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Cultural Organization

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## Item 9 of the provisional agenda

### **REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON AN IMPROVED VERSION OF THE GLOBAL ACTION PLAN TO ACHIEVE THE EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA) GOALS BY 2015 AND PROGRESS REPORT ON ITS IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **SUMMARY**

The Executive Board, by 175 EX/Decision 7, requested the Director-General to "...submit to it at its 176th session an improved version of the Global Action Plan and a progress report on its implementation...".

This document presents the improved version of the Global Action Plan to achieve the EFA goals by 2015 and a progress report on its implementation. This fulfils the above-mentioned requests of the Executive Board and provides an outline of the progress that has been made since the 175th session.

Decision proposed: paragraph 5.

1. Since the last meeting of the Executive Board, the EFA High-Level Group has examined an improved version of the Global Action Plan (see Annex). This version includes input from two consultations with the other EFA convening agencies, held in September and October 2006. As a result of the consultations with partners during 2006 and the recommendations of the Executive Board, the GAP underwent significant change, and has led to a higher level of ownership by all stakeholders. The improved version includes the following changes:

- the main document is now shorter and more concise, and includes charts which provide a better illustration of essential aspects, such as implementation mechanisms and the comparative advantages of the convening agencies;
- the six key areas of support to national efforts to achieve EFA are presented in chart form, thus giving a more structured presentation of the main purpose of the GAP;
- the main document is supported by a series of nine documents which lay out the rationale of the GAP as well as more detailed aspects of strategy and partnership. In addition, a number of tables have been added, for example, on countries farthest away from achieving the EFA goals, and on the areas of action of the sponsoring agencies with respect to each EFA goal;

- a more comprehensive table is currently under development to show the relative needs of countries with regard to each EFA goal. These data, which will be updated regularly, will give a more precise analysis of needs, thus enabling alignment of the necessary external support with national EFA priorities.

2. At its sixth meeting in Cairo in November 2006, the EFA High-Level Group welcomed the GAP in its current form and asked that it should be applied expeditiously at country level, emphasizing the need to use and build on existing coordination mechanisms. UNESCO was also charged with monitoring its application and ensuring that the lessons of experience are learnt and utilized. The High-Level Group also recommended that capacity development for EFA should receive particular attention, with a more consistent approach among agencies in this area, and that the convening agencies should maintain regular consultations so that the plan is applied and adapted in a dynamic manner in the future. The next such consultation is planned for late February 2007.

3. Since the Cairo meeting of the EFA High-Level Group, the application of the GAP at country level has led to the following steps:

- **Ensuring linkages with the United Nations Reform process:** the connections between the United Nations High-Level Panel Report on United Nations system-wide coherence and the Global Action Plan are being examined within the Secretariat. It is clear that the United Nations reform pilot countries should be among those for early application of the Global Action Plan. Of particular note is the intention to move to a single United Nations country programme; this exactly parallels the intention of the GAP for the education sector. The strengthened role of the resident coordinator, signalled in the United Nations report, must be enlisted in support of the application of the GAP at national level, as part of a clear strategy to integrate sectoral concerns into a unified United Nations programme.
- **Collective ownership of the GAP:** the consultations among partner agencies in 2006 addressed the issue of collectively owning the six EFA goals so that any one of the five convening agencies can take responsibility for applying the GAP at country level. This process now needs to be further defined in operational terms in the countries where the GAP is initially applied. A series of consultations, beginning in February 2007, will do further work on this.
- **Links with UNESS:** UNESS is a UNESCO educational planning instrument which will help to promote collaboration in support of national action towards the EFA agenda. In countries where UNESS is becoming a tool of coordinated action in the education sector, the GAP and UNESS processes will be handled in a unified fashion. In this regard, UNESS will provide UNESCO's strategic contribution to collaborative mechanisms at country level through the collection and analysis of policy-relevant information on education systems and the support given by development partners.
- **Wider linkages:** EFA and the education sector in general do not stand in isolation at the country level. Linkages with the national development strategy, with MDG processes and with moves towards greater aid effectiveness (Paris Declaration) must be factored in. The processes established by FTI in certain countries will also be important for applying the GAP. In this regard, the "Partnerships for Education" agreement between UNESCO and the World Economic Forum will also provide an effective mechanism to promote a country approach to enhance partnership for educational reform and development.

