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

**SUMMARY**

Pursuant to 162 EX/Decision 3.2.1, this report presents UNESCO's follow-up activities to the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, April 2000).

Decision required: paragraph 47.

## Introduction

1. The World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000) endorsed UNESCO's mandated role in coordinating EFA partners and maintaining their collaborative momentum. The follow-up to Dakar is the top priority of UNESCO. This is reflected in the major programmes and budget for 2002-2003. The 31st session of UNESCO's General Conference approved the Organization's new education strategy and its programme and budget for 2002-2003. Delegates unanimously agreed that the Education for All initiative is the linchpin of UNESCO's programme.

2. The Dakar Follow-up Unit (DFU), established in December 2000 within the Executive Office of the ADG/ED, is responsible for coordination of EFA activities in the Education Sector, between different sectors in UNESCO and with external partners. The work of the Dakar Follow-up Unit is reinforced by a correspondents group, composed of specialists from the Education Sector and selected UNESCO institutes, which meets monthly for dissemination of information and brainstorming on EFA issues. The Assistant Director-General for Education ensures coordination and sharing of information on EFA within the Education Sector through his weekly meetings of the Division Directors.

3. At its 162nd session (162 EX/Decision 3.2.1), the Executive Board requested the Director-General to reinforce the collective momentum regarding the follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action in line with the priorities established in the Medium-Term Strategy for 2002-2007 (31 C/4) and the Programme and Budget for 2002-2003 (31 C/5), notably with regard to the status of national EFA plans, to prepare a flagship programme on teachers and to report to the 164th session on the progress of implementation.

4. To give effect to the above and, in pursuance of its mandated role to lead and coordinate the follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action, UNESCO has reinforced mechanisms and undertaken a number of activities, at different levels (national, regional and international) to accelerate progress towards the EFA goals.

## Status of national EFA plans

5. A survey launched by UNESCO in 2001 raised some concerns regarding the quality and credibility of national EFA plans. UNESCO has developed *Generic Criteria for Assessing the Credibility of National EFA Plans* with the aim of helping countries to develop more relevant national EFA plans. This document proposes a non-prescriptive overall framework for evaluating plans, outlining both political and technical criteria as well as generic criteria on process and content.

6. The status of national EFA plans, based on the survey's responses by 71 countries as of March 2002, is as follows: (1) 41 EFA plans were now in place but 39 of these were prepared pre-Dakar. Seven countries reported having no plan in place and 18 countries are preparing the plans; (2) half of the existing education development plans remain at the level of policy statements, and just short of being credible action plans. In 31 countries out of 39 where education development plans exist, governments are reportedly going to readjust them to EFA Goals, which means that 58 countries out of 71 responding countries (over 85%) still need to develop or adjust the existing education development plans according to the EFA criteria; (3) 55 countries out of the 71 countries (over 80%) would require methodological and technical support for the preparation of EFA plans or strengthening of existing ones.

7. UNESCO will organize another survey in May 2002 in order to assess the progress made in EFA planning and to identify the urgent actions to be taken for expediting the preparation of national EFA plans.

8. According to reports from UNESCO's regional offices, many countries are seriously engaged in the process of planning for EFA. A few countries have completed their national EFA plans and others are making an earnest effort to have them in place during 2002.

9. For **sub-Saharan Africa**, a survey conducted by UNESCO Dakar regarding the EFA planning process, suggested that, by October 2001, 36 countries had a national education plan, 33 were developing their national EFA plans of action and one country had its plan completed and validated. A series of decisions to move forward the EFA drive in Africa were taken during a caucus of African Ministers of Education which took place on 17 October 2001 in parallel with the 31st session of UNESCO's General Conference. Discussing this year's *Eighth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education of African Member States* (MINEDAF VIII) (Mauritius, 2-6 December 2002), 32 African Ministers of Education agreed on "Meeting the Challenges of Education in Africa: From Commitment to Action" as the main theme of the conference and stressed the need for close cooperation with the OAU/AU, EFA partners and other key development partners in Africa. MINEDAF VIII will coincide with the deadline for finalizing national EFA plans of action.

