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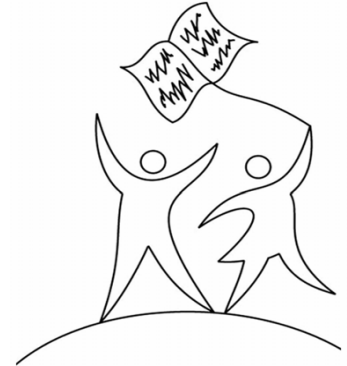
Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
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Education for All

Seventh Meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All  
Dakar, Senegal  
11 – 13 December 2007

Communiqué

**Seventh Meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All  
11–13 December 2007  
Dakar, Senegal**

**C o m m u n i q u é**

1. We, Ministers, senior officials of multilateral and bilateral agencies, and leaders of civil society, met in Dakar, Senegal, from 11 to 13 December 2007 at the invitation of the Director-General of UNESCO and the government of Senegal, and we express our sincere thanks to our hosts for their warm hospitality. At the halfway point between 2000 and 2015, the 2008 EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR) presented an overview of progress towards the six EFA goals, and a projection of current trends up to 2015. We noted the significant progress – and commend countries for their committed action – in primary education, and positive though uneven developments on the other goals, and welcomed the presentation of a range of good practices offering examples of responses to the challenges of reaching the most marginalized groups. We are now in a position to know better what works in basic education, but the current pace of progress is not sufficient to meet the 2015 target.
2. We noted with concern that three EFA goals – on early childhood care and education (ECCE), learning opportunities for youth and adults, and adult and youth literacy – are neglected and agreed that we must redouble our efforts to ensure they are attended to. Our deliberations focused on three interconnected issues, namely, inclusion, the quality of education, and meeting the financing needs of EFA. We also agreed that attention must be given to EFA progress in countries facing conditions of fragility.
3. We agreed that priority attention will be given to the following three critical and interconnected issues in 2008 and beyond.

***Equity and inclusion***

4. We recognized that achieving the EFA goals means reaching those children, youth and adults, especially girls and women, who have hitherto been excluded from basic education opportunities. Situations of disaster and conflict, in particular, have robbed many young people and adults of basic education, adding to the challenge of providing access to literacy, numeracy and life-skills. In order to ensure greater equity and inclusion, we propose the following actions during 2008 and beyond, to be led by governments at country level, in partnership with civil society and other stakeholders, and with the support of international partners:
  - a) Undertake a mapping to determine more precisely the characteristics of excluded groups, their circumstances and needs and thus inform more inclusive educational policies. This mapping could also:
    - i. Use household and other such surveys as sources of detailed quantitative and qualitative data;
    - ii. Empower communities by engaging them fully in identifying the excluded and vulnerable in their societies;
    - iii. Identify steps to strengthen and harmonize, where necessary, the legislative framework within which the right to education is guaranteed;
    - iv. Include a costing of what is needed to reach marginalized groups effectively;

- v. Foster coordination at local, regional and national levels and across sectors, promoting more inclusive policies in order to mobilize schools and their communities.
- b) Improve policy frameworks to address post-primary learning opportunities for in-school and out-of-school youth which will:
- i. Take an integrated approach to secondary education and other learning programmes for those transitioning from primary schooling;
  - ii. Provide equitable access to quality opportunities, including non-formal education, for literacy learning, technical and vocational education and training, and life-skills programmes;
  - iii. Address the complexity of providing diversified learning opportunities.

### ***Quality of education***

5. We affirm that it is both access to education and its quality that make a difference to the life chances of the learner and that the pursuit of quality is integral to the achievement of the six EFA goals. Quality is multi-dimensional, requiring a set of interlinked investments. To promote quality, we propose the following actions during 2008 and beyond by national governments with the assistance of their EFA partners:
- a) Take a comprehensive and results-oriented approach to addressing quality in policy formulation, programme management and implementation, and evaluation, giving due attention to the quality of teaching and learning (such as curriculum, pedagogy, languages of instruction, materials, ICTs, school management, infrastructure...) and the necessary measures to ensure the readiness of the learner (such as safety, security and peace, health, nutrition, respect of gender, response to disabilities, ECCE...).
  - b) Develop a policy framework regarding teachers, which comprehensively addresses:
    - i. The need to train and recruit large numbers of teachers, with an emphasis on female teachers in regions where they are under-represented (18 million at primary level worldwide by 2015, with almost 4 million needed in sub-Saharan Africa);
    - ii. Quality initial and in-service training that balances content and pedagogical method;
    - iii. The need for enhanced status and a clear path of career development for teachers which aims to strengthen their professional competence, and for incentives to retain them in the system;
    - iv. Employment practices that protect the rights and professional status of teachers;
    - v. Equitable deployment of teachers to rural, urban and remote areas.
  - c) Strive for gender equity and equality in the education sector through sharing good practices and promoting gender-based analysis.
  - d) Promote capacity development for school management, including supervision and support, organizational development, financial management and collaboration with the community.

