role in co-ordinating EFA partners and maintaining their collaborative momentum...”
- ⁵ This position is echoed by the recent Education Section Strategy Update (ESSU – 2005) of the World Bank: ‘The single most important recommendation of the ESSU is that Bank assistance should be tailored to a country’s vision and be geared to maximizing the chances for realizing such a vision.’ p.36
- ⁶ UNESCO. 2000. *The Dakar Framework for Action. Education for All: meeting our collective commitments*. Paris: UNESCO.
- ⁷ Bilateral ODA to basic education was about 2% of total bilateral aid in 2003 (*EFA Global Monitoring Report 2006* pp.108-109).
- ⁸ UNESCO. 2005. *Literacy for Life*. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2006. Paris: UNESCO. This figure compares with US \$1.16 billion of bilateral aid to basic education in 2003.
- ⁹ UNESCO’s Executive Board documents 170 EX/8 (2004) and 171 EX/8 (2005) provide the framework for these responsibilities and objectives.
- ¹⁰ See Annex I Timeline for a non-exhaustive listing of possible meetings where EFA should be part of the agenda.
- ¹¹ This was underlined in the Communiqué of the Ministerial Round Table (Paris, October 2005), and further stressed during the HLG meeting in Beijing.
- ¹² In 2006, IBRD and IDA loans amounted US \$1.193 billion and US \$946 million respectively. Grants provided through the Development Grant Facility (DGF) since 1997 were US \$82.2 million. Lending by area of education 2002-2006 is as follows: 1) adult/non-formal education – 0.3%, 2) general education sector – 33.3%, 3) pre-primary education – 7.5%, 4) primary education – 23.3%, 5) secondary education – 17.1%, 6) tertiary education – 15.0%, and 7) vocational training – 3.5%.

ANNEX II

UNDG Principals' meeting, Geneva, 12 July 2006

We, Heads of the five EFA convening agencies – UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank –, agree in principle to continue to work on the Education for All (EFA) Global Action Plan as a platform for collaboration and enhanced action in support of national efforts to achieve the EFA goals.

This Plan is a work-in-progress moving in an agreed direction; it is envisaged that agencies will continue their consultation process and will present to the sixth meeting of the High-Level Group on EFA (Cairo, 14-16 November 2006) a more fully developed version of the Plan.

This work is in line with efforts towards greater coherence and complementarity within the UN system and with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Harmonisation. In the context of the Millennium Development Goals and the wider development agenda, the Plan seeks to re-invigorate efforts to achieve the EFA goals and will serve as a framework for strengthened cooperation and coordinated action among all EFA partners at country level.

EDUCATION FOR INNOVATIVE SOCIETIES IN THE 21st CENTURY

St. Petersburg, July 16, 2006

1. Education is at the heart of human progress. Economic and social prosperity in the 21st century depend on the ability of nations to educate all members of their societies to be prepared to thrive in a rapidly changing world. An innovative society prepares its people to embrace change. We will promote the global innovation society by developing and integrating all three elements of the “knowledge triangle” (education, research and innovation), by investing fully in people, skills and research, and by supporting modernization of education systems to become more relevant to the needs of a global knowledge-based economy.
2. Education enriches cultures, creates mutual understanding globally, underpins democratic societies, builds respect for the rule of law. Education, the enhancement of skills, and the generation of new ideas are essential to the development of human capital and are key engines of economic growth, drivers of market productivity, and sources of cohesion for all nations.
3. Development of a global innovation society depends on the mobility and integration in all nations of people, knowledge and technologies. As science, technology, and economic progress become more global, international collaboration is indispensable to generate the talent and knowledge needed to find solutions to fundamental global challenges.
4. Knowledge-based economies require innovative education systems and reliable, transparent, and non-discriminatory legal, regulatory, and policy frameworks. These frameworks foster pro-competitive and predictable policies, offering strong protection of intellectual property rights, supporting research, development, and investment, and providing incentives that favour innovation.
5. To achieve this common vision for the Innovation Society, and noting the Moscow Declaration adopted by Ministers of Education on June 2, 2006, we will:
 - actively cooperate to achieve high quality basic education, literacy and gender equality in accord with the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the objectives of Education for All (EFA);
 - build modern, effective education systems to meet the challenges of and participate fully in the global innovation society;
 - encourage educational policies and investment that foster diverse, efficient, sustainable, and high quality higher education institutions;
 - promote lifelong learning based on the principles of the G-8 Cologne Summit Charter on Aims and Ambitions for Lifelong Learning, to enable individuals to adapt to change, maximize their skills and knowledge, and contribute to their communities and work places;
 - cooperate with the private sector to expand research networks to generate knowledge, encourage innovation, and move new technologies quickly from the laboratory to the marketplace;
 - increase exchanges in science and technology and other fields at all levels of education, and promote better understanding of foreign qualifications and educational outcomes;