10. EFA planning in **South Asia** has been reinforced by initiatives undertaken by the Directors of the three UNESCO's offices, namely a Joint South Asia Training Programme for: (1) "Monitoring of Learning Achievement" led by the Islamabad Office (Pakistan); (2) "Curriculum Development and Change" and "Educational Planning and Management" by the New Delhi Office (India); and (3) "Literacy and Non-formal Education" by the Dhaka Office (Bangladesh).

11. UNESCO and UNICEF Regional Offices jointly organized the launching of the **Central Asian EFA Forum** in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 17-18 January 2002. The meeting evaluated the current education reform processes in the five republics and served to strengthen partnerships between EFA stakeholders and foster better collaboration and exchanges between the five countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). UNESCO Almaty is assisting Central Asian countries through a system of ministerial and expert consultation.

12. UNESCO Bangkok organized a meeting on 10-12 December 2001 that brought together the 14 national EFA coordinators of **East and South-East Asia** to review the status of the national EFA action plans in the subregion. Focused on the process of developing plans, the discussion was crucial to identify the countries that need assistance and the countries that have done well in certain areas such as girls' education. Most countries indicated that their national EFA objectives will be derived from existing policy documents and education sector plans. Additional objectives will be defined for EFA components not covered under existing policy documents and plans. A few countries believe that EFA goals are already addressed within the framework of existing national education sector development plans. For the purpose of assisting countries to produce their national EFA plans, UNESCO Bangkok has developed *Guidelines for Preparing Gender Responsive EFA Plans* and translated *The EFA Planning Guide* into French.

13. Almost all the **Pacific** countries have completed their national action plans for EFA. The Ministers have also signed some of the completed Action Plans. Each country has an EFA forum and most of them have a wide range of representatives from various stakeholders. These forums have been involved in the development of the Action Plans. On 11-15 March 2002, all EFA coordinators met in Tonga with Pacific donors to solicit donor support. The meeting addressed the issue of integration of FRESH and HIV/AIDS into national EFA plans. The planning for this year is

to support the completion of the remaining Action Plans and promote donor acceptance of and support for them.

14. In the **Arab States**, the status of the preparation of EFA planning is as follows: (1) in January 2002, all countries except five have formed their national EFA forums; (2) three subregional workshops were held during October-November 2001 to assist countries in planning for EFA. The workshops discussed critical planning issues such as: how to prepare a plan, what the plan should include, partnership at the national level, how to meet the six goals and priorities of each country, addressing the different target groups, financial framework, time frame, and synergy and inclusion within the general Development Plan of the country; (3) in coordination with the Arab Bureau of Education in the Gulf Countries (ABEGS), *The EFA Planning Guide* developed by the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education was translated into Arabic; and (4) the Regional Mechanism for Education for All in the Arab Region (ARABEFA), with the assistance of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), will prepare criteria for monitoring and evaluating EFA reports and criteria for credible plans.

15. In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, UNESCO Santiago has developed orientation guidelines for preparing national action plans for EFA in the region. This presents specific yet flexible steps and timelines to be considered for national plan preparation. UNESCO Santiago has created the website “Virtual forum of the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2001-2015” to encourage participation in consultations on this project, which will define education goals and strategies in the region for the next 15 years. In May 2002, UNESCO will organize a meeting of vice-ministers of education, as a preparatory meeting to analyse the draft proposal of the Regional Education Project. The final proposal of the project will be presented for approval at a meeting of ministers of education to be organized by UNESCO in November 2002 in Havana, Cuba.

16. A subregional meeting on EFA in the countries of the **Baltic Sea Region** took place on 24-27 January 2002 in Riga, Latvia. An informal subregional EFA working group composed of representatives from Latvia, Lithuania and Sweden was set up to maintain the momentum generated at the conference, facilitate the sharing of information and foster country partnerships as well as wider interregional cooperation.