4. The next two concrete steps, to be undertaken in close collaboration with EFA partners, are the following:

- identification of countries for initial application, focusing on the United Nations reform pilot countries, and then on countries where there is particular need for greater coordination; this process will entail full ownership by and close consultation with national authorities;
- at country level, harmonization of the GAP with existing national arrangements and mechanisms, clearly demonstrating what value the GAP will add.

### **Proposed draft decision**

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

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 175 EX/Decision 7,
2. Having examined document 176 EX/9,
3. Reaffirming the importance of accelerating progress towards the six EFA goals and other educational development goals,
4. Welcoming the changes introduced into the Global Action Plan reflecting the specific concerns expressed by the Executive Board and the participants in the Sixth Meeting of the EFA High-Level Group held in Cairo, Egypt, in November 2006,
5. Having urged the Director-General to continue to improve and develop the draft Global Action Plan by reinforcing collective ownership through ongoing regular consultations among the five original EFA convening agencies so that it remains a dynamic framework for coordination and can be expanded to include other EFA partners,
6. Noting that the GAP is in line with the United Nations reform process and will increasingly have a strong focus on application at country level, including in the United Nations reform pilot countries,
7. Further noting the welcome given to the improved version of the GAP by the Sixth Meeting of the High-Level Group,
8. Welcoming the efforts to harmonize the GAP and UNESS at the country level,
9. Further welcoming the new agreement on “Partnerships for Education” between UNESCO and the World Economic Forum,
10. Invites the Director-General to submit an initial report on the application of the Global Action Plan at country level to the Executive Board at its 177th session.

ANNEX

# Education for All EFA



## Global Action Plan: improving support to countries in achieving the EFA Goals

A basis for enhancing collective effort  
among the EFA convening agencies

UNDP~~~UNESCO~~~UNFPA~~~UNICEF~~~The World Bank

# P R E F A C E

## 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 reducing poverty and realising 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 UN system – the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (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 UN 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 Harmonisation.

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 particularly of the five convening agencies; 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 harmonising 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 programmes;**
- (iv) Achieving a 50 per cent 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)**

# GAP Document I

## OVERVIEW

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The EFA Global Action Plan consists in all of a series of ten documents. However, the present document – **GAP Document I** – conveys its essential elements and objectives and is self-contained.

The **supporting documents**, to which Document I refers as necessary, provide further details and explanations as well as data to support application of the Plan. They are as follows:

**GAP Document II: Background, context, focus**

**GAP Document III: International partnerships in EFA**

**GAP Document IV: Strategic directions of the EFA convenors**

**GAP Document V: Provision of support to EFA by the five convening agencies**

**GAP Document VI: Key areas of support to the national level**

**GAP Document VII: Improved coordination at the global level**

**GAP Document VIII: Putting EFA coordination into practice at country level**

**GAP Document IX: Country indicators, status and support**

**GAP Document X: Indicative timeline**

## **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. The current Education for All (EFA) movement started in 1990 with a World Conference on Education in Jomtien, involving representatives from Governments, Bilateral and Multilateral agencies and Civil Society Organizations. The conference was convened by five multilateral agencies (UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and World Bank) and the resulting Jomtien Declaration on EFA entailed a commitment by countries and development partners to achieving universal primary education by 2000. Despite some good progress this goal proved to be unrealistic for many countries in the time period proposed. The five convening partners organized a follow up World Education Forum in Dakar in April 2000, at which progress was reviewed, the EFA vision was renewed and an integrated set of six EFA goals was agreed by the participating countries and agencies/organizations.

3. These six Dakar goals represent the most comprehensive and ambitious education goals the international community has ever agreed to pursue. In terms of broader development efforts, the Millennium Declaration and the related MDGs, agreed by Heads of Governments and agencies at the United Nations Millennium summit in September 2000, provide an over-arching international framework. The MDGs include two of the six Dakar goals, namely achieving universal primary education by 2015 and gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2005. Progress in EFA has therefore become increasingly intertwined with efforts to achieve the MDGs. This approach more clearly highlights the contribution of education to overall development and reiterates the rationale for investing in education, both as a key driver of development and as a basic human right.

### **PROGRESS AND CHALLENGE IN EFA**

4. Progress towards achieving the six EFA goals, adopted in 2000, is visible, but they remain elusive.<sup>1</sup> Recognising 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.

5. 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.