- promote high standards notably in mathematics, science, technology, and foreign languages at all levels of education, and support the engagement of highly qualified teachers in these critical areas;
- promote social and economic integration of immigrants into host countries and societies with education being one of the effective means of doing so.

I. Developing a Global Innovation Society

6. We must generate new knowledge and nurture innovation to sustain long-term economic growth. We will collaborate on creating research networks among higher education institutions, research centres and business, and capitalize on the leading edge technology they produce. We will share best practices on knowledge-based cluster development and public-private partnerships to facilitate global knowledge dissemination and move technologies quickly from the laboratory to the marketplace.

7. We will promote investment in knowledge, research and development. We will also leverage public expenditures strategically to attract private funding in R&D, including in the education sector. In addition, we will encourage closer cooperation between universities and industry. These actions will generate innovation that improves the lives of our people, the prosperity of our nations and the well-being of the global community.

8. We will develop policies to promote the creation and dissemination of new technologies that encourage innovation and entrepreneurship. We will also make effective use of technological advances and research across businesses, education systems, and nations, while preserving the rights of innovators. We appreciate the contribution made by business and higher education leaders from our countries who met in Moscow on July 11, 2006 to discuss leveraging the resources, ideas and expertise of the public and private sectors to foster greater innovation and meet the education and workforce needs of the 21st century.

As a follow-up to the St. Petersburg Summit, we welcome Italy's offer to organize in cooperation with UNESCO a World Forum on "Education, Innovation and Research: New Partnership for Sustainable Development".

9. Education is vital to the public interest. Our governments will cooperate with the private sector in the development of innovative, high quality higher education and research and development systems. We will ensure a reliable, transparent and non-discriminatory environment that fosters a supportive, pro-competitive and predictable policy framework, offers strong protection of intellectual property rights, provides incentives to investment, and promotes regulatory policies that encourage innovation. Our governments will promote dialogue and synergies with business, higher education and labour to develop sound higher education and human resources policies.

10. We will promote innovation alliances and increase the exchange of ideas and expertise about university-based public-private partnerships in the G-8 countries. Sharing among relevant stakeholders best practices ideas and experience about education governance, funding, modern teaching methods, as well as about recognition and transparency of qualifications could also add value. We will collaborate internationally through innovation alliances to generate the critical mass of scientific and technological talent and knowledge needed to support innovative societies.

11. We will identify points of contact in our countries that can facilitate the exchange of ideas and expertise, while recognizing that private sector involvement in the development of these

partnerships is one of the main keys to achieving an effective linkage between higher education and the needs of the global innovation society.

12. We will promote international academic mobility at all levels, significantly increasing the mobility of students, teachers and researchers. We will enhance existing programs of exchange and promote the development of linguistic and cross cultural skills. The Bologna Process aimed at creating the European higher education area is an example of one such program. We will also facilitate access to knowledge generated in other countries, taking account of the multiple factors that impede the movement of students and scholars.

13. We will share information about qualification systems in our countries to increase understanding of national academic practices and traditions. We will foster a global education environment that merges excellence and innovation with increased access, and we will encourage effective systems for the assessment and comparison of foreign qualifications in the public and private sectors.