- e) Track and evaluate the definition and development of standards of learning achievement and the measurement of learning outcomes.
- f) Undertake impact evaluations of policies and investments with a view to improving learning outcomes and feeding into future policy development.
- g) Improve the quality, relevance and effectiveness of youth and adult literacy and non-formal education programmes, especially for women.

## **Financing**

6. Domestic resources typically account for most of the education budget, and their share in national income has increased in a majority of developing countries since 2000. In resource-poor countries, external aid is critical in supporting national efforts. We are extremely concerned about the decline in external aid commitments to education in 2005 in light of the Gleneagles G8 Summit of that year and in the perspective of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. We also deplore the fact that aid commitments remain well below the estimated annual external funding requirements of US\$11 billion. We are determined to work to maintain and increase levels of funding to education in general and to basic education in particular. Increased external financing must be met with genuine political will and increased capacity across the sector, at all levels, not only in terms of quality input but also to ensure efficient and effective use of resources. To this end, we re-affirm our commitment to the Dakar pledge that no country seriously committed to Education for All will be thwarted in its efforts because of a lack of resources, and we propose the following actions during 2008 and beyond:
  - a) National and local governments should mobilize sufficient domestic resources in accordance with indicative standards (~6% of GNI / 15-20% of government budget) in allocations to education, with a prioritization of basic education (>3% of GNI / 10% of government budget);
  - b) External funding partners should raise levels of predictable and long-term financing to education in general and to basic education in particular. External financing should pay particular attention to the timely flow of resources, and to filling the funding gap of FTI-endorsed education sector plans;
  - c) Governments and EFA partners should support costing exercises that facilitate investment options in all education sub-sectors (from ECCE through basic, secondary and adult education), taking into consideration a more integrated approach and building more efficiently on existing resources within education and other sectors (health, social services);
  - d) Governments should strive to ensure that no child is excluded from school because of the financial burden, including the removal or reduction of user fees where appropriate, and give support to the poorest households and other excluded groups, for example through cash transfers, school feeding or subsidies;
  - e) Governments and external funding partners should seek to optimize the financing opportunities available through the multiple channels of external funding to basic education, the relationship between them, and their relative impact on progress towards the EFA goals, in the context of the commitments made in the Monterrey Consensus and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness;
  - f) EFA partners should prioritize low-income countries, fragile, emergency and conflict-affected states, and sub-Saharan Africa.

## ***The way forward***

### 7. We commit ourselves to:

- a) Raise the profile of EFA in development, as a human right and as a fundamental tool in economic growth and poverty reduction, by:
  - i. Providing conceptual input to relevant events on the inter-connections and interdependence of EFA with global issues such as the MDGs, climate change, sustainable development and public health;
  - ii. Working for the inclusion of all EFA priorities on the agendas of other global and regional development meetings, such as Financing for Development, G8, TICAD IV, the World Bank and IMF semi-annual meetings, MDG processes, and other such events;
  - iii. Enhancing international commitment to basic education through stronger linkages between EFA and the agendas of education-related meetings in 2008, such as the E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting, ADEA meetings, and the International Conference on Education, which will also provide input into the next meeting of the High-Level Group;
  - iv. Providing input into the ongoing discussions on aid effectiveness, based on experience in the education sector, as part of the Paris Declaration processes, in particular in preparation for the High-Level Forum on aid effectiveness to be held in Accra, Ghana, in September 2008.
- b) Maintain the political momentum on EFA by
  - i. Continuing to foster the full engagement and coordinated action of multiple stakeholders through the Working Group on EFA, FTI, the International Advisory Panel (IAP) and the High-Level Group, and by applying the EFA Global Action Plan;
  - ii. Increasing the visibility of EFA to a wider public and in the media through a stronger and more pro-active communications strategy;
  - iii. Monitoring the implementation of the actions proposed in this Communiqué, as part of the next meeting of the EFA High-Level Group; we are pleased to accept the invitation of the government of Norway to meet in Oslo from 16 to 18 December 2008.