### **Strengthening the coordination mechanisms**

17. In pursuance of UNESCO’s role of coordinating EFA partners, the Dakar Forum entrusted the Director-General with the task of convening annually a high-level, small and flexible group (Dakar Framework for Action, para. 19). The High-Level Group on EFA met for the first time on 29-30 October during the 31st session of the General Conference. Attended by ministers of education from 18 countries, representative of all regions of the world, leaders of four international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), heads and senior officials of multilateral and bilateral agencies, and numerous observers, the High-Level Group adopted a Communiqué requesting all EFA partners to redouble their efforts to meet the goals of Education for All. The Communiqué (see Annex) calls for an authoritative and analytical annual EFA monitoring report drawing upon national data and assessing the extent to which countries and the international community are meeting their Dakar commitments, as well as the development of a strategy to operationalize the Dakar Framework by March 2002.

18. The next High-Level Group Meeting on EFA will be hosted by Nigeria on 19-20 November 2002 in Abuja. It will be preceded by the third meeting of the Working Group on EFA (UNESCO Paris, 22-24 July 2002).

19. The first *Monitoring Report on EFA* was produced by UNESCO in October 2001, with inputs from EFA partners and the Working Group on EFA, and circulated at the first High-Level Group meeting. In January 2002, UNESCO convened an International Editorial Board for the *Monitoring Report*, bringing together key representatives from the international community (ADEA, UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank), NGOs and representatives of bilateral donors, together with UNESCO institute directors and staff from Headquarters. The Editorial Board recommended that the annual *Monitoring Report* be a major independent report to the High-Level Group and an advocacy tool for EFA. Based on a rigorous analysis, the report will aim to create awareness, induce change and alert the world to the critical issues, bottlenecks and problems in EFA progress. The necessary infrastructure to produce it and resources to support it, both in Paris (DFU) and Montreal (UIS), are currently being mobilized by UNESCO. The EFA Observatory, set up in UIS, is now operational and has commissioned a series of expert meetings to review the indicators relevant to the new EFA goals and targets. The Observatory has also joined hands with DFU in order to plan and contribute to the production of the annual *Monitoring Report on EFA*.

20. UNESCO continues to participate in all inter-agency flagship programmes on the major thrusts of Dakar, especially in the following four important areas:

(a) *The United Nations Literacy Decade*

The United Nations Literacy Decade for 2003-2012 was proclaimed on 19 December 2001 by the 56th session of the United Nations General Assembly (ref: A/RES/56116). The resolution that took note of the document Draft Proposal and Plan for a United Nations Literacy Decade submitted by UNESCO, explicitly situates the Decade within the Dakar Follow-up mechanisms and calls on UNESCO to assure the coordinating role at the international level.

(b) *AIDS, School and Education*

The Director-General has established a HIV/AIDS Coordination Unit at IIEP that ensures in general UNESCO representation in different UNAIDS and other inter-agency meetings. The Unit prepared the Unified Budget and Work Plan (UBW) for 2002-2003, now approved by UNAIDS, and ensured the reporting exercise for the UBW 2000-2001. The first meeting of the Board of the Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS and to reduce infections, illness and death also from malaria and tuberculosis took place in Geneva on 28-29 January 2002. UNESCO participated in the meeting as a member of the UNAIDS delegation. In 2002 UNESCO is sharing with UNDP the lead role for the World Aids Campaign.

(c) *Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH)*

The inter-agency initiative on school health (FRESH) was launched by UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, World Bank and Education International during the World Education Forum (Dakar, April 2000) in order to raise awareness among the international education community on the value of implementing an effective school health programme as one of the strategies to achieve EFA. The initiative now includes additional partners such as UNAIDS, WFP, FAO, EDC (Education Development Center – United States), CDC (Center for Disease Control – United States) among others. The FRESH strategy regarding comprehensive school health has also been adopted within the ACC Sub-Committee on Nutrition and the Roll Back Malaria initiative. Through the joint and coordinated actions of participating agencies FRESH school health programmes are in development in some 26 sub-Saharan African countries. In Asia and the Caribbean, several health-related projects have been extended to encompass the comprehensive school health context presented in FRESH. Several UNESCO

workshops (national and subregional) are proposed to integrate FRESH and HIV/AIDS in National EFA Action Plans.