II. Building Skills For Life and Work Through Quality Education

14. We will improve the quality of education to provide stronger opportunities for our young people and for future generations. We will promote more effective use of public resources in education at all levels and at all stages of life. We will build innovative societies that provide continuing improvement of labour force skills and creative opportunities for lifelong learning.

15. We will prepare our people to embrace change through lifelong learning. We will strengthen linkages between learning, enterprise training and the labour market, including through distance education and cross-border provision of education services. We reaffirm the importance of the G-8 Cologne Summit Charter on Aims and Ambitions for Lifelong Learning and its call for opportunities and incentives for lifelong learning to be created for all people.

16. We place a high policy priority on the importance of early childhood education to give young children a strong start and to strengthen social equity. We will also foster greater and more equitable participation in adult learning beyond secondary and tertiary education.

17. We welcome active participation of the business community and non-governmental organizations in the development of continuous education that provides the competences and skills needed by our societies and economies.

18. Our nations will focus on achieving quality, efficiency, effectiveness, and affordability in our education systems. We take note of the joint efforts by the UNESCO and OECD to develop voluntary guidelines for quality provisions in cross-border higher education. We will collaborate with the academic community and the private sector to ensure we use the best models of education governance, teaching and management.

19. We encourage our educational institutions and appropriate organisations to share information and promote understanding of our respective countries' qualifications systems, teaching methods, education management and financing.

20. We reaffirm our commitment to use information and communication technologies (ICTs) in education more effectively in accordance with the G-8 Okinawa Charter on Global Information Society and the Tunis Commitment of the World Summit on Information Society. ICTs are crucial to meeting the educational needs of a technology-intensive economy. Accessible educational resources are important tools for creating a more equitable and more efficient global information environment.

21. We will strive for high standards in particular in mathematics, science, and technology to provide strong foundational elements for the global innovation society. All primary and secondary school curricula should stimulate more intensive learning in these subject areas, as well as problem-solving skills and critical thinking. We also encourage the efforts of developing countries to improve their science, technology and mathematics education at primary and secondary levels.

22. We welcome initiatives to support the learning and mastery of foreign languages at all educational levels. The ability to communicate and to learn foreign languages is also essential in today's global environment. It involves social and international skills, intercultural knowledge and competences and the understanding and respect of the values and the history underlying cultures and societies.

23. We will encourage the development of education policies aimed at fostering a system of accessible, diverse, sustainable, and high-quality higher education institutions, both university and non university including research institutions, community colleges, technical schools, public and private sector vocational training institutes, with the ability to respond to new demands. Universities and other tertiary institutions have a key role in innovative societies to educate our public. They must be able to adjust rapidly to the changing demands of society and the labour market through effective and transparent governance in the framework of education policies.

24. We will work within our national systems to make teaching an attractive career choice, to develop teachers' knowledge and skills, and to retain effective teachers in schools. The teacher lies at the heart of education. Fundamental to improving student learning and achievement is the presence of highly qualified teachers in every classroom. Teachers must have good knowledge of content and instructional methods to be effective educators and mentors. Effective teachers instruct their students in critical content knowledge, and help develop the desire and ability to excel and to pursue life-long learning.

25. We encourage our relevant education authorities, the private sector and other stakeholders to share information and best practices on a wide range of issues related to modernization of education systems. Modernization of our education systems must play an important role in achieving our common strategic goals. In the new millennium, the management of knowledge strategies is as fundamental as the management of more traditional educational resources – personnel, finance and facilities. Thus, education systems should focus increasingly on developing intellectual capacity, not only in terms of the mastery of content but in processing, adapting, applying existing information, and, more importantly, in creating new knowledge. Education must also find ways to combine excellence with the widest access possible.

III. Education for All and Development

26. We will work to provide affordable, quality education and professional training accessible for all, regardless of social and economic background, age, sex, religion, ethnicity or disability. Education is a vital investment in the sustainable development of a country and its human potential. Basic education, including literacy, numeracy and life-skills training is its foundation. In addition to access, the content of student-learning and the quality of their learning outcomes are equally important.