### **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.

### **Urgent EFA challenges**

- Giving children the best start: policies must provide for a healthy and stimulating early learning environment so that children, particularly disadvantaged children, are ready to get the most out of school when they enter the primary level.
- Accelerating access to formal schooling: there are still approximately 77 million out-of-school children of primary school age, and 57% of them are girls. Many more children are enrolled, but do not attend regularly.
- Facilitating access to and completion of quality education for the 43 million children living in conflict-affected and fragile states.
- Alleviating the financial burden on the poorest: household costs are a major obstacle for the poor, and schools fees are still collected at the primary level in 89 out of 103 countries surveyed.
- Giving adequate attention to adult literacy: policies must provide for the scaling up of youth and adult literacy programmes and the development of a rich literate environment, with increased budgets
- Addressing gender issues throughout education: there is a compelling need to address ongoing obstacles to girls' access to schooling and to tackle issues of gender equality within the school environment.
- Improving educational quality: Being in school or in an adult learning programme will not have positive impact unless it is of high quality and leads to usable knowledge and competencies.
- Raising the resources to achieve EFA is a constant challenge, both from domestic budgets and external aid.

*GAP Document II expands on these challenges*

## **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 socio-political agendas, as well as specific commitments to new aid resources. Education in general and EFA in particular are a central part of these commitments, which include (see also GAP Document II):

- The World Summit in September 2005 assessed progress towards the MDGs and re-affirmed EFA as a key element in broader development efforts.
- The Monterrey Consensus provides a compact of mutual commitments between donor and developing countries.
- The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Harmonisation, adopted in May 2005, envisages new ways of aligning aid with national development processes.

- The reform of the UN is a matter of urgent and over-arching concern, bringing new demands and fresh opportunities for coordinated action. It aims to enhance coherence across the UN system and will result in a unified programme at country level. In education, the GAP echoes these aims and puts into practice the calls for coordinated action and greater efficiency among UN agencies.

7. The GAP builds on the existing efforts of EFA partners. Since the World Education Forum in Dakar 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 others<sup>2</sup>) 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.<sup>3</sup> Global action on EFA takes multiple forms; the GAP provides a reference point for greater coordination of initiatives such as the UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), the EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI), the UN Decades for Literacy (UNLD) and Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD), the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE), the E-9 Initiative, and many more (see GAP Document III).

8. South-South cooperation is increasingly a key partnership in support of EFA. It has the particular advantage of sharing experience across contexts which face similar challenges, opportunities or constraints. A more deliberate and expanded approach to such cooperation, in part supported by donor countries, will offer greater opportunities for exchange and mutual learning through a range of fora and mechanisms including the E-9 countries. The latter have 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.

## PURPOSE OF THE GLOBAL ACTION PLAN

9. The intention of partners in formulating this EFA Global Action Plan is to better coordinate the support provided to countries for achieving the six Dakar Goals, particularly those with the deepest EFA needs (see GAP Document IX). The plan commits the five EFA convening partners to spearheading this coordinated support in line with their respective comparative advantages and within the framework of existing means and mechanisms for coordinating development assistance. This global action plan entails support for the six EFA goals in their own right, as well as in terms of being the main contribution of the EFA movement to achievement of the MDGs. The diagram at the end of this document shows how the EFA Global Action Plan serves to enhance coordinated action at national and international levels.

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<sup>2</sup> 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 persons; 5) the World Health Organization (WHO) on health (including HIV/AIDS) education; 6) the World Food Programme (WFP) through the school feeding programme; 7) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) on environmental education.

<sup>3</sup> The links between EFA, the MDGs, the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the UN 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.

10. 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.

11. The specific objectives of the Global Action Plan are to:

- Provide a framework for increased, ongoing cooperation among international EFA partners as a basis for greater complementarity of effort in support of efforts to achieve EFA at national level;
- Identify key areas of education support to be provided by partner agencies for different categories of countries, and for each country as and when specific country plans are reviewed (see below and GAP Document VI).
- Map out roles/responsibilities of partner agencies, based on comparative advantage, in a joint approach to providing support for different categories of countries and for each country as specific country plans are reviewed (see below and GAP Document IV).
- Outline and regularly update a “service provider” checklist of the comparative advantages of agencies in relation to policy, programming, technical, logistic, advocacy and other forms of external support for education in different categories of countries (see GAP Document V).
- Map out operational strategies and mechanisms to facilitate, at country level, a seamless flow of joint support by partner agencies to specific national education-sector plans (see below).
- Further develop mechanisms for joint monitoring and reporting on performance in EFA and for jointly reviewing progress regularly in order to promote decisions on the most appropriate measures for accelerating progress towards achieving the EFA goals (see below).

12. Coordinated action 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 will demonstrate commitment to greater coordination, harmonisation and alignment with national priorities as part of the wider development processes, in particular the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. At international level, EFA partners will ensure that agendas are complementary and mutually supportive. Shared experience at the regional level provides a productive and appropriate basis for harmonising action where similar contexts lend themselves to common approaches in the pursuit of EFA.

13. Coordination responsibilities for the overall EFA effort, with a focus on the role of UNESCO in collaboration with the other EFA convening agencies, are outlined in GAP Document VII. The objectives of global coordination are to maintain commitment and political momentum in the international community, in support of the achievement of the EFA goals at national level. An indication of arenas and events by which the international profile may be promoted, together with an indicative timeline, is given GAP Document X.

### Integrating international EFA mechanisms: annual cycle



GMR = EFA Global Monitoring Report  
WG = EFA Working Group  
HLG = EFA High-Level Group

**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 coordinated action at national level among EFA partners, so that support to national leadership and implementation in EFA is relevant, effective and efficient, building on the specific comparative advantages of each agency in a given country.

**OPERATIONAL TARGETS AND PRIORITIES**

14. In operational terms the targets set by partner agencies are about helping to put countries on a feasible track for achieving the six EFA goals as well as the education and gender MDGs by the proposed deadline. The external support required for developing and implementing sound policies and programmes in education can be quite complex and extensive in scope. As the six Dakar Goals indicate, support needed could span from early childhood through primary and on to secondary levels and beyond. It also includes the formal school and non-formal learning. It is about ensuring quality, eliminating disparities and promoting effective learning. It is also about financing the education system and sector on an adequate, reliable and sustainable basis. Given the diversity and intensity of external support required, it is evidently the case that agencies will have their own priorities and preferences as to what they can best support based on their strengths, capacities, competencies and organisational mandates.

15. 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, UN processes (CCA/UNDAF, UN Country Team), groupings of external partners (around PRS, SWAps, FTI), and other networks. Regional fora may also serve to improve coordination in support of the national level.

**TARGETS**

16. The Dakar Framework for Action set quantified and timed targets for three of the six EFA goals and recommended that, beyond these, other targets should be set at country level:

*Individual countries, through a process of consultation among all stakeholders in education and with the assistance of the wider international community and EFA follow-up mechanisms, should set their own goals, intermediate targets and time-lines within existing or new national education plans. (p.14)*

17. Other reasons for promoting national targets include consideration of context, building strong local ownership and enabling the participation of a wide range of local stakeholders in setting and monitoring targets, as well as using them in advocacy. Linking targets to planning and resource allocations is also more direct at national level. The key areas of support to the national level (see below) provide a framework for multilateral agencies to establish target-setting and monitoring.

18. There is a need to keep the international community accountable for its part in achieving the EFA goals and to push hard for greater commitment and action. By defining areas of complementary action, this Plan serves also as a guide for monitoring the scope and effectiveness of support to national efforts to achieve EFA.

## KEY AREAS OF SUPPORT

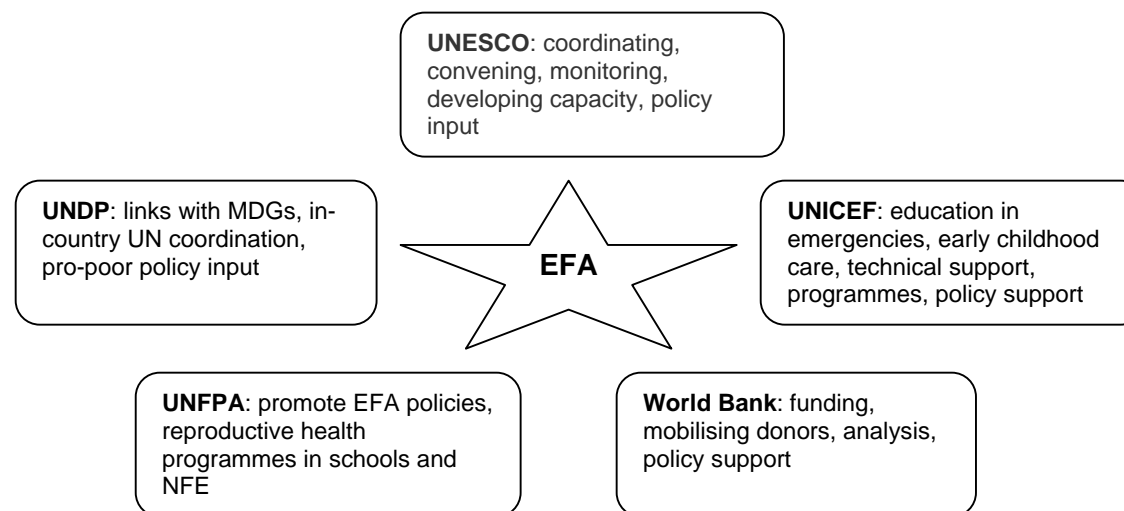
Key support area	Goal	Comment
<b>Key area 1: Promoting national leadership</b>	EFA convenors will influence CCA/UNDAF development and implementation to become a consistent process for integration of multilateral agendas, with the full incorporation of education, and in support of national development strategies. EFA convenors will also work to influence PRS and other national development strategy processes in the same way.	National development strategies, whether a PRSP or a national plan, will remain pivotal in all planning assistance. Strengthening national leadership in education is crucial to guiding greater harmonisation and alignment of international support at national level and to coherent long-term planning and priority-setting.
<b>Key Area 2: Capacity development</b>	Develop an integrated approach towards capacity development and a process for implementation – a joint venture among the EFA convenors.	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.
<b>Key Area 3: Communication and advocacy</b>	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.	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. The data and evidence of the EFA Global Monitoring Report are a key resource in shaping advocacy messages.
<b>Key Area 4: Resource mobilisation</b>	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 education <sup>4</sup> .	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 mobilised 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 mobilise the necessary resources remain crucial.

Key support area	Goal	Comment
	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.	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 annum <sup>5</sup> . 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 mobilisation 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.	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.
	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 programmes for young people; FTI, bilateral and other channels will be explored.	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.	A clear framework for policy development will build on experience and lessons learnt from existing public-private partnerships
<b>Key Area 5: Effective use of aid for EFA</b>	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.	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.

Key support area	Goal	Comment
<b>Key Area 6: Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	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. In the longer term, a process of peer review among countries and among agencies will be considered.	Currently, progress on EFA is monitored through the annual <i>EFA Global Monitoring Report</i> which is prepared by an independent team based in UNESCO. The GMR represents the most authoritative source of evidence on progress with EFA and is assumed to reflect the collective efforts of most EFA partners who make inputs and provide information at the request of the GMR team. The implementation of this plan will also be monitored and evaluated. In addition to the GMR there is an EFA Working Group through which a wide range of partners and countries convene annually to review progress and discuss technical and strategic issues relating to the challenges of achieving the EFA goals. Most importantly, there is the EFA High-Level Group comprising of a wide range of countries and agencies, which meets annually to review progress as reported in the GMR and to take key decisions on measures required to accelerate progress towards achievement of the EFA goals.

*Note: these key areas are further developed in GAP Document VI.*

#### EFA convening agencies: broad areas of support to EFA





## **FROM INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK TO NATIONAL ACTION: OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES AND MECHANISMS**

19. 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.

20. In the national context, the process of collaboration can be spelled out in more specific and more concrete terms than is possible in a global document. With the GAP providing an international framework, collaboration at national level can and should be structured around measurable targets and timelines, on the basis of local data, stakeholder capacity, and particular circumstances.

21. Support to countries under this EFA Global Action Plan will be provided through the various mechanisms that already exist for coordinating external assistance in education and development. These mechanisms include:

- **UN Country Teams (UNCT):** UNCTs bring together all the UN agencies represented in a particular country in order to coordinate and harmonise their support. The role of this mechanism gains in importance because of the United Nations reform process that is leading to joint programming among UN agencies in an increasing number of countries, as a means of consolidating their efforts and offering more effective support to countries, as well as providing more efficient partnerships with other development actors. The UN Resident Coordinator is tasked with convening and managing the UNCT, which serves, among other things, as the arena for debating and developing the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the resulting UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The UNCT may have a number of theme groups, including on education (but only nine countries are listed by UNDG). As a forum specifically designed within the multilateral system, it includes the five EFA convening agencies and has the advantage of bringing other multilateral EFA stakeholders to the table, such as FAO and WFP. It is therefore a key forum for maintaining education in general and EFA in particular on the agenda, and it is essential that one of the five agencies present in the country should assume, potentially on a rotating basis, the role of EFA advocate in this arena.
- **Sector Wide Approaches (SWAs) in education:** through which development partners at the country level work jointly with the Government to review national education sector plans and priorities, as a basis for pooling support through a sector budget or a general budget support process. There is considerable variation in the interpretation of how a SWAp should function; however, it offers an arena for coordination of support to EFA, even though its scope goes beyond the EFA goals.
- **Fast Track Initiative (FTI):** For the purpose of endorsing a country's eligibility for FTI assistance and assessing the plan for working towards the targets of the indicative framework, the FTI has set up in-country groups of donors and, generally, some civil society representatives, led by a designated coordinating donor agency. The membership and the mandate of this group are limited, in that it consists principally of donor agencies, which present their conclusions to the government and the FTI international secretariat, and that it focuses exclusively



on primary education. The FTI grouping is a key actor in supporting part of the EFA agenda and should be represented in a wider forum.

- **Aid coordination:** The Paris Declaration calls for greater alignment of donor support to government priorities, increased harmonisation of procedures and approaches among donors and mutual ownership of development goals and targets by donors and governments. Thus external development partners are being brought together under government leadership to examine how to work towards the targets of the Paris Declaration. While the focus of these discussions is on how aid is delivered, questions will inevitably be raised around development priorities, at the macro level. Thus education may figure among such discussions, although it is unlikely to be their focus. With regard to EFA, it will be crucial to maintain its profile appropriately in meetings and discussions of aid coordination, as well as to reflect those discussions and principles in other fora where EFA is particularly in focus.
- **Sector Clusters in emergency humanitarian response:** The cluster approach was designed to fill gaps and to enhance the response to humanitarian crises among partners working in countries affected by conflict and natural disasters. The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) Working Group agreed in November 2006 to apply the cluster approach to the education sector. UNICEF, in close collaboration with Save the Children, will facilitate a development process with key UN and NGO stakeholders in early 2007 for the implementation of the cluster approach at the global and country levels.
- **Comprehensive Sector Planning Processes:** through which countries are supported by partners (often jointly) to strengthen their national education plans, so that it addresses all aspects of the six EFA goals and builds on the connections or linkages with other sectors in order to better address the MDGs. Echoing the functions of the EFA fora, proposed in Dakar but rarely set up, a comprehensive sector planning process is convened by the government, with the participation of all EFA stakeholders, including both national and external partners (the latter being principally the multilateral agencies and bilateral funders) and civil society (for example, NGOs active in education, teachers' organisations, parent/teacher associations or *associations de parents d'élèves*, and community groups). Given that this mechanism has an education-wide mandate and inclusive participation, it is likely to be the most suitable forum to address EFA specifically and to ensure better coordination of effort and stronger support to national leadership.

22. Situations of state fragility and post-conflict call for special measures, since it is unlikely that mechanisms already exist through which coordination in support of EFA can be promoted. Agencies are engaged in a common process of learning by doing and developing best practices for challenging situations. Currently key initiatives in this regard involve several of the EFA convening partners (especially UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank) in knowledge building work through OECD/DAC and EFA-FTI work on these subjects.

23. Given that these mechanisms do not all serve the same purpose and that several may exist in one country, coordination in support of EFA may take place across a number of groupings. In terms of identifying the best arena, two functions should be taken into consideration:

- The need for an inclusive mechanism, chaired by the government, with ALL the relevant stakeholders from government, civil society, donors/funders, multilaterals and the private sector. This will serve to fulfil the purposes originally intended for the EFA fora and now best represented by comprehensive sector planning processes.

- The need for a forum where coordination among external partners is specifically negotiated, including both bilateral and multilateral partners and, where relevant international civil society partners. This forum may be a consultative or working group in education; the UNCT, or a sub-group of it, provides a further forum for the multilaterals specifically, focusing on EFA (or on education more broadly). Local dynamics, relations and context will determine what the most appropriate forum is. In terms of improving external support, it is necessary that the EFA agenda should be advocated by the agencies providing such support, and it is appropriate that this key function should be undertaken in turn by each of the EFA convenors who are represented in the respective country.

24. Within these processes and mechanisms, action will be based on agreement on roles and responsibilities – see GAP Document VIII for an indication of how that might be structured.

**Using the GAP: global and national coordination**