(d) *United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI)*

UNESCO has been actively participating in the ten-year United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) and undertaken several concrete activities specifically in support of the UNGEI. UNESCO hosted the first Technical Meeting on Partnering the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative to Intensify Progress towards Gender Equality in Education (UNESCO Paris, 21-23 January 2002). UNICEF organized the meeting with financial contribution from DfID. Progress towards a prioritization of gender within various development modalities was debated. The meeting also discussed partnership strategies that could accelerate action towards the 2005 and 2015 targets. UNESCO organized two seminars in Asia (Kyoto, Japan, 28-30 November 2001) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Subregion (Accra, Ghana, 18-20 February 2002) on Gender Equality in Basic Education. The main objective of the seminars was to ensure gender-responsive national EFA plans. In order to support countries' endeavour to this end, regional networks of EFA gender focal points have been created in Asia and Africa-ECOWAS subregions. UNESCO has prepared a working document on Gender Equality in Basic Education. It provides a set of strategic guidelines for Member States to develop or strengthen their relevant national programmes and to attain the Dakar goal of eliminating gender disparity in education by 2005. During the last quarter of 2001, UNESCO initiated a statistical analysis on girls' education in developing countries.

### **New flagship programme on teachers and quality**

21. A set of five inter-agency initiatives has been incorporated into UNESCO's work plans. These are aimed at strengthening national capacities in teacher-education in support of the Dakar goals. In cooperation with UNICEF, ILO, Education International and other partners, UNESCO is developing the following initiatives:

- (a) In cooperation with UNESCO Headquarters, UIS is developing policy-oriented EFA-relevant teacher indicators on the current shortage of teachers in general and of qualified teachers in particular and on the implications of that shortage if projected to 2015. This activity is tied to an ongoing dialogue with OECD, ILO and Education International, on the one hand, and to regional workshops on national statistical capacity-building on the other.
- (b) UNESCO and ILO have advocated institutionalized participation of teachers' associations in the formulation and monitoring of national education plans in Member States.
- (c) UNESCO is beginning a programme of national capacity-building of lead teacher training institutions, which are at tertiary-level and/or Ecoles Normales Supérieures in selected sub-Saharan African countries. Partnership arrangements for implementation are in discussion with ILO, Education International, UNICEF and selected bilateral donors.
- (d) UNESCO has developed guidelines and materials on the strengthening of ICTs and open and distance learning capacities of national teacher training institutions.

- (e) UNESCO in cooperation with ILO will assist Member States in establishing a subregional Teachers' Registration Board, defining minimum qualifications for entry into the profession based upon consensus of agreements of governments, teachers' associations and employers.

### **Comprehensive strategy on Education for All**

22. To strengthen the EFA process, UNESCO, in its coordinating role, has been entrusted the mandate of developing a comprehensive EFA strategy to operationalize the Dakar Framework by March 2002 (cf. the High-Level Group Communiqué). The strategy aims at identifying major actions to be taken within specified timelines, general roles and responsibilities of partners, linkages among activities including how flagship programmes are integrated into country-level activities and a consensus on the global initiative for technical and financial resource mobilization.

23. For this purpose UNESCO has set up an international task force chaired by ADG/ED and composed of 13 members representing Canada, Cuba, Denmark, Jordan, Senegal, Pakistan, Action Aid Alliance, Arab Resource Collective, Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, African Network Campaign for EFA, European Commission, UNICEF and the World Bank. UNESCO organized a meeting of the Task Force on 11-12 March 2002. Drawing upon the recommendations of the Task Force, UNESCO coordinated the finalization of paper on the comprehensive strategy on EFA that was released on the second anniversary of Dakar in April 2002.

### **Resource mobilization**

24. On the basis of long negotiations undertaken since the World Education Forum in Dakar, and following the first High-Level Group meeting on EFA, UNESCO has been successful in mobilizing additional resources from EFA partners. Agreements have been signed with the Governments of France and Norway for financial assistance to the follow-up to Dakar, largely to be utilized for technical support to developing countries in the preparation of national EFA plans.

25. France provided a sum of 533,572 euros in the framework of a convention of cooperation signed on 30 October 2001 between UNESCO and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs for three years for Dakar Follow-up, particularly for countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia. France has also agreed to provide US \$204,900 for three years to a project entitled "The forum of exchange and virtual library for questions on non-formal education" within the framework of Dakar Follow-up.

26. Norway has shown interest in supporting UNESCO's strategies as outlined in the "Policy Statement on Cooperation with Donors for the Dakar Follow-up Actions". US \$600,000 has been provided for funding of Mobile Teams of Experts for support to the review process of selected countries' national EFA plans. On the basis of proposals submitted by field offices, 16 countries in different regions have been identified for provision of technical support from these funds. Further negotiations for specific activities and modalities of support will commence mid-2002.

27. Denmark has earmarked its voluntary contribution in 2002 for support to UNESCO's role in the follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action in line with the approach stipulated in the "Policy Statement on Cooperation with Donors for the Dakar Follow-Up Actions". The level of and modalities under the contribution will be addressed in a meeting in late April 2002.

28. Italy has officially announced a first contribution of two million euros to support UNESCO in its coordinating role of the Dakar Follow-up, mainly for capacity-building for developing national EFA plans and their integration into national and international development plans. With regard to

this contribution, UNESCO has submitted a draft “Joint Declaration between UNESCO and the Government of Italy on cooperation in the field of Education for All and Follow-up to the World Education Forum in Dakar in April 2000” to the Italian authorities; it is currently under evaluation by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

29. Owing to the time taken in negotiating extrabudgetary funding and the processes involved in releasing these funds to the field, it is expected that in operational terms the Member States will be able to benefit from this assistance in the latter half of 2002 approaching the deadline set at Dakar for preparation of national EFA plans. Meanwhile UNESCO has taken the initiative to decentralize additional funds, amounting to US \$745,500, from its regular budget in late 2001 to provide technical support to Member States through its field offices. It is understood that this has been matched by substantial funding from multilateral agencies and bilateral donors in several countries.

## **Partnerships**

### *G-8 Task Force on Education*

30. The G-8 Task Force, which was set up at the G-8 Summit in Genoa in July 2001 met for the first time at UNESCO Paris on 30 October 2001, immediately after the High-Level Group. The objective of this Task Force is to consider how G-8 countries can accelerate their support to the EFA process. Senior officials of the eight countries have continued the consultation process that started at UNESCO Paris. ADG/ED attended the first meeting of the Task Force and the Lead Manager, DFU, attended the third meeting in mid-January 2002 at Costa Rica to present UNESCO’s perspective and work.

31. UNESCO hosted consultative meetings with countries and civil society on behalf of the G-8 Task Force on Education (UNESCO Paris, 7 and 8 February 2002). The meetings discussed the work of the Task Force and the potential role the G-8 might usefully play in advancing progress towards the Education for All goals. A first meeting took place on 7 February and brought together some 30 major international NGOs, as well as NGOs from developing countries. At the second day meeting, the Permanent Delegates of UNESCO’s Member States discussed the work of the Task Force and learned how their governments can provide inputs to the Task Force through a process of electronic consultations. Len Good, President of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), chaired both meetings. ADG/ED moderated the discussions.

### *International Agencies*

32. UNESCO participated in a Conference on “Accelerating Action towards EFA” organized by the World Bank and the Netherlands Government on 10-11 April 2002 in Amsterdam. At the conference, a financing mechanism for EFA was discussed. ADG/ED and the Lead Manager, DFU attended the conference.

33. At the 27th session of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) in November 2001, UNESCO’s intervention included information on the first meeting of the High-Level Group on EFA. At this session, CESCR decided to discuss questions relating to the legal implications of the Dakar Framework for Action, including possible contributions by CESCR to the preparation of future annual *Monitoring Report on EFA*, at its next session (Geneva, 29 April-17 May, 2002).

34. At the high-level segment of the United Nations Economic and Social Council at New York, ADG/ED participated in a round table (14 February 2002) that agreed that EFA was the best



investment a country could make for its development. At the session, good practices in education and case studies from UNESCO and various United Nations agencies were presented.

### *Parliamentarians*

35. On 21 February 2002, a UNESCO/Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) inter-secretariat meeting was held at UNESCO Paris. EFA was proposed as one of the priority areas for possible cooperation between UNESCO and parliamentarians. The Secretary-General of IPU pointed out that parliamentarians are generally interested in social issues, education in particular, but that not much documentation was available to them in an easy-to-digest form. In this context, a proposal was made that UNESCO and IPU undertake a preparation of a handbook for parliamentarians on EFA as a joint activity. The matter is under active consideration.

36. The caucus of African Ministers of Education that took place on 17 October 2001 decided to establish a Forum of African Parliamentarians for Education. During a three-day conference that took place in Dakar, Senegal, 21-23 January 2002, 30 parliamentarians from nine African countries laid the foundation for a forum to play a more active role in the promotion of education. The forum aims at being a parliamentary body to review legislation, monitor progress and engage in advocacy. ADG/ED participated and addressed the gathering.

### **Cooperation with civil society organizations**

37. NGOs have actively participated in all important EFA meetings organized by UNESCO, notably the first High-Level Group meeting, the meeting of the Editorial Board for the *Monitoring Report* and the meeting for the comprehensive strategy on EFA.

UNESCO strengthened its cooperation with non-governmental organizations through regionalizing the collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA (CCNGO/EFA). The network tracks the participation of civil society organizations in EFA processes across the regions, facilitates local NGO capacity-building, and develops research on issues of quality and the transformation of education systems and modalities. In Latin America, the Consejo de Educación de Adultos de America Latina (CEAAL) is coordinating civil society participation in Dakar follow-up activities with UNESCO Santiago.

38. UNESCO and UNICEF regional offices jointly organized the first Collective Consultation of civil society in **Latin America and the Caribbean** (Santiago, Chile, 23-24 August 2001) that brought together representatives of 31 leading international, regional and national non-governmental organizations active in EFA in the region. The discussions focused on three key areas: (1) exchange on lessons learned; (2) identification of cooperation strategies among civil society, governments and intergovernmental organizations; and (3) development of concrete strategies to strengthen the participation of organizations of civil society in the preparation of national plans of action. The participants drafted and presented at the end of the meeting a short-term proposal for mobilization by civil society organizations (2001-2002) to strengthen civil society participation in the preparation of national EFA plans of action and a series of recommendations for international organizations.

39. UNESCO coorganized a seminar with the Latin American focal point for the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA, the Consejo de Educación de Adultos de America Latina (CEAAL), on the “Creation of Learning Societies: Democracy, Governance and Citizenship” in the framework of the second World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, 1-5 February 2002, which highlighted the strengths and challenges for civil society in transforming education systems and reinforcing broad-based participation in EFA.

40. In **Asia and the Pacific**, EFA has been the main pillar of the policy and advocacy work of the Asian South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education (ASPBAE). ASPBAE has given priority to mobilizing civil society participation in developing national action plans in South Asia and the South Pacific. ASPBAE members in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Vanuatu organized NGO consultations in this regard. ASPBAE is also sending out an electronic bulletin to NGOs in the region to provide updates on initiatives of the CCNGO/EFA.

41. In **sub-Saharan Africa**, the African Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA) has requested CCNGO/EFA to focus on capacity-building for national EFA coalitions. The network is interested in participating in developing case studies on civil society participation in EFA in African countries. Some preliminary work has started in West Africa with the support of Oxfam.

42. UNESCO has reinforced ICT-based consultation with NGOs through regular mailing services on key EFA-related issues and the improvement of the EFA civil society web page. Civil society organizations in Africa are involved in the preparatory process for MINEDAF VIII and regional consultations are under preparation in Latin America and the Arab region.

### **Advocacy and communication**

43. The Director-General of UNESCO has decided to launch each year around the anniversary of the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000) a global EFA Week to recall the EFA goals and to take stock of the advances being made. This year EFA Week was scheduled from 22 to 26 April 2002 in conjunction with the Global Campaign for Education. As part of this event, UNESCO is organizing one of its series of Twenty-first Century Talks on EFA on 26 April 2002. The same day, the Director-General will address the Permanent Delegations and selected representatives of NGOs. A joint statement with major EFA partners (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank) is planned for release.

44. During EFA Week, the national winning entries in a children's drawing competition on the theme "What I Want to be When I Grow Up" are to be reviewed. The competition was organized by UNESCO and the Global Campaign for Education, with National Commissions in various countries facilitating the organization of the competition in schools. UNESCO invited its EFA partner agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank) to team up at the country-level to jointly organize a series of advocacy and awareness-raising activities. UNESCO's Bureau of Public Information (BPI) issued a press release on the issue of drop-outs at primary and secondary level in developing and industrialized countries.

45. The Assistant Director-General for Education has delivered important speeches on several occasions to raise awareness and understanding of EFA in the international community: including the keynote speech at the first World Terakoya Conference on "Basic Education for All: Learning to live together", coorganized by UNESCO and National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (Kyoto, Japan, 1 December 2001); the Gaitskell Lecture on "Education for All: What will it take?" (University of Nottingham, United Kingdom, 21 February 2002); and the lecture to the Council for Education in the Commonwealth on "Education for All in the Commonwealth: What are the issues?" (Palace of Westminster in London, United Kingdom, 14 March 2002).

46. At the invitation of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Lead Manager, DFU presented an overview of EFA at a series of seminars and lectures from 11 to 16 February 2002 in Tokyo and Hiroshima. The seminars and lectures aimed at promoting better understanding on EFA among Japanese experts, administrators and researchers in the field of development assistance.

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

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 164/EX 7,
2. Welcomes the Report on the Follow-up action to the Dakar Framework for Action;
3. Reaffirms its commitment to the importance and centrality of the follow-up to the World Education Forum in UNESCO's education programme;
4. Requests the Director-General to maintain the collective momentum in regard to the follow-up to the Dakar Framework for Action in line with the priorities established in documents 31 C/4 and 31 C/5, as well as the Communiqué of the High-Level Group;
5. Invites the Director-General to report to the Board at its 166th session on the progress of implementation of and follow-up to the Dakar framework for Action, notably with regard to the status of national EFA plans of action and the elaboration of a comprehensive EFA strategy, including the global initiative.

## ANNEX

### **Communiqué from High-Level Group On Education for All First Meeting, UNESCO, Paris, 29-30 October 2001**

*We affirm that no countries seriously committed to education for all  
will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources*

1. We, the participants in the first meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All (EFA), call upon all EFA partners to redouble their efforts to meet the goals and targets of Education for All. The world has changed considerably since the World Education Forum in Dakar in April 2000 and the challenge ahead remains daunting but not insurmountable. The events of 11 September 2001 have further emphasized the absolute importance of universal basic education of good quality as an essential, if not sufficient, condition for a healthier, more democratic and more tolerant world.

2. We understand and stress the importance of EFA in the context of the other Millennium Development Goals. We recommit ourselves to the six Dakar goals which represent the expanded vision of basic education in the World Declaration on Education for All. In fulfilment of our mandate – to monitor and assess the extent to which progress is being made on the Dakar commitments; to advocate for more extensive and better coordinated action at the international and national levels; and to promote the expansion of resources (financial, human, technical and material) to meet each country's requirements to achieve the Dakar goals – we call upon all partners to move forward in this endeavour, motivated by a greater sense of urgency and supported by accelerated efforts.

#### **Priorities for action**

3. All partners must act decisively on a number of serious issues: the persistent gender and other disparities; the neglect of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including individuals with disabilities; the high number of non-literates; the need for understanding and acceptance of diversity; the undermining of education systems and institutions by the HIV/AIDS pandemic; and the critical situation in countries in emergency, crisis, post-conflict and other risk situations. There is an urgent need to define educational quality, its content and outcomes including life-skills education. As a dynamic force in social and economic development, the education of girls and women should receive special attention. EFA must be accelerated in sub-Saharan Africa – with due consideration to the plan entitled the New Partnership for Africa Development – South Asia and the least developed countries, where needs continue to be the greatest.

4. We realize the importance of building on the strength of each partner in the movement, learning from successful experiences, and applying systemic reforms and innovative approaches to the attainment of each Dakar goal, including capacity-building and harnessing new communication and information technologies in the delivery of basic education and teacher training and upgrading. We emphasize the importance of taking into account individual country contexts.

#### **Partnership**

5. We underline the core responsibility of governments for education, and especially to provide free and compulsory quality basic education for all. All partners of the EFA movement should endeavour to coordinate their efforts under the leadership of governments within the framework of cross-sectoral poverty reduction strategies and education sector planning. We encourage governments to establish as broad-based a partnership as possible, in particular to ensure the full inclusion of teachers' organizations, and other non-governmental and civil society organizations in

EFA policy formulation, implementation and monitoring. The full participation of local communities is equally important.

6. We appreciate the steps already taken to recognize the role of non-governmental and other civil society organizations in the EFA movement as partners at the global level. EFA partners must, however, play their broker role at the national level in order that the potential of NGOs and local communities can be fully utilized. This includes appropriate capacity-building of NGOs and others to fulfil their role. Furthermore, the private sector needs to be called upon to contribute to the thinking and actions of the EFA movement, and must be adequately represented in relevant forums.

7. We consider it to be vital that our shared efforts be fully coordinated among all partners of the EFA movement. Existing and new initiatives on EFA in the funds and programmes of the United Nations, the World Bank, IMF, bilateral agencies, the Task Force of senior G-8 officials on Dakar Follow-up, OECD/DAC and the European Commission, must be well integrated, mutually reinforcing and built on the comparative advantage of each organization.

8. We are encouraged by the partnerships, innovative approaches and potential impact of a range of coordinated activities responding directly to specific Dakar goals and special focus areas, including flagships. Such multi-partner initiatives and programmes must be carefully synchronized with national priorities, form part of national EFA action plans, be properly coordinated by governments and pay special attention to the educational needs of out-of-school children.

### **The global initiative**

9. We need to establish an urgent consensus on all six elements of the global initiative, as described in the Dakar Framework for Action. Each element of the global initiative, individually and collectively, must be supportive of national EFA efforts. EFA is critically important for poverty reduction and sustainable development. EFA goals must be pursued as part and parcel of national poverty reduction strategies, and education plans developed and implemented in the context of macro-economic frameworks and policy reform. Strategic alliances with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are crucial in this regard.

10. We acknowledge the importance of non-financial constraints to the development of EFA and support the broader understanding of resources, not just as financial, but as human, material and organizational as well. Increased resource mobilization must go hand in hand with effective resource utilization and management by all governments and organizations. Nationally, governments must reinforce national resolve, increase their budget allocations for EFA, address efficiency and capacity constraints, and use international assistance strategically. Internationally, all potential financial sources must be exploited and new creative ways of funding EFA be found, for example through increased South-South collaboration and partnership with the private sector. We continue to be alarmed by the insignificant proportion of overall bilateral and multilateral assistance provided for basic education. The fulfilment of the Dakar commitment also requires a reversal of the decline in overall ODA, particularly for the least developed countries, sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

### **Recommendations**

We propose that the following immediate actions be taken:

- Countries must, within poverty reduction strategies, accelerate progress towards sector plans which encompass all EFA goals and take into due consideration both content and process. The plans, which would be the basis for national and international coordinated

efforts, must be in place by 2002. They must reflect the gaps – results, capacity, policy and financing (domestic and external) – related to the achievement of EFA goals.

- Building on existing structures, partners at the country level must develop criteria and mechanisms for reviewing and mobilizing resources for the plans. The Dakar resource commitment should be part of all processes to develop Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC). Many countries will have their plans agreed to and funded, through domestic and external resources, at the country level. Where this is not the case, the World Bank should, where feasible, take the lead in identifying the resource gaps. Where the World Bank cannot do so, the task will be taken forward by the United Nations Agencies. All partners should find new and creative ways to fill the resource gaps.
- A strategy to operationalize the Dakar Framework must be developed by March 2002 by a Task Force constituted by representatives of all partners. The strategy would identify: major actions to be taken within specified time-lines; general roles and responsibilities of partners; linkages among activities, including a clear description of how flagships are integrated into country-level activities; and a consensus on the global initiative. Once the content and scope of a global initiative are agreed, it should be implemented with immediate effect and progress presented to and reviewed by the High-Level Group.
- An authoritative, analytical, annual EFA Monitoring Report should be produced drawing upon national data – quantitative and qualitative – and assessing the extent to which both countries and the international community are meeting their Dakar commitments. As a matter of urgency, UNESCO should convene key partners to discuss how the report can best be prepared, managed and resourced. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics has an important role in the development of the report.
- Taking into account the experiences of the first meeting of the High-Level Group, we call upon UNESCO to ensure focused and operational discussions and continuity in the important work of the Group.