27. We will support the educational elements that develop critical thinking, and the open exchange of knowledge, which build both democratic societies and well-functioning economies with opportunities for all. Creation of an educated population and workforce is vitally important. To achieve this strategic objective, the world community embraced the education-related MDGs which prioritized the EFA goals of universal primary completion and gender equality at all levels of

education. We regret that interim targets related to eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education have not been achieved. Greater concerted action by all will be needed to fulfil these key goals by 2015. We reaffirm our commitments in this regard.

28. We welcome the resolve of the 2005 World Summit to promote the Dakar Framework for Action (Education for All) adopted at the World Education Forum in 2000 as an integral part of renewed international development efforts. We reaffirm our commitment to the EFA agenda and welcome UNESCO's efforts to finalize a Global Action Plan to achieve the EFA goals and provide a framework for coordinated and complementary action by multilateral aid agencies in support of country-level implementation. Particular attention needs to be given to the poorest countries, including in Africa, where more than forty million children, 60 % of whom are girls, are currently excluded from the school system. We call upon UNESCO and the additional convening agencies of the Dakar Framework (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank) to support harmonization and alignment with national priorities, plans and targets and to utilize each organization's unique capacities to eliminate duplication of effort and increase efficiency.

29. We also support an effective implementation of the EFA Fast-Track Initiative (FTI) and reiterate our Gleneagles commitment to help FTI-endorsed countries to develop sustainable capacity and identify the resources necessary to pursue their sustainable educational strategies. We look forward to a progress report on the FTI by the World Bank at the Annual Meetings. We reiterate our commitment to support Africa in its achievement of the Education for all (EFA) agenda. This builds on the partnership that the G8 has developed with Africa, as set out in the Africa Action Plan (Kananaskis) and subsequently in the Gleneagles Declaration. In this context we confirm our commitment to work with all FTI - endorsed countries including newly endorsed ones to meet these goals.

30. We call upon developing countries to take the lead to create sound national education sector strategies, policies, and plans, to integrate them fully into national development plans, and to work with all relevant stakeholders to provide education opportunities for all. Success in EFA can only be possible if there is a strong vision and firm commitment by developing countries themselves with national ownership and self-help based on clearly formulated Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers or their equivalent and well-constructed long-term plans for the education sector as a whole. Effective governance, sound policy and institutional environment, a focus on quality, and the recognition of the value of informal and non-formal education are at the heart of healthy education systems.

31. We will work with all relevant stakeholders to promote cooperation and the sharing of good practices to achieve EFA goals. New forms of cooperation between and among developing and developed countries, including through trilateral cooperation, will play an important role in reaching EFA targets. We will encourage this, especially to improve learning outcomes and the quality of educational management, materials and teaching.

32. We are committed to attaining EFA goals and to eliminating obstacles in other sectors that narrow education opportunities. Assistance in the education sector alone will not solve the problem. We will work to support cross-sectoral approaches combining investments in education and other key areas such as poverty reduction, health and sanitation, water nutrition and infrastructure to achieve EFA goals, raising HIV/AIDS awareness in education systems.

IV. Advancing Social Cohesion and Immigrant Integration through Education

33. We will promote civic participation, as well as equality of opportunity and cross-cultural understanding to help people to maximize their individual potential and overcome barriers to their participation in society. Inclusive, respectful and equitable societies provide the most conducive

conditions for acquiring skills and knowledge, promoting innovations, and driving economic and social success. We view cultural diversity and knowledge of foreign languages, openness to new talent and the mobility of the labor force as essential attributes of innovative and inclusive societies.

34. We will facilitate social, cultural and professional integration in our societies by promoting support for life-long learning, and encouraging the language competencies necessary to secure employment commensurate with levels of skill and experience. We also call for joint research and exchange of knowledge, experiences, and best practices among the G-8 countries and other stakeholders in this important area.

35. We will aim to maximize the human and social capital of all people through policies that recognize that diversity in the educational sector and in the workplace, advance innovation and stimulate creativity. Successful social cohesion policies, including education for democratic citizenship, will help to combat intolerance and discrimination. Our education systems should facilitate achievement of these fundamental goals, while taking into consideration that each country employs a range of different policies to promote acceptance and integration in its economy and